Amistad

National Recreation Area
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Spur 454

Location

Spur 454 is located approximately 5 miles west of Del Rio, Texas on U.S. Highway 90. This paved roadway has been periodically submerged since this old section of Highway 90 was initially submerged in 1968 when Amistad Reservoir first began to fill.

Purpose

This 2.5 mile section of previously submerged Highway 90 is being made available so visitors can enjoy additional recreational opportunities at Lake Amistad. A boat dock is provided near the end of Spur 454 where it re-enters the lake. With the newly exposed land, we are providing park visitors with new opportunities to observe abundant wildlife and birds, bank fish, or simply hike around and explore this area. Visitors are welcome to park along the edge of the paved roadway and walk throughout this area. The park-owned land is indicated on the attached map in green. Off-road vehicle use is prohibited throughout the park.

History

A thirteen mile section of Highway 90 located west of Del Rio was re-routed in the 1960's after the decision was made to construct Amistad Dam and it was determined that portions of this section of highway would be submerged by the new Amistad Reservoir. Completed in June, 1968 Amistad Dam was constructed by the United States and Mexico in accordance with the Water Treaty Act of 1944. By August of 1968, the reservoir was filling and Spur 454 was submerged for the first time.

Spur 454 did not become exposed again until 1985 when the lake dropped to 39 feet below conservation level as a result of a drought and associated water releases from the dam for irrigation purposes. Heavy rains in July of 1986 brought the lake back up, and this section of Spur 454 was again submerged.

The next time that this section of Spur 454 was exposed was in 1994, and it remained exposed for nearly ten years until the lake came back up to conservation level in the Fall of 2004. During this long drought, park visitors were allowed to drive off-road to gain access to bank fishing areas. This resulted in an extensive twelve-mile network of dirt roads that marred the landscape. In 2004, Amistad National Recreation Area was targeted by an environmental group in a federal lawsuit for allowing off-road driving without legislative authorization. As a result, Amistad National Recreation Area is under a court order to not allow off-road driving.

Resource Protection & Safety

To better protect the natural resources of the park, driving off of the paved roadway is prohibited. When the park allowed off-road travel in this area from 1994 to 2004, these back roads were used as an illegal dumping ground for bed mattresses, household trash, discarded tires, and local landscaping debris like branches. Some visitors used the area as a mudding playground for their 4x4 trucks, damaging the native vegetation and leaving deep, unsightly ruts.

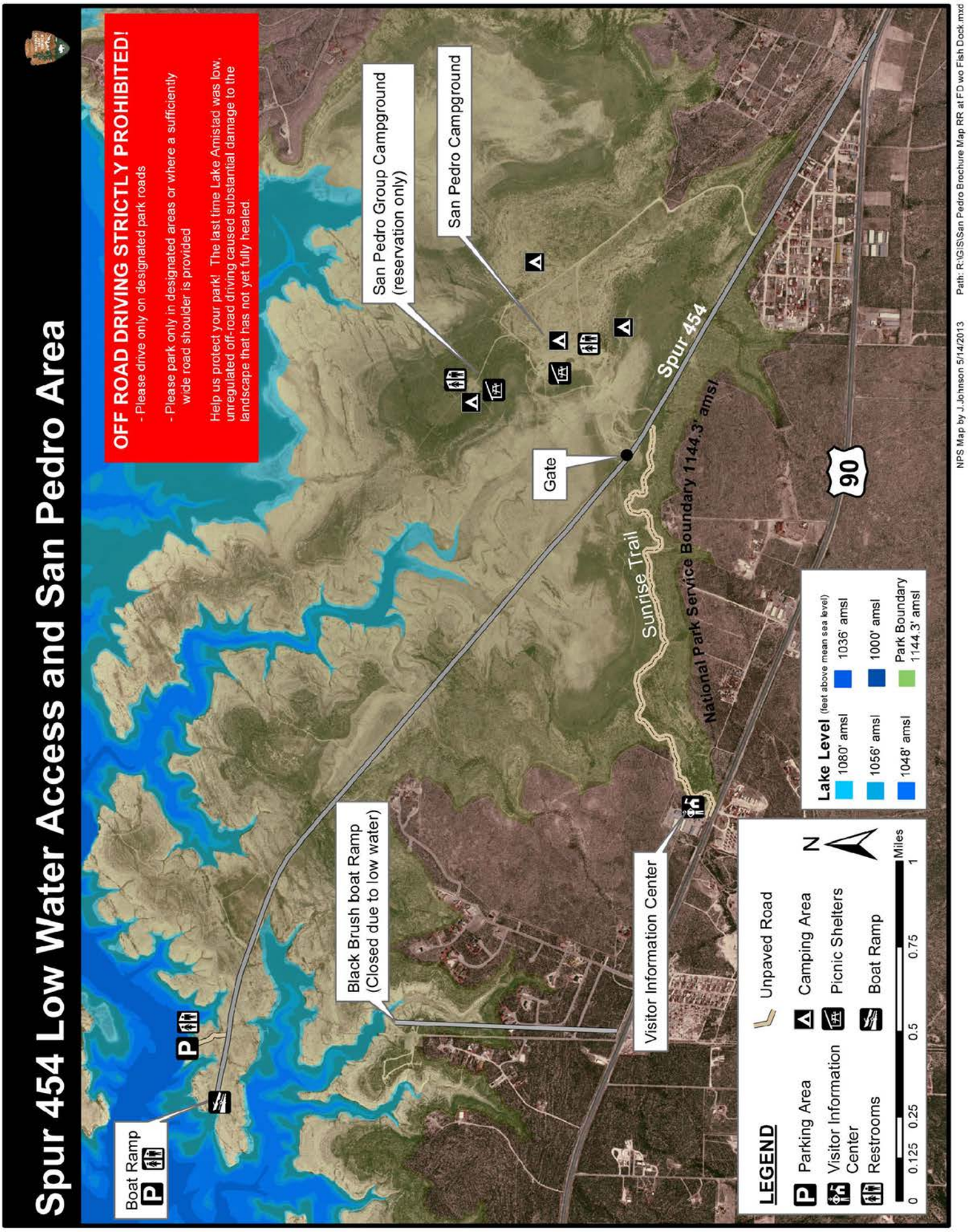
Please observe the 35 mph speed limit. Wildlife crossing the road, including deer, will be put at risk if you drive faster than the posted speed limit. In addition, there are walkers and bicyclists who also wish to use the paved road to gain access to the area. Please share the road with your fellow park visitors and stay safe by driving the speed limit.

For the safety of all of our park visitors, we prohibit the use of glass beverage containers (beer bottles, wine, etc.) in the park. Numerous people, including children, have been injured in the past by stepping on broken glass in the San Pedro cliffs area at the end of Spur 454, as well as other popular swimming areas of the park.

We ask that you restrain your dogs on a leash while in the park. This is for the protection of the wildlife, including deer and ground-based burrowing owls.

The photo above is an example of what we do not want park visitors to do. Driving off-road through the grass is prohibited. Following these illegally-made vehicle tracks in your motor vehicle may result in you receiving a citation, too. At the end of Spur 454, there is a clearly marked improved gravel road that is available for visitors to get closer to popular fishing and swimming areas.

8/27/2013



Visitor Information Center, US Hwy 90 W, six miles west of the Hwy 90 and 277 N intersection
Open: Tuesday – Saturday 8 am to 4:30 Closed: Sunday and Monday
Amistad National Recreation Area 830.775.7491 ext 0 www.nps.gov/amis