

Rocky Bayou

AQUATIC PRESERVE

"Rocky Bayou Aquatic Preserve provides the visitors and residents of northwest Florida an exceptional water resource for recreational fishing and boating, in addition to hiking along its forested coastline."

Shelley Alexander, Aquatic Preserve Manager

Key Accomplishments

- The aquatic preserve staff work closely with Fred Gannon Rocky Bayou State Park to provide educational material to the general public and preserve/park visitor. A kiosk displaying aquatic related material is located within the park. The display offers a variety of information on subjects such as marine debris, water quality, steephead ravines, fish identification, boating safety and other as needed material to inform visitors about the area and value add to their experience .



Stormwater pond adjacent to preserve

Project Spotlight

Nonpoint Source Pollution Reduction

A partnership led by the Northwest Florida Coastal Aquatic Managed Area office using Project NEMO (Nonpoint Source



Educational kiosk

Education for Municipal Officials) will provide to stakeholders of Rocky Bayou resources to address water quality. The strategy of Project NEMO will be used to focus on the cumulative effects that stormwater, septic tanks, lawn maintenance, recreational motor boat activities and bayou circulation patterns have on the Rocky Bayou Aquatic Preserve. Partners

will include the City of Niceville, Okaloosa County Health Department, Northwest Florida District DEP watershed office, Jackson Guard of Eglin AFB, Fred Gannon Rocky Bayou State Park, Northwest Florida National Estuarine Research Center, Northwest Florida Water Management District and Florida Sea Grant.

Rocky Bayou Aquatic Preserve



Location:

Okaloosa County

Acreage:

640 acres of sovereign submerged lands



Local Contact:

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Aquatic Preserve Facts:

- Rocky Bayou is a fresh to brackish water system bordered by Fred Gannon Rocky Bayou State Park popular for camping, kayaking, fishing and hiking.
- Rocky Creek and East Turkey Creek are two of only six streams, within the Choctawhatchee Bay system, that support the endangered Okaloosa darter fish. Several steephead streams also characterize the watershed contributing to Rocky Bