



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Big Thicket  
National Preserve

6044 FM 420  
Kountze, Texas 77625

Superintendent's Compendium  
Of Designations, Closures, Permit  
Requirements and Other Restrictions  
Imposed Under Discretionary Authority.

(409) 951-6700 (Telephone)  
(409) 951-6717 (Fax)

Approved:

  
Todd W. Brindle, Superintendent

In accordance with regulations and the delegated authority provided in Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations ("36 CFR"), Chapter 1, Parts 1-7, authorized by Title 16 United States Code, Section 3, the following provisions apply to all lands and waters administered by the National Park Service, within the boundaries of Big Thicket National Preserve. Unless otherwise stated, these regulatory provisions apply in addition to the requirements contained in 36 CFR, Chapter 1, Parts 1-7.

Written determinations, which explain the reasoning behind the Superintendent's use of discretionary authority, as required by Section 1.5(c), appear in this document identified by italicized print.

**I. 36 CFR §1.5 – VISITING HOURS, PUBLIC USE LIMITS, CLOSURES, AND AREA DESIGNATIONS FOR SPECIFIC USE OR ACTIVITIES**

**36 CFR §1.5 (a)(1) The following visiting hours and public use limits are established for all or for the listed portions of the park, and the following closures are established for all or a portion of the park to all public use or to a certain use or activity:**

**Visiting Hours:**

Big Thicket National Preserve is open 24 hours per day with the following exceptions:

- The Preserve Visitor Center is open from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, 7 days per week, unless otherwise posted.

*The Preserve Visitor Center is open based upon personnel availability.*

- All areas designated as DAY USE AREAS are closed between sunset and sunrise for general public use, unless designated by posting.
- During hunting season, hunters, with a Big Thicket Hunting Permit, may use the DAY USE AREAS from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset to access designated hunt areas.
- Persons launching or retrieving boats or bank fishing may use the DAY USE AREAS adjacent to park waterways for those purposes 24 hours a day. Boat Launching with Trailers is limited to designated boat ramps as listed in the Big Thicket National Preserve general brochure.
- The following areas have been designated as DAY USE AREAS:

**Beaumont Unit:**

- Confluence Day Use Area, Boat Ramp, and Parking Area, Four Oaks Ranch Road
- Four Oaks Day Use and Parking Area, Four Oaks Ranch Road
- Lakeview Sandbar Day Use Area and Parking Area

- Edgewater Drive Day Use Area and Parking Area
- Cook's Lake Road Day Use Area and Parking Area

Beech Creek Unit:

- Beech Woods Trail Day Use Area and Trailhead

Hickory Creek Savannah Unit:

- Sundew Trail Day Use Area and Trailhead

Big Sandy Creek Unit:

- Woodlands Trail Day Use Area and Trailhead
- Big Sandy Horse Trail Day Use Area and Parking Area
- Big Sandy Creek Day Use Area and Parking Area
- Beaver Slide Trail Day Use Area

Lance Rosier Unit:

- "Hunter" Parking Area off Church House Road at the northeast corner of the unit
- Cotton Road Hunter Parking Area
- Teel Road Bridge Parking Area

Lower Neches River Corridor Unit:

- Highway 96 Day Use Area, Evadale Bridge

Menard Creek Corridor Unit:

- Holly Grove Day Use Area and Parking Area
- Hoop n' Holler Day Use Area
- Bird Watcher's Trail Day Use Area and Parking Area

Neches Bottom and Jack Gore Baygall Unit:

- Franklin Lake Day Use Area and Parking Area
- Timber Slough Road Day Use Area located at the terminal end of Timber Slough Road at the Neches River
- Potato Patch Lake Day Use Area and Parking Area
- Sandlot Lake Day Use Area and Parking Area

Turkey Creek Unit:

- Kirby Nature Trailhead (Staley Cabin) Day Use Area and Parking Area
- Day Use Area and Trailhead on the south side of FM 1943
- Day Use Area and Trailhead on south side of County Line Road
- Day Use Area and Trailhead on the north side of County Line Road
- Pitcher Plant Trail Day Use Area and Trailhead
- Day Use Area and Trailhead on the south side of Hester Bridge Road
- Gardner Cemetery Parking Area

Upper Neches River Corridor Unit:

- McQueen's Landing Boat Ramp and Day Use Area

Village Creek Corridor Unit

- White Beach Sandbar Day Use Area

*These areas are designated as day use areas due to public safety concerns. These improved recreational sites have a history of late night parties, illegal camping, drug use and poaching activities. This closure is necessary to maintain acceptable conditions, to reduce vandalism, to prevent camping in*

*unauthorized areas and to prevent other common violations (such as underage alcohol consumption, litter, and vehicle travel off of established routes).*

**Public Use Limits:**

- Visitors must remain on the established trail system at the Pitcher Plant Bog in the northeastern portion of the Turkey Creek Unit

*Natural vegetation in the Pitcher Plant Savannah is very susceptible to damage from foot traffic. Increasing interest in and publicity about this unusual area has resulted in growing impacts to the resource. A trail and boardwalk were constructed in this area during 1984 to allow public enjoyment of the area without adverse impact to the plants.*

**Closures:**

- Glass beverage containers are prohibited on the water courses and sandbars within the Preserve on the following waterways:

Neches River  
Village Creek  
Big Sandy Creek  
Menard Creek  
Turkey Creek

*Glass, in addition to becoming litter, can create both environmental and safety concerns. Glass containers create serious safety hazards for visitors when broken in sandy beach and water areas where visitors frequently walk barefoot.*

- All areas within the Preserve affected by fire management operations, including wildfires and prescribed fires are CLOSED to public use or entry until declared safe and available for public use by the Incident Commander.

*Wildland fires, and the activities associated with suppressing and managing them are inherently hazardous. In order to protect the public all areas affected by fire management operations must be inspected for safety and resource management concerns before being opened to normal public use activities.*

- The Regal Fern Bog Research Natural Area located in the Beaumont Unit, and The Neches Bottom Research Natural Area located in the Neches Bottom Unit, are CLOSED to public entry or use without a permit. Maps (copies attached) showing these areas are available for public inspection at the Preserve Headquarters Office.

*Ongoing research in these areas could be compromised by public activities, and entry into these areas must be limited to protect the naturally occurring processes being studied.*

- Structures acquired by the National Park Service in conjunction with the acquisition of lands for the Big Thicket National Preserve are CLOSED to public entry or use. Such structures shall be marked by the posting of standard "No Trespassing -- U.S. Government Property" signs in a conspicuous location on the exterior of each structure. This closure shall not apply to the Visitor Center, Headquarters/Maintenances Complex offices, Environmental Education Center, Woodville Ranger Station, Fire Management Office, and the Saratoga Research Station during those times that they are staffed by National Park Service personnel and open for business.

*The National Park Service has acquired a number of cabins and similar structures located in various parts of the Preserve. The majority of these structures will be disposed of in accordance with applicable*

*Federal regulations. These structures are not being maintained by the National Park Service and are typically unsafe for visitor use.*

- The Big Sandy Horse Trail in the Big Sandy Creek Unit and the Beech Woods Trail in the Beech Creek Unit are closed to hiking during the designated Preserve hunting season as published annually in the Big Thicket National Preserve Hunting Guide and Regulations.

*These trails are closed during hunting season to limit conflicts between user groups and to reduce safety hazards for non hunters who are not required to comply with hunter orange apparel regulations.*

- The following areas of the Preserve are closed to camping:

Little Pine Island-Pine Island Bayou Corridor Unit  
Hickory Creek Unit  
Loblolly Unit  
Menard Creek Corridor Unit  
Sandbar located directly across the Neches River from the Lakeview Day Use Area  
Island Sandbar located across Village Creek from the White Beach Day Use Area

*The sandbars are closed to camping due to the heavy demand for picnicking, fishing, and similar activities at these sites. These sandbars are marked with appropriate signs to indicate this restriction. The Units closed to camping are closed because of their small size and limited access opportunities for the public.*

- All portions of the following units are closed to camping during the Preserve hunting season:

Beaumont Unit (including sandbars along the Neches River)  
Beech Creek Unit  
Big Sandy Creek Unit  
Neches Bottom and Jack Gore Baygall Unit (including sandbars along the Neches River)  
Lance Rosier Unit

*These Units are closed to camping during hunting season to limit potential conflicts between hunters and non-hunters and to reduce safety hazards for non hunters who are not required to comply with hunter orange apparel regulations.*

- The following units of the Preserve are closed to hunting:

Turkey Creek Unit  
Hickory Creek Savannah Unit  
Loblolly Unit  
Little Pine Island-Pine Island Bayou Corridor Unit  
Upper Neches River Corridor Unit  
Lower Neches River Corridor Unit  
Menard Creek Corridor Unit

- Limited portions of the following units of the Preserve, as delineated on hunting area maps provided with each Big Thicket hunting permit and available at the Big Thicket Visitor Center, are closed to hunting:

Beaumont Unit  
Beech Creek Unit  
Big Sandy Creek Unit  
Neches Bottom and Jack Gore Baygall Unit  
Lance Rosier Unit

*These areas are closed to hunting because they do not contain sufficient land area to allow hunting without conflicts developing with adjoining landowners or to allow for other recreational uses during the hunting season while reducing conflicts between hunters and non-hunters.*

- The following units are closed to trapping throughout the year:

Beech Creek Unit  
Big Sandy Creek Unit  
Hickory Creek Savannah Unit  
Loblolly Unit  
Little Pine Island-Pine Island Bayou Corridor Unit  
Lower Neches River Corridor Unit  
Menard Creek Corridor Unit  
Turkey Creek Unit  
Upper Neches River Corridor Unit

- Limited portions of the following units of the Preserve, as delineated on trapping area maps provided with each Big Thicket trapping permit and available at the Big Thicket Visitor Center, are closed to trapping throughout the year:

Beaumont Unit  
Neches Bottom and Jack Gore Baygall Unit  
Lance Rosier Unit

*These areas are closed to trapping because they do not contain sufficient land area to allow trapping without conflicts developing with adjoining landowners or to allow for other recreational uses during the trapping season while reducing conflicts between trappers and other user groups.*

**36 CFR §1.5 (a)(2) The following areas have been designated for a specific use or activity, under the conditions and/or restrictions as noted.**

EPAMD (electric personal assistive mobility device, or Segway):

- EPAMD's, when used by a mobility impaired person for locomotion, may be used in all portions of Big Thicket National Preserve in the same manner as a Motorized Wheelchair with the following restrictions.
- An electric personal assistive mobility device (EPAMD) is defined as, a self-balancing two non-tandem wheeled device, designed to transport only one person, with an electric propulsion system, with an average power of 750 watts (one horsepower), whose maximum speed on a paved level surface is less than 20 MPH.
- EPAMD's shall be limited to a maximum speed of 8 mph.
- An EPAMD operator traveling on a sidewalk, trail, or other pedestrian accessible area of the Preserve shall have the rights and duties of a pedestrian, shall exercise due care to avoid colliding with pedestrians, and shall yield the right of way to pedestrians.
- EPAMD operators shall be at least 16 years of age.

Justification: *EPAMD's have increasingly become a common mode of conveyance and are often adopted as a mode of conveyance by mobility impaired persons. "These devices provide benefits by increasing*

people's mobility and substituting for automobile travel, but they can create new problems such as congestion and risks to other non-motorized facility users." (Todd Litman and Robin Blair, *Managing Personal Mobility Devices (PMDs) On Non-motorized Facilities*, 26 July 2006). EPAMD's when operated on trails, sidewalks and other pedestrian accessible areas can increase access for mobility impaired persons but can also cause increased risks for EPAMD operators and other pedestrians. These restrictions area required to enhance the safety of the general public and EPAMD operators.

Camping:

- Please refer to §2.10 for detailed camping restrictions and conditions.

## II. 36 CFR §1.6 – ACTIVITIES THAT REQUIRE A PERMIT

**36 CFR §1.6(f) The following is a compilation of those activities for which a permit from the superintendent is required:**

- §2.4(d) Carry or possess a weapon, trap, or net.
- §2.5(a) Specimen collection (Take plant, fish, wildlife, rocks or minerals)
- §2.10(a) Backcountry Camping. See section 2.10 for specific camping regulations.
- §2.12 Audio Disturbances:
  - (a)(2) Operating a chain saw in developed areas
  - (a)(3) Operation of any type of portable motor or engine, or device powered by a portable motor or engine in non-developed areas
  - (a)(4) Operation of a public address system in connection with a public gathering or special event for which a permit has been issued pursuant to §2.50 or §2.51.
- §2.17 Aircraft & Air Delivery:
  - (a)(3) Delivery or retrieval of a person or object by parachute, helicopter or other airborne means
  - (c)(1) Removal of a downed aircraft
- §2.37 Soliciting or demanding gifts, money goods or services (Pursuant to the terms and conditions of a permit issued under §2.50, §2.51 or §2.52)
- §2.38(a) Explosives: Use, possess, store, transport explosives, blasting agents
- §2.50(a) Conduct a sports event, pageant, regatta, public spectator attraction entertainment, ceremony, and similar events.
- §2.51(a) Public assemblies, meetings, gatherings, demonstrations, parades and other public expressions of views.
- §2.52(c) Sale or distribution of printer matter that is not solely commercial advertising.
- §2.61(a) Residing on federal lands
- §2.62 Memorialization:
  - (a) Erection of monuments (Requires approval from Regional Director)

- (b) Scattering ashes from human cremation.
- §5.1 Advertisements - (Display, posting or distribution.)
- §5.3 Engaging in or soliciting any business  
(Requires a permit, contract or other written agreement with the United States, or must be pursuant to special regulations)
- §5.5 Commercial Photography/Filming:
  - (a) Commercial filming of motion pictures or television involving the use of professional casts, settings or crews, other than bona fide newsreel or news television
  - (b) Still photography of vehicles, or other articles of commerce or models for the purpose of commercial advertising
- §5.6(c) Use of commercial vehicles on park area roads (The superintendent shall issue a permit to access private lands within or adjacent to the park when access is otherwise not available)
- §5.7 Construction of buildings, facilities, trails, roads, boat docks, path, structure, etc.
- §7.85(c) Hunting and trapping. See section 7.85(c) for specific hunting and trapping permit conditions.
- §9.32(a) Access for gas and oil operations. (A plan of operations approved by the Regional Director shall serve as the operator's access permit.)

### III. GENERAL REGULATIONS

#### 36 CFR §2.1 – PRESERVATION OF NATURAL, CULTURAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

**(a)(4) Dead wood on the ground may be collected for use as fuel for campfires within the park in the following areas:**

- The collection of wood (downed wood and/or driftwood) is allowed on sandbars along the Neches River and Village Creek for the purpose of campfires associated with backcountry camping.

**((b) Hiking or pedestrian traffic is restricted to the trail or walkway as listed in Section 1.5 of this document.**

- Hiking or pedestrian use of the Pitcher Plant Savannah in the northeastern portion of the Turkey Creek Unit is restricted to the established trail and boardwalk. The posting of appropriate signs in the unit shall indicate this restriction.

**(c)(1), (c)(2) The following fruits, nuts, berries or unoccupied seashells may be gathered by hand for personal use or consumption, in accordance with the noted size, quantity, collection sites and/or use or consumption restrictions:**

- Gathering of fruits, berries, and nuts by hand for personal use or consumption is permitted in the Preserve. Gathering is limited to pawpaw, may haw, wild grape, wild strawberry, wild blueberry, wild huckleberry, blackberry, dew berry, mulberry, walnuts, pecan nuts, and hickory nuts. The

total quantity of edible fruits, berries, or nuts that may be possessed is limited to one quart per person.

*Determination: Limited consumption of these resources does not adversely affect the reproduction of either the plants or the wildlife food source. If future monitoring indicates that such gathering or consumption is likely to cause adverse affects to park resources. then the authorization of this consumptive use will be terminated. Use of these items for any purpose other than personal consumption is specifically prohibited.*

### **36 CFR §2.2 - WILDLIFE PROTECTION**

**(d) The transporting of lawfully taken wildlife through the park is permitted under the following conditions and procedures:**

- The transportation of lawfully taken wildlife through the Preserve will be in accordance with applicable State law.

**(e) The following areas are closed to the viewing of wildlife with the use of an artificial light:**

- The viewing of wildlife with artificial light is prohibited in all portions of the Preserve.

### **36 CFR §2.3 – FISHING**

**(d)(2) Possession or use of live or dead minnows or other bait fish, non-preserved fish eggs or roe is permitted in the following fresh water areas:**

- The possession or use of live or dead minnows or other bait fish, non preserved fish eggs or roe is permitted in all fresh water areas of the Preserve in accordance with the provisions of State law.

### **36 CFR §2.4 – WEAPONS, TRAPS, AND NETS**

**(a)(2)(i) Weapons, traps, or nets may only be carried, possessed or used at the following designated times and locations:**

- Individuals holding a valid Big Thicket Hunting permit may carry .17 and .22 caliber rim fire cartridge rifles while hunting small game and hogs and may carry shot guns, muzzle-loading rifles, and bow and arrows while hunting hogs and other species authorized by the permit, and in accordance with state law.
- Slugs and buckshot may be possessed and/or used only during the deer gun season
- Crossbows are allowed in accordance with State of Texas Regulations
- Firearms must be unloaded (empty chamber and magazine) while crossing an area closed to hunting while traveling to a hunting area.
- Individuals holding a valid Big Thicket Trapping Permit may, for the purpose of trapping fur bearing animals, carry, possess or use in the Preserve not more than an aggregate of 24, unmodified steel leg hold traps, snares, conibear traps or live traps.

### **36 CFR §2.10 – CAMPING and FOOD STORAGE**

**(a) The sites and areas listed below have been designated for camping activities as noted. A permit system has been established for camping activities and conditions for camping and camping activities are in effect as noted:**

Camping in Big Thicket National Preserve is limited to backcountry areas and is subject to the following conditions:

- Permits are required for camping. Permits may be obtained at the Preserve Visitor Center.
- Areas open to camping are designated in portions of the following Preserve units:
  - Lower Neches River Corridor Unit on sandbars and islands
  - Turkey Creek Unit;
  - Village Creek Corridor Unit on sandbars and islands
  - Upper Neches River Corridor Unit on sandbars and islands
- Areas open to camping except during hunting season are designated in portions of the following Preserve units:
  - Beaumont Unit
  - Beech Creek Unit
  - Big Sandy Creek Unit
  - Lance Rosier Unit
  - Neches Bottom and Jack Gore Baygall Unit
- Maps showing approved camping areas are attached as an appendix to this document and are available for public inspection at the Visitor Center and are furnished upon request to the public and to each group receiving a permit for backcountry camping.
- A member of the camping party must obtain a permit in person. No third party representative is authorized to obtain permits unless that person has been issued an Incidental Business Permit, and this activity has been expressly authorized in the license.
- Group size is limited to eight persons.
- Backcountry use is limited to five days per trip.
- Groups must maintain visual and noise separation.
- Campsites must be at least 200 feet from a unit boundary, road, or trail.
- Camping is not allowed in areas posted "DAY USE ONLY," including the Lakeview Sandbar and the sandbar located directly across from Lakeview, and the sandbar at the end of Timber Slough Road.
- Some banks of Village Creek and the Neches River are privately owned – camp on sandbars only along the main watercourses.
- Open fires and charcoal are allowed only on sandbars along the Neches River using driftwood or dead and down timber.
- Camp stove use is allowed Preserve wide.
- All trash and garbage must be packed out.

- Horses (except on the Big Sandy Horse Trail in the Big Sandy Creek Unit) and motorized vehicles are prohibited.
- Bicycles are prohibited on all Preserve trails with the exception of the Big Sandy Horse Trail.
- Possession of glass containers is prohibited on sandbars and water courses along the Neches River, Village Creek, Big Sandy Creek, Menard Creek, and Turkey Creek.
- Possession of firearms and weapons is prohibited while camping unless stored in a manner described in 36 CFR §2.4(b).
- Possession of Firearms and weapons is prohibited in the Preserve at night from one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise, 36 CFR §7.85(d)(2).

**(b)(3) Camping within 25 feet of a fire hydrant or main road, or within 100 feet of a flowing stream, river or body of water is authorized only in the following areas, under the conditions noted:**

- The public is allowed to camp on sandbars (areas below the vegetation line) within 25 feet of the waters edge on the Neches River in the Upper Neches River Corridor Unit, Neches Bottom and Jack Gore Baygall Unit, Lower Neches River Corridor Unit, Village Creek Corridor Unit, and Beaumont Unit.

### **36 CFR §2.11 – PICNICKING**

#### Conditions for Picnicking:

- Burying and/or burning trash is strictly prohibited.

### **36 CFR 2.13 – FIRES**

**(a)(1) The lighting or maintaining of fires is generally prohibited, except as provided for in the following designated areas and/or receptacles, and under the conditions noted:**

#### Designated Areas:

- Sandbars along the Village Creek
- Sandbars along the Neches River

#### Established Conditions for Fires:

- Open fires are allowed only on sandbars along Village Creek and the Neches River.
- Driftwood or dead and downed timber collected in the Preserve may be used in fires.
- Fires must not be left unattended.

**(a)(2) The following restrictions are in effect for the use of stoves or lanterns:**

- Stoves or lanterns used in the preserve may not be left unattended when lit.

**(b) Fires must be extinguished according to the following conditions:**

- Fires must be completely extinguished with charcoal and ashes scattered before leaving an area.

### **36 CFR §2.14 – SANITATION and REFUSE**

**(b) Conditions for the disposal, containerization, or carryout of human body waste have been established as follows:**

- Digging trenches for toilet purposes is prohibited.
- Disposal of human body waste must be at least 25 feet away from any creek bank or trail.
- Buried human waste must be in a hole 6-8 inches in depth. After use the hole must be covered.

### **36 CFR §2.15 – PETS**

**(a)(1) The following structures and/or areas are closed to the possession of pets:**

- Any special event or program open to the public and in
- All areas designated for hunting, trapping, and camping during times established for these activities.

**(a)(5) Pet excrement must be disposed of in accordance with the following conditions:**

- Pet excrement must be picked up and carried out of the Preserve, or disposed of in an appropriate trash receptacle.

**Note:** In accordance with 36CFR 2.15(a)(1), these closures shall not apply to guide dogs accompanying visually-impaired persons or hearing-ear dogs accompanying hearing-impaired persons.

### **36 CFR §2.16 – HORSES and PACK ANIMALS**

**(a) The following animals are designated as pack animals for purposes of transporting equipment:**

- Horses, burros, mules, or other hooved mammals

**(b) The use of horses or pack animals is allowed on the following trails, routes or areas:**

- Big Sandy Horse Trail in the Big Sandy Creek Unit except during the Preserve hunting season.
- Rights-of-way of designated and maintained County and State highways.

**(g) Other conditions concerning the use of horses or pack animals:**

- Horses must be kept under physical control at all times; they may not be left to graze or water unattended.
- Off-trail horseback riding is prohibited.
- Grazing is not permitted. Hay is not permitted in the backcountry due to the likelihood of introducing seeds of exotic grasses.
- Hitch rails, when available, must be used.
- In the absence of hitch rails, horses must be tied to a line strung between trees in such a manner that stock cannot damage tree trunks, tree roots, or other vegetation.
- Tying horses directly to trees is prohibited.

*The General Management Plan for the Preserve includes provisions for a horse trail in the Big Sandy Creek Unit. The Preserve will continue to allow traditional horse use along County roads in the Preserve. Cross-country use is prohibited in order to reduce adverse impacts from grazing, soil and vegetation disturbances from hooves, and introduction of exotic plants through animal wastes.*

### **36 CFR §2.21 – SMOKING**

**(a) The following portions of the park, or all or portions of buildings, structures or facilities are closed to smoking as noted:**

- Smoking is prohibited in all Preserve structures and Government vehicles.

*Employees and Preserve visitors are entitled to a smoke-free environment to prevent involuntary exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke.*

### **36 CFR §2.22 – PROPERTY**

**(a)(2) Property may be left unattended for periods longer than 24 hours in the following areas and under the following conditions:**

- Vehicles and boats may be left unattended in the Preserve in conjunction with use of a valid backcountry camping permit. Such vehicles, boats, and property must be removed from the Preserve prior to expiration of the permit. Vehicles and boats must be described at the time a backcountry permit is obtained.

### **36 CFR §2.35 –ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES and CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES**

**(a)(3)(i) The following public use areas, portions of public use areas, and/or public facilities within the park are closed to consumption of alcoholic beverages, and/or to the possession of a bottle, can or other receptacle containing an alcoholic beverage that is open, or has been opened, or whose seal has been broken or the contents of which have been partially removed:**

- The possession and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages is PROHIBITED in all Day Use Areas listed in Section 1.5 – CLOSURES AND PUBLIC USE LIMITS -- and in all areas designated for hunting and trapping during the seasons established for these activities.

*Determination: All areas listed in Section 1.5 of this document are closed to alcoholic beverages. All of these areas have limited space for parking of vehicles and the space needs to be available for visitors using trails and facilities provided by the Preserve. Other locations are readily available in the vicinity for persons who wish to sit in their vehicles and consume alcoholic beverages. Use of these parking areas as gathering places for alcohol consumption also contributes to vandalism and litter. These areas have been improved to include rest room facilities, picnic tables, and barbecue areas. The National Park Service recognizes that the public has a legitimate right to recreate in these areas. However, many of these recreational use areas have a history of late night parties, which includes the consumption of alcohol and illegal drugs. The history of illegal activities indicates that the public interest is best served by limiting use. As a result, these areas have been closed to the possession and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages. Prohibiting the possession and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages in these areas has not had an impact on legitimate public use of the Preserve.*

### **36 CFR §2.51 – PUBLIC ASSEMBLIES, MEETINGS**

**(e) The following areas/sites are designated as available for public assemblies:**

- The bus parking spaces and the center sidewalk at the Big Thicket Visitor Center parking area, as indicated on the map in appendix A.

### **36 CFR §2.52 – SALE OR DISTRIBUTION OF PRINTED MATTER**

**(e) The following areas/sites are designated as available for the sale or distribution of printed matter:**

- The bus parking spaces and the center sidewalk at the Big Thicket Visitor Center parking area, as indicated on the map in appendix A.

### **36 CFR §3.6 – BOATING OPERATIONS**

(h) The following areas/sites are designated for the launching or recovery of vessels using a trailer:

- Confluence Boat Ramp, Beaumont Unit.
- McQueen's Landing Boat Ramp, Upper Neches River Corridor unit.

Note: the following public and private boat ramps, adjacent to the Preserve, are also available for launching and recovery of vessels using a trailer.

- Hwy 69 Pine Island Bayou Boat ramp, public
- Hwy 96 Village Creek Boat Ramp, public
- Hwy 96 Neches River boat ramp, public
- Chandler's Landing, private
- Johns, Lake, private
- Sheffield Ferry, private

### **36 CFR §3.21 – SWIMMING AND BATHING**

(a)(1) The following areas are closed to swimming and bathing:

- All areas within 100 feet of a designated boat launch facility.

### **36 CFR §4.10 – TRAVEL ON PARK ROADS AND ROUTES**

(a) Park roads open for travel by motor vehicle are those indicated below, and/or as indicated in the following publications:

- Park roads open for public travel are those indicated in the Big Thicket Brochure.

### **36 CFR §4.30 – BICYCLES**

(a) Bicycle use is permitted on park roads, parking areas, and on the following designated routes.

- The Big Sandy Horse Trail in the Big Sandy Creek unit except during hunting season.

*The Big Sandy Creek Unit Horse Trail follows a series of abandoned logging roads that have been heavily impacted during years of private ownership. These roads are now maintained as administrative roads for fire management and other administrative access. The use of horses and bicycles on the Horse Trail have been determined to be compatible uses, and such use is consistent with the Preserve's natural, scenic, and aesthetic values, safety considerations, and management objectives, and will not disturb wildlife or Preserve resources.*

### **36 CFR §7.85 – SPECIAL REGULATIONS, BIG THICKET NATIONAL PRESERVE**

(c) In addition to applicable State licenses or permits a permit from the Superintendent is required for hunting or trapping on Preserve lands.

#### **Hunting permit conditions**

- The hunting season within the Big Thicket National Preserve extends from the opening date of the State of Texas fall hunting season through the second Sunday in January. The extended hog only season extends from January 15, 2007, until February 28, 2007. Deer season ends at the

end of general gun season. The Texas spring hunting season and the special muzzle-loader season are not observed in the Big Thicket National Preserve. Hunting at any other time or in any other manner than prescribed in this set of regulations is prohibited.

- The following game animals and birds may be hunted in the preserve: white-tailed deer, squirrel, rabbit, feral hog, and waterfowl.
- The following items must be in your possession while hunting in the Preserve:
  - Big Thicket Hunting Permit;
  - State of Texas Hunting License;
  - Driver's License or an official personal identification certificate issued by a State department of public safety or similar State agency authorized to issue a driver's license;
  - Appropriate State and/or Federal stamps;
  - Texas Hunter Safety Course Certification (if required). All hunters who are Age 17 and older and whose date of birth is on or after September 2, 1971, must have successfully completed the Texas Hunter Safety Course to hunt in the State of Texas. All hunters who are Age 12 through 16 must have successfully completed a hunter education course or be accompanied by a licensed hunter 17 years of age or older. All hunters who are under 12 years of age must be accompanied by a licensed permitted hunter 17 years of age or older.
- Persons who are 12 years of age or younger by October 1 of the fall hunting season are not required to have a permit, but they must be in the immediate control of a licensed permitted hunter Age 17 or older.
- Each hunter must place a copy of the Big Thicket Hunting Permit on the dashboard of the vehicle from which he/she is hunting so that it can be read from outside the vehicle. Hunters who will be hunting in the Neches Bottom and Jack Gore Baygall Unit and Beaumont Unit hunting areas will be issued a special boat permit. This permit must be left in the boat from which they are hunting in a waterproof container attached to the vessel in plain view.
- Possession or consumption of an alcoholic beverage while in a unit open to hunting is prohibited.
- Hunter Orange or International Orange must be worn and visible at all times while hunting in the Preserve. All hunters are required to wear a minimum of 400 square inches of Hunter Orange or International Orange while in designated hunting areas. The exception is waterfowl hunters when stationary in their waterfowl blinds.
- Hunters may hunt in the "hunting area" as shown on the enclosed unit map; however, they may not hunt within 500 feet of any designated trail, roadway, residence, or any navigable waterway (Neches River, Pine Island Bayou, and/or LNVA Canal).
- Flagging, any marking device, or any other method of marking is prohibited
- Hunters must carry out all trash, including empty shotgun shells. Only field dressing of game is allowed within the Preserve
- Hunters may park vehicles along roads or in designated parking areas but may not block gates or roads.

- Hunters are required to return a Big Thicket Harvest Card at the end of the hunting season. Hunters that do not return a Harvest Card will be ineligible to receive a hunting permit for the following season.

*The superintendent has determined that the listed hunting permit conditions are necessary to provide for the safety of the public, the protection of the flora and fauna of the Preserve, effective administration and management of the Preserve, and to provide for the public use and enjoyment of the Preserve.*

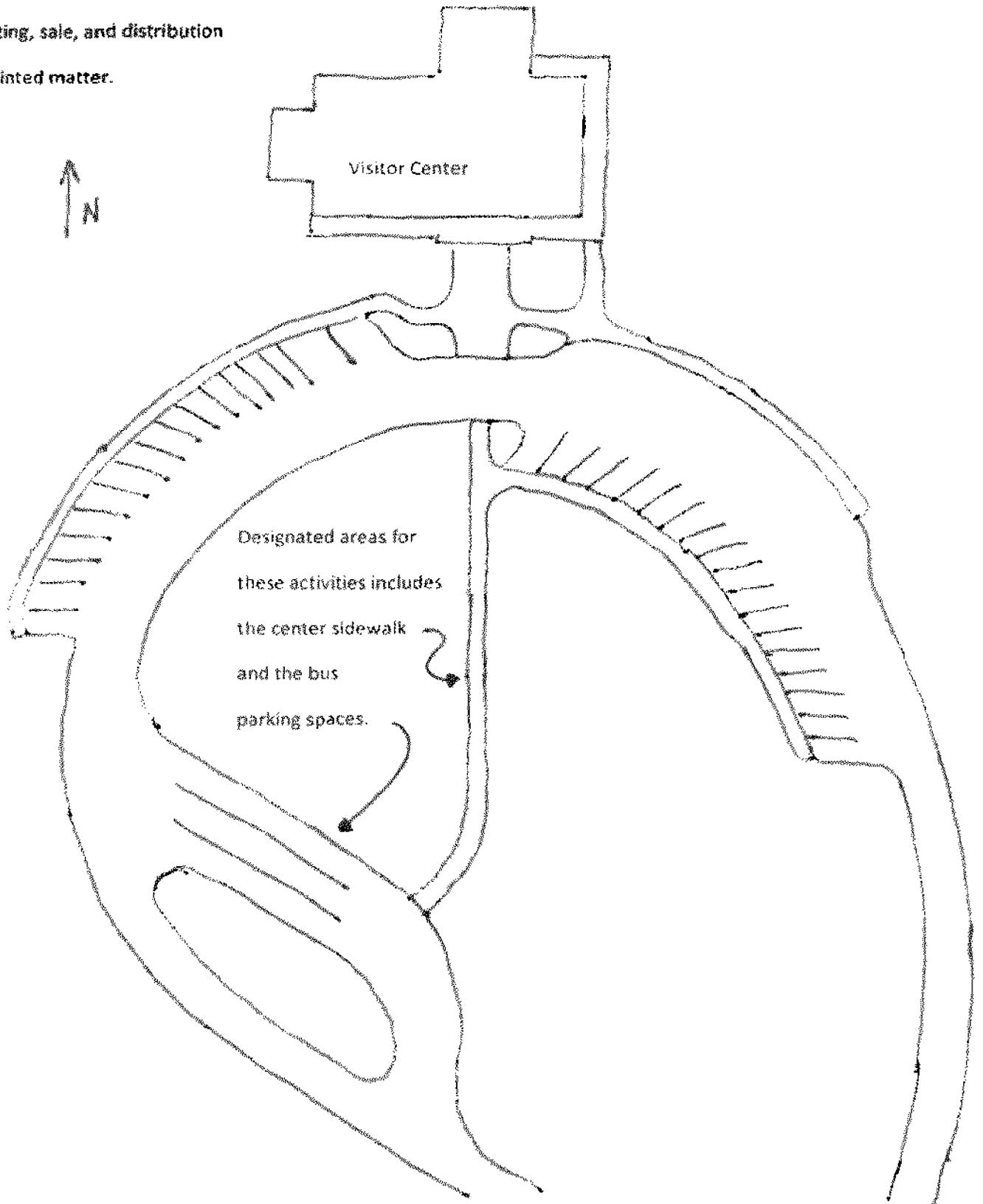
#### Trapping permit conditions

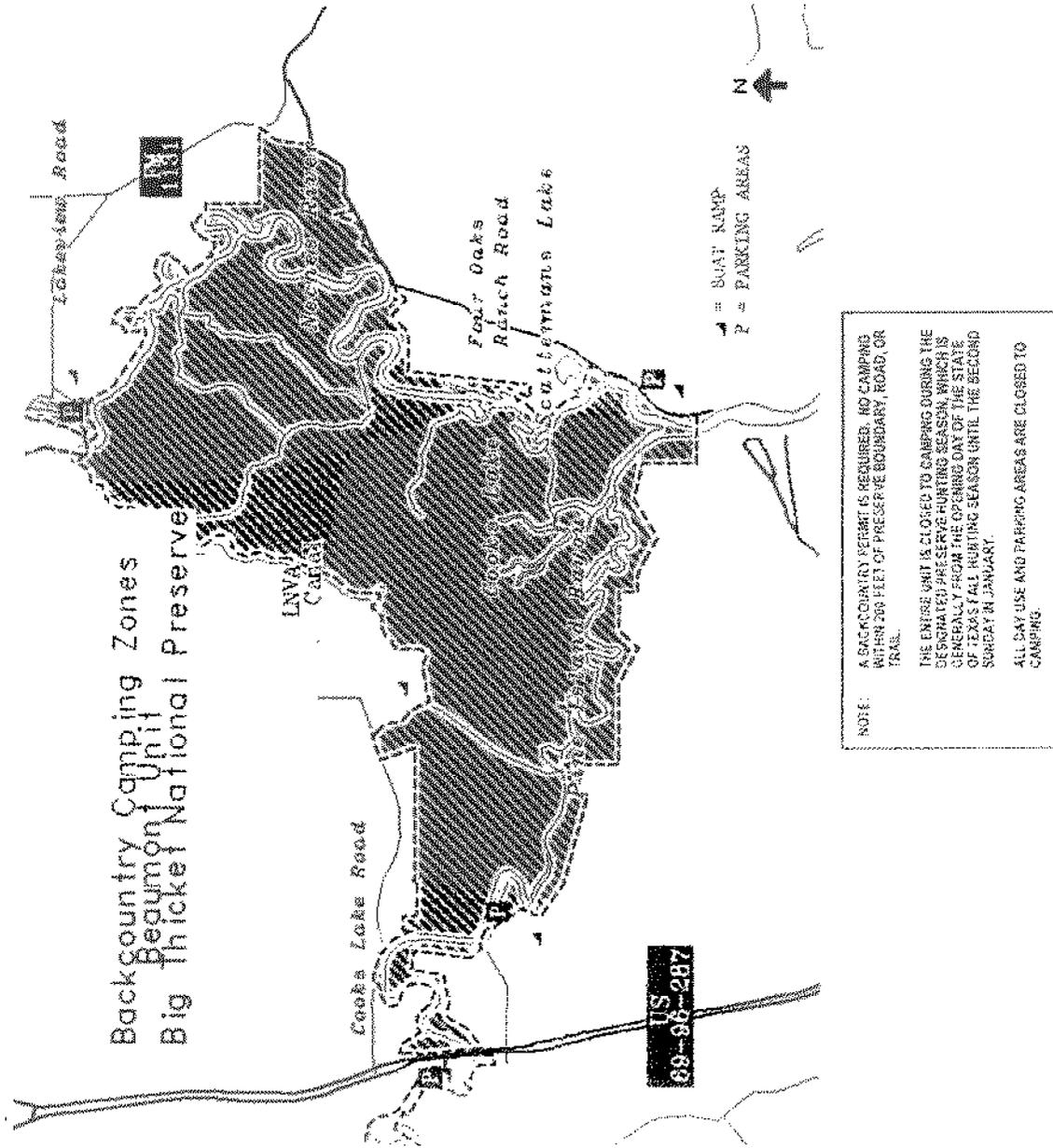
- The trapping seasons in Big Thicket National Preserve are December 1 in a given year through January 31 of the following year.
- The following fur bearing animals may be trapped in the preserve: badger, beaver, civet cat, grey fox, red fox, mink, muskrat, nutria, opossum, otter, raccoon, ring-tailed cat, striped skunk, and spotted skunk.
- *Trapping is limited to the trapping area as indicated on maps provided with the trapping permits. Preserve boundaries are marked with National Park Service boundary signs and/or with yellow paint on trees. Trapping areas are bounded by a combination of pipelines, flag lines, and Preserve boundaries. Trapping outside of the designated area within the unit is strictly prohibited.*
- *Trappers may trap in the trapping area as shown on the map provided with the permit; however, trapping is prohibited within 500 feet of any designated trail, roadway, residence, or any navigable waterway (Neches River, Pine Island Bayou, and/or LNVA Canal).*
- *Traps may not be set on old logging trails, pipelines, or abandoned roads.*
- *The use of a handgun to kill a fur-bearing animal caught in a trap is strictly prohibited. A .17 or .22 caliber rim-fire rifle may be used for such purposes. Larger caliber rifles are not permitted. A rifle may only be loaded while actually in the act of killing a trapped animal.*
- *Traps must be checked at least every 36 hours for captured animals*
- The following items must be in your possession while trapping in the Preserve:
  - *Big Thicket Trapping Permit;*
  - *State of Texas Trapping License;*
  - *Driver's License or an official personal identification certificate issued by a State department of public safety or similar State agency authorized to issue a driver's license;*
- *Persons who are 12 years of age or younger by October 1 of the fall hunting season are not required to have a permit, but they must be in the immediate control of a licensed permitted hunter Age 17 or older.*
- *Each trapper must place a copy of the Big Thicket trapping Permit on the dashboard of the vehicle so that it can be read from outside the vehicle. Trappers who use a boat must leave a boat display copy of their permit in the boat in a waterproof container attached to the vessel in plain view.*
- *All traps must be legibly tagged or inscribed in some fashion to show trapper's name.*

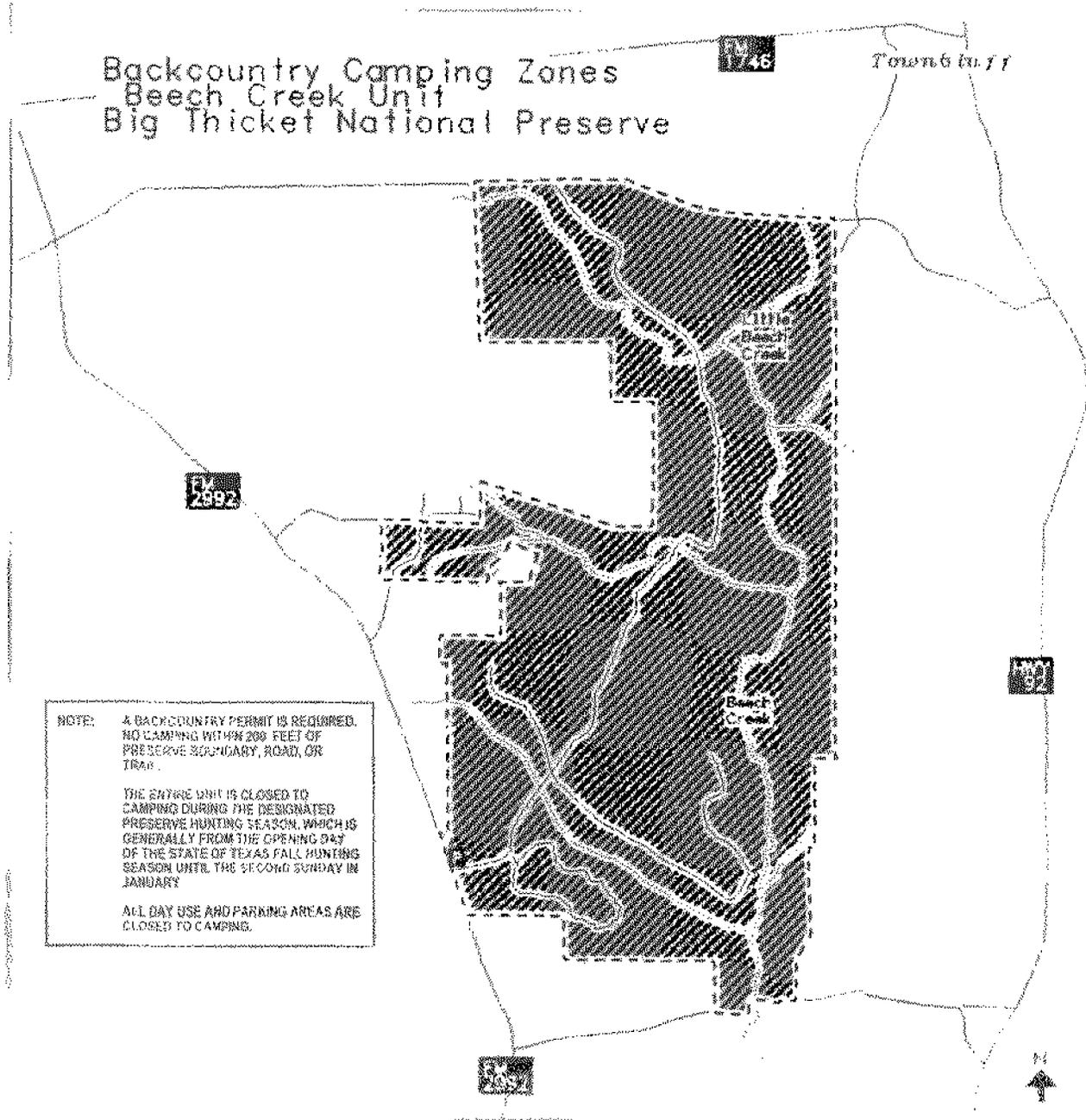
- *All trappers are required to wear 400 square inches of "Hunter's Orange" or "International Orange" while trapping in the Preserve.*
- *Trappers may park vehicles along roads or in designated parking areas but may not block gates or roads.*
- *Trappers are required to return a Big Thicket Harvest Card at the end of the trapping season. Trappers that do not return a Harvest Card will be ineligible to receive a trapping permit for the following season.*

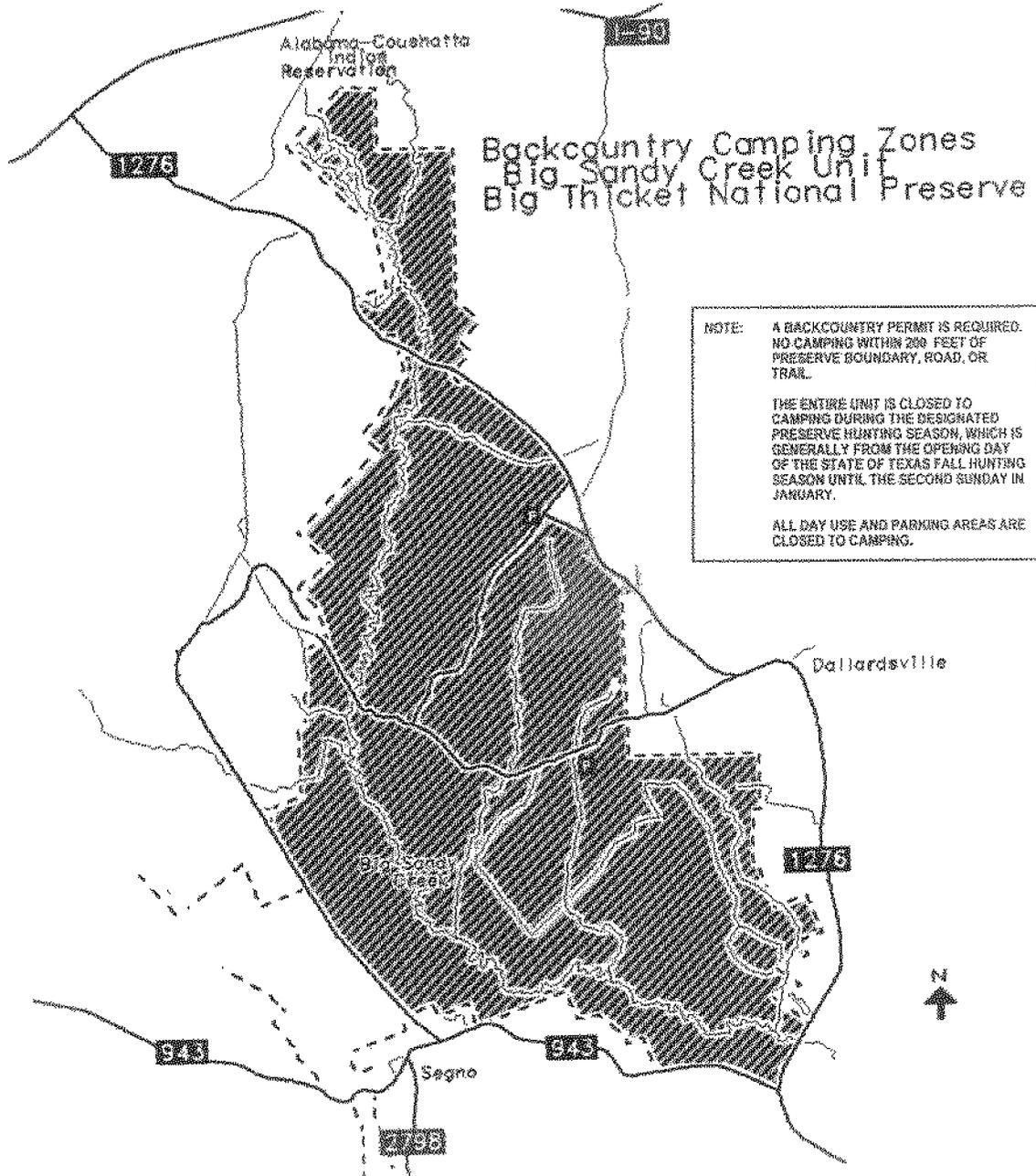
*Determination: The superintendent has determined that the listed trapping permit conditions are necessary to provide for the safety of the public, the protection of the flora and fauna of the Preserve, effective administration and management of the Preserve, and to provide for the public use and enjoyment of the Preserve.*

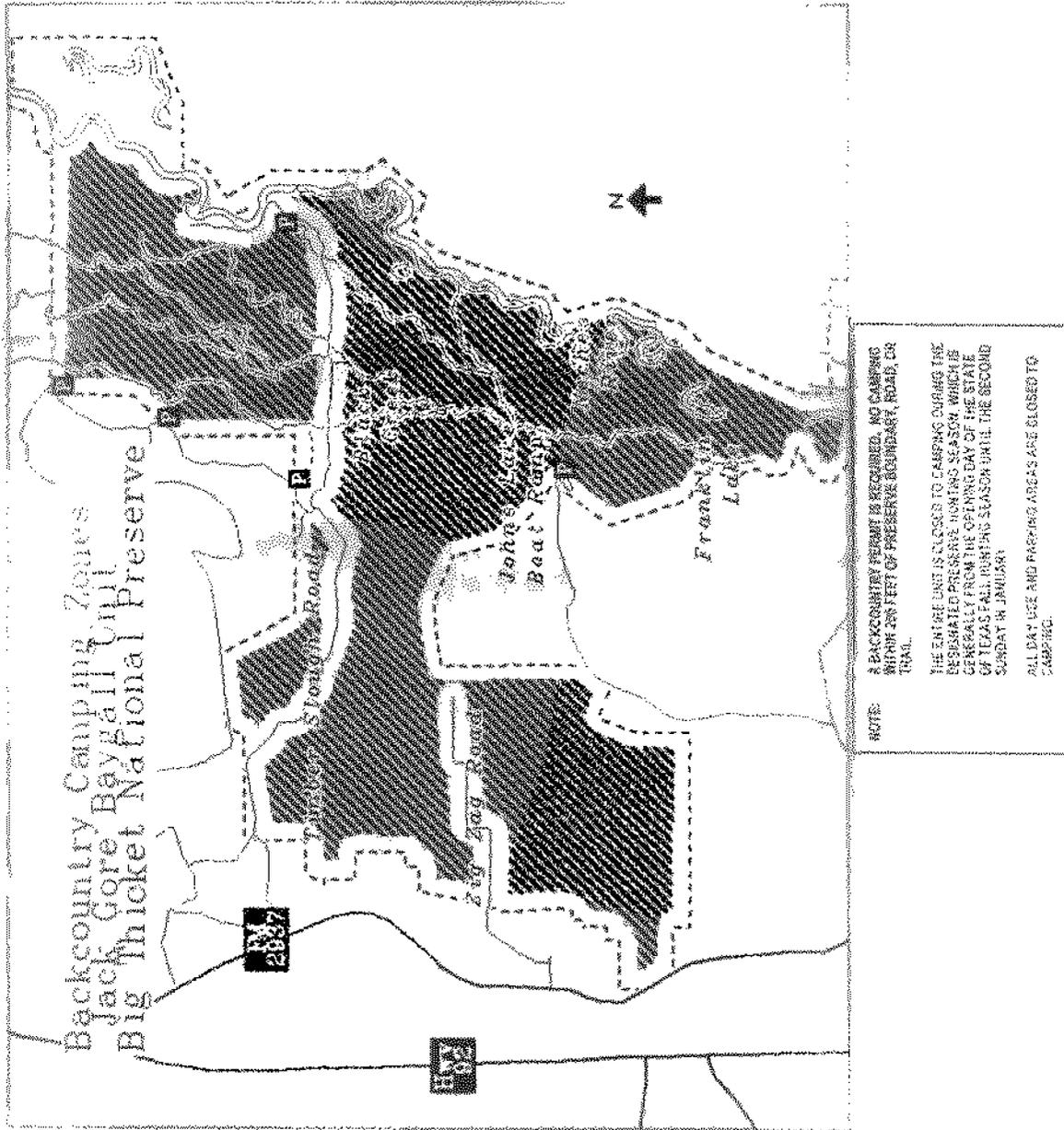
Designated area for public assembly,  
meeting, sale, and distribution  
of printed matter.

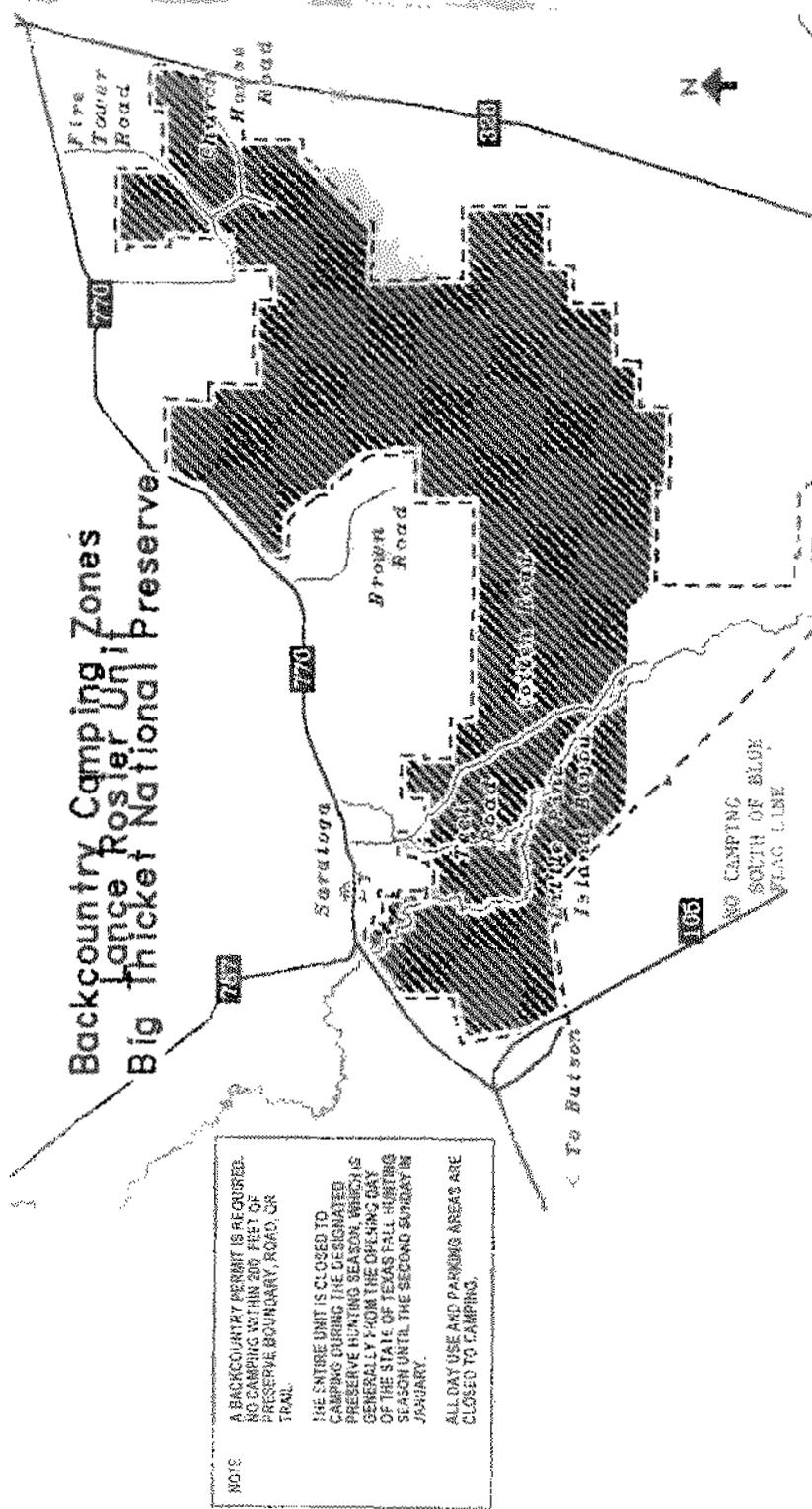




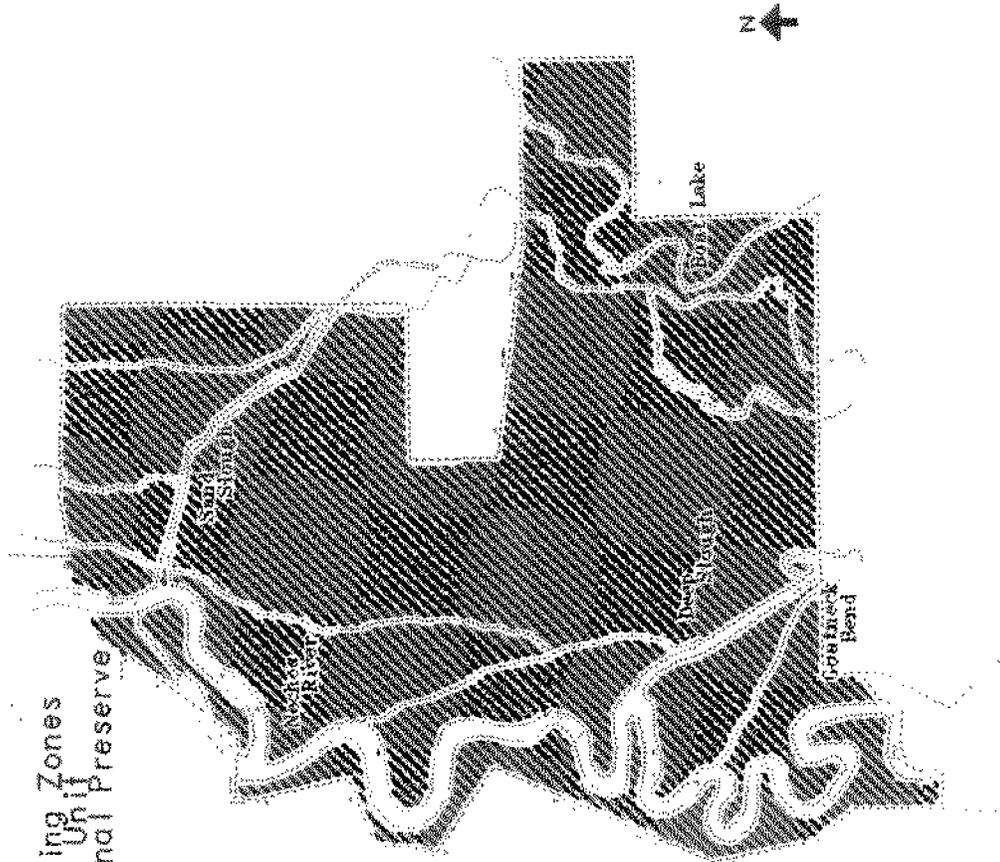








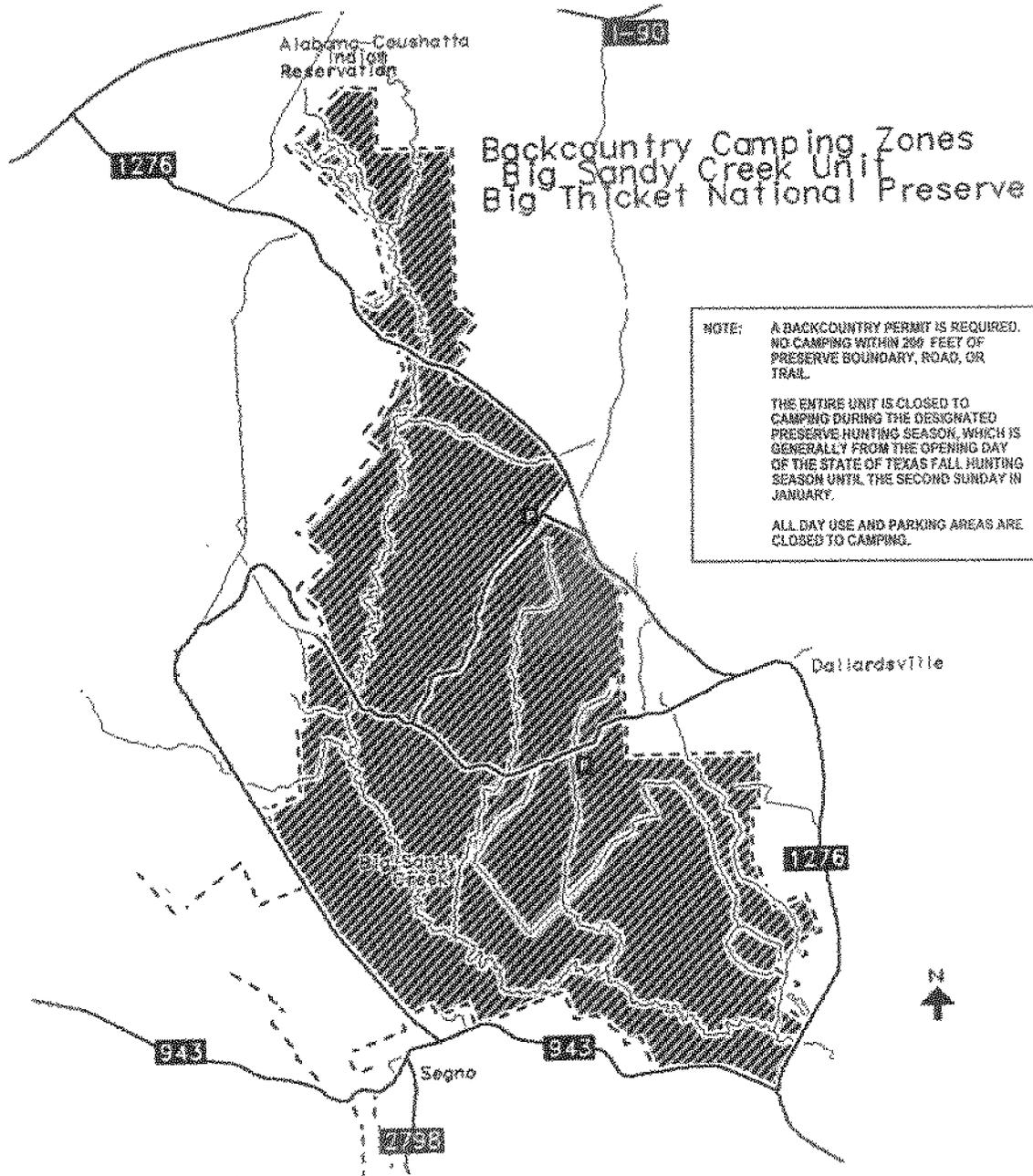
Backcountry Camping Zones  
Neches Bottom Unit  
Big Thicket National Preserve

