

# Lake Ophelia National Wildlife Refuge



Established in 1988, and named for Lake Ophelia, the Lake Ophelia National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) spans some 17,500 acres in Avoyelles Parish. Made up of bottomland forest, cropland, wetlands, lakes, and bayous not cleared for agriculture during the 1930's, this refuge provides habitat for deer, small game, waterfowl and migratory birds. Today, Lake Ophelia NWR is open to the public for day-use activities that include wildlife observation, hunting, fishing, and hiking.

When the US Fish and Wildlife Service contracted Moore Planning Group, LLC (MPG) to create the Lake Ophelia Comprehensive Management Plan in 1997, the design intent was to provide the refuge manager with a sound document that would serve as a guide for managing this wildlife area.

MPG used a team approach and sought input at public meetings. Additionally, MPG also worked with the US Fish and Wildlife Service to establish plan vision and objectives. The final Master Plan included the following objectives:

- Provide wintering habitat for migratory birds, particularly waterfowl.
- Provide a habitat for threatened and endangered fish and wildlife.
- Restore and protect habitats capable of supporting a high diversity of native fish and wildlife.
- Provide opportunities for compatible fish and wildlife-oriented education and recreation.

Implementing the Master Plan allowed the Lake Ophelia National Wildlife Refuge to become “one of the finest examples of high quality wildlife and waterfowl habitats in the Lower Mississippi Valley.”