

# MAXWELL-McPHERSON

McPherson State Fishing Lake and Maxwell Wildlife Refuge are located in McPherson County, six miles north of Canton, Kansas. The

refuge consists of 2,254 acres of rolling native prairie owned and managed for wildlife by the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism. Constructed in 1954,

McPherson State Fishing Lake has 46 surface acres of water. Surrounding the lake are 260 acres of campground and public use area.

## FISHING AND BOATING

The lake is characterized by a steep rocky shoreline towards the dam and shallow mud flats on the upper end. Water clarity is usually good, supporting fair to excellent populations of channel catfish, black bullhead, black crappie, redear sunfish, bluegill, and largemouth bass.

A boat launching facility is located in the main use area on the west side of the lake. Boating on McPherson State Fishing Lake is for fishing only. Skiing and pleasure boating are prohibited. Shore anglers will find several fishing piers that provide access to deep water.

## MAXWELL WILDLIFE REFUGE

In 1943, the estate of Henry Irving Maxwell, a McPherson businessman, began purchasing land for the purpose of creating a wildlife refuge. In 1944, 2,560 acres were deeded to what is now the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism.

After fencing and corrals were constructed, seven buffalo cows and three bulls were obtained in 1951 from the

Wichita Mountains (Okla.) National Wildlife Refuge to form the nucleus of the Maxwell herd. Today, the Maxwell herd averages about 200 animals.

Elk were also introduced at Maxwell in 1951. Today, the elk herd on the refuge averages about 50 animals. Elk are shy and harder to spot than bison, but the best times to observe them are late evening or early morning.

## BISON

At their peak, there were 60-75 million bison in North America. The plains bison was the subspecies prevalent in Kansas. Mature plains bison bulls generally weigh 1,600 to 1,900 pounds, but some individuals may weigh more than a ton. Adult bulls stand five to six feet tall at the shoulder. Cows generally weigh 900 to 1,200 pounds and stand about five feet tall.

In winter, both sexes are covered with a thick, wooly coat of dark brown hair, with longer and darker hair on their heads and forequarters. After shedding their heavy winter coats in the spring, long hair remains on the animal's head, forelegs, and hump, and a short, thin summer coat covers the rest of its body.

Bison are wild animals and must be given the respect due to an animal of their size and strength.

## PRAIRIE ELK

Elk once occurred throughout Kansas, but they were extirpated from the state by the early 1900s.

Elk belong to the deer family (Cervidae). They prefer grass, but they can subsist on forbs and woody vegetation.

Males have large antlers that are shed each year in March or April. The new antlers have a velvet covering that is shed in late August. The breeding season occurs in the fall. At this time, males gather females in harems. Males have territorial calls known as bugles, which are most often heard at night.

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism maintains herds of American plains bison and elk under as natural conditions as possible, keeping with the current land-use demands, ensuring that an important part of our state's natural heritage will not disappear from this portion of the Great Plains.

## LAKE FACILITIES

Pit toilets, fire rings/grills, and picnic tables are available for use by picnickers, campers, and fishermen who wish to stay overnight.

A self-guided nature trail is open year-round on the southwestern corner of the lake. The trail is mowed and well marked. Brochures for the trail are available at the trail head. Only pedestrians are allowed on the trail; no horses, mountain bikes, etc. are allowed.

## THINGS TO REMEMBER

Vehicles are permitted on maintained roads and parking lots. No vehicles are allowed on fishing piers.

Primitive camping is permitted, but please take your trash with you.

Consult area information signs for additional rules and regulations.



General Area Map

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs described herein is available to all individuals without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, political affiliation, and military or veteran status. Complaints of discrimination should be sent to Office of the Secretary, Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, 1020 S Kansas Ave., Topeka, KS 66612-1327. 07/12

# Maxwell Wildlife Refuge & McPherson State Fishing Lake



Maxwell Wildlife Refuge  
2577 Pueblo Rd.  
Canton, KS 67248

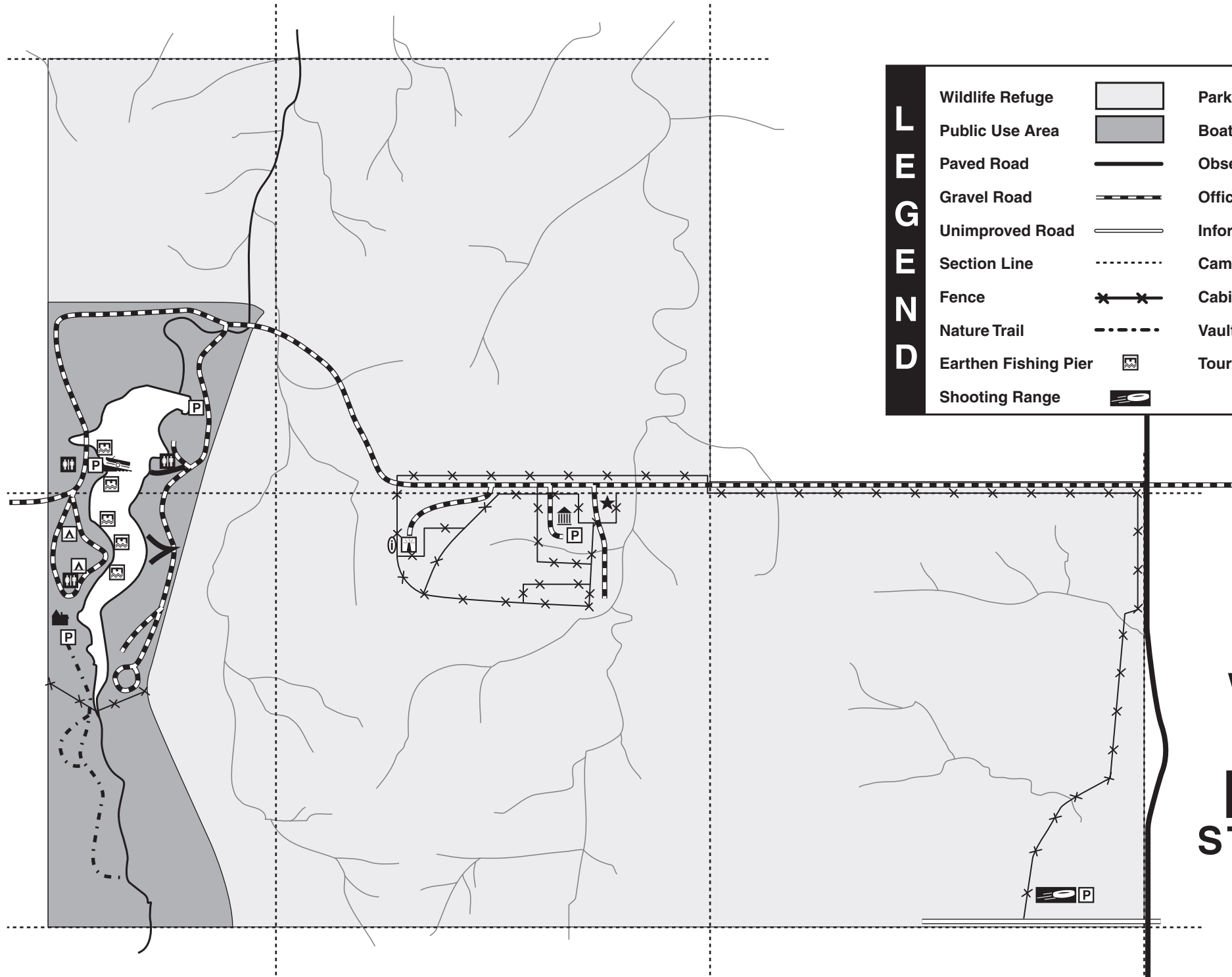
(Area Office)  
(620) 628-4592

(Regional Office)  
(620) 683-8069

(TOURS)  
(620) 628-4455

www.ksoutdoors.com





<b>L E G E N D</b>	Wildlife Refuge		Parking	
	Public Use Area		Boat Ramp	
	Paved Road		Observation Tower	
	Gravel Road		Office	
	Unimproved Road		Information Shelter	
	Section Line		Camping Area, Primitive	
	Fence		Cabin Camping	
	Nature Trail		Vault Toilet	
	Earthen Fishing Pier		Tour Center	
	Shooting Range			



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STATE FISHING LAKE**