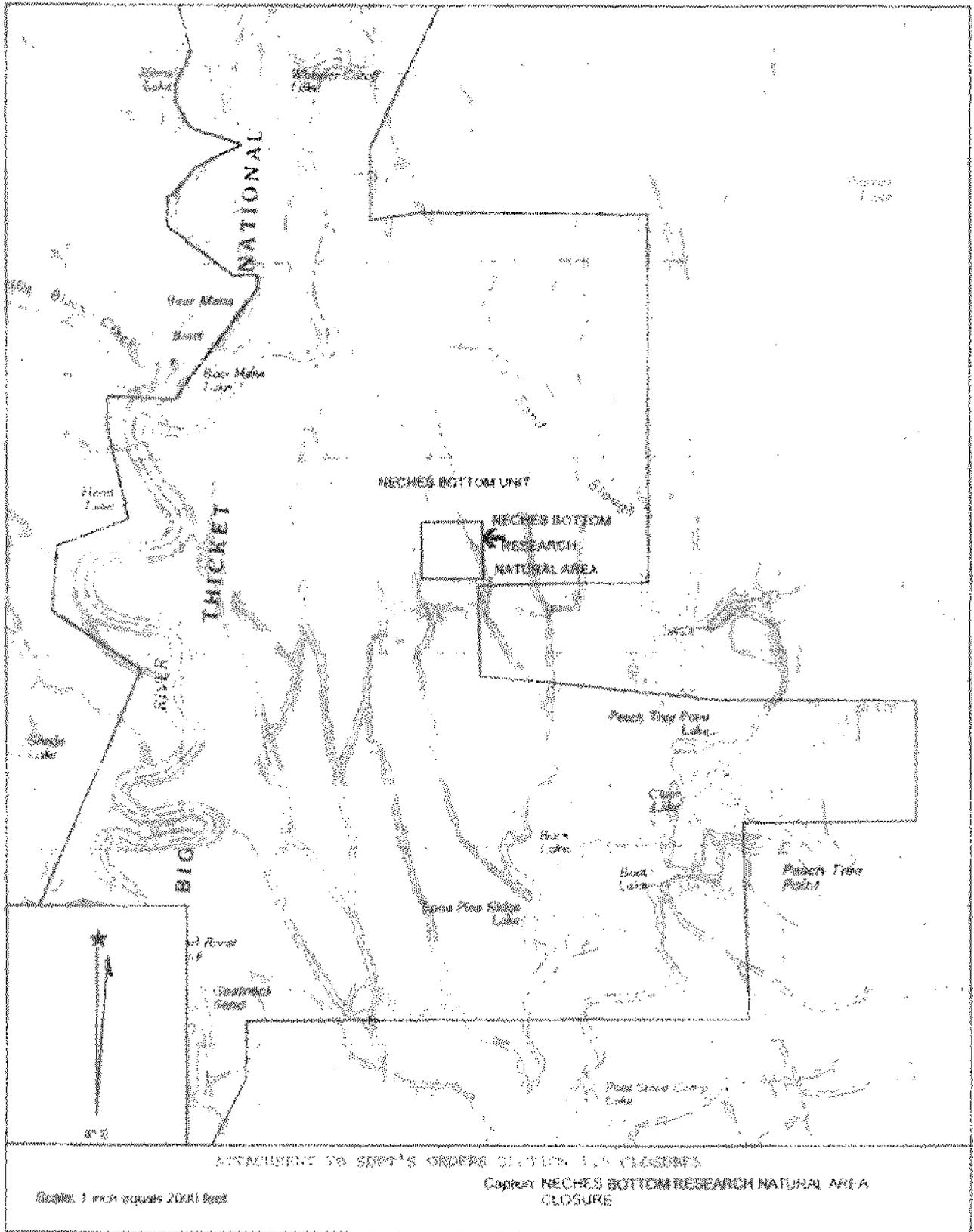


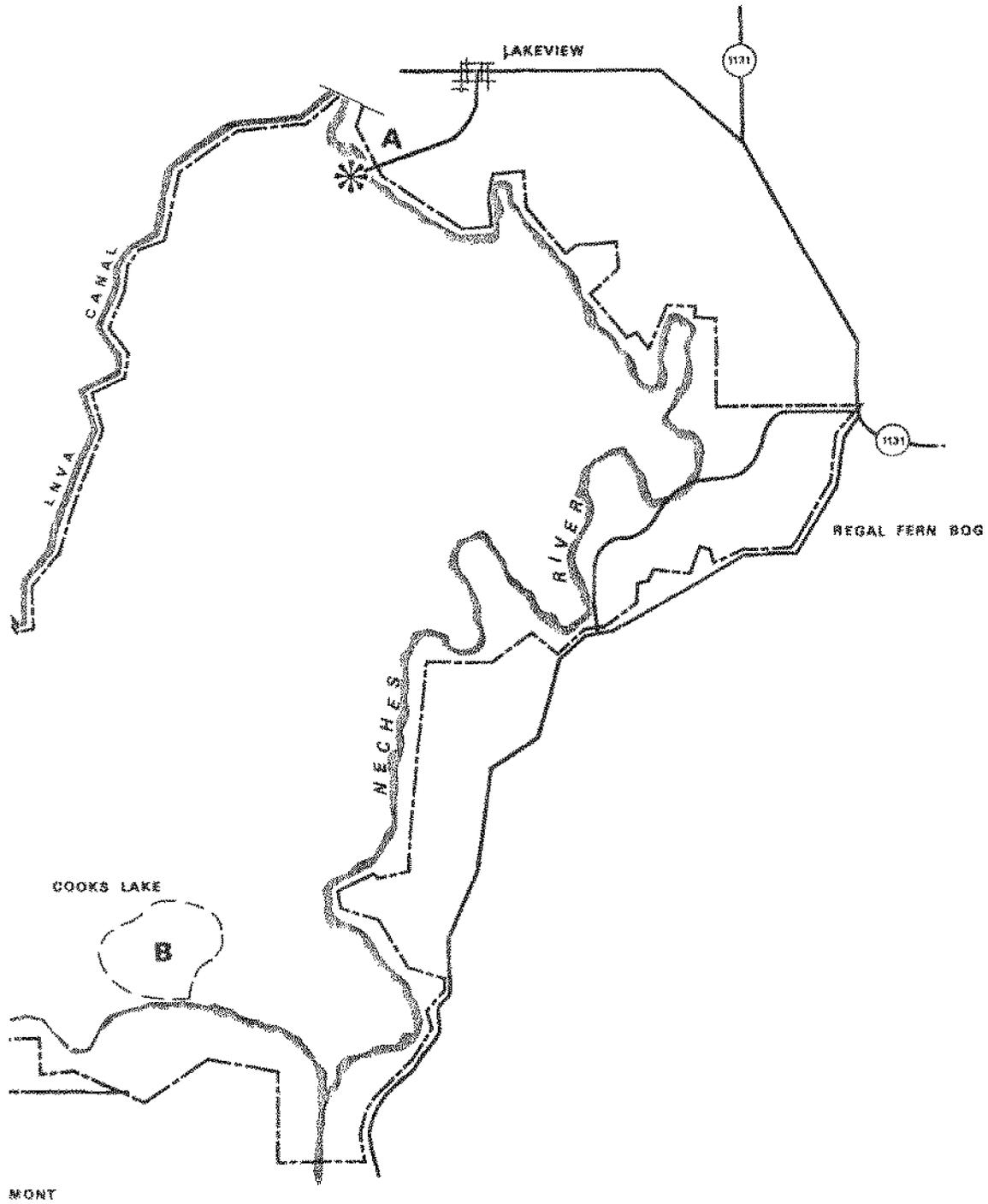
NOTE: A BACKCOUNTRY PERMIT IS REQUIRED. NO CAMPING WITHIN 200 FEET OF PRESERVE BOUNDARY, ROAD, OR TRAIL.

THE ENTIRE UNIT IS CLOSED TO CAMPING DURING THE DESIGNATED PRESERVE HUNTING SEASON, WHICH IS GENERALLY FROM THE OPENING DAY OF THE STATE OF TEXAS BULL HUNTING SEASON UNTIL THE SECOND SUNDAY IN JANUARY.

ALL DAY USE AND PARKING AREAS ARE CLOSED TO CAMPING.







*Regal Fern Bog  
Research Natural Area  
Closure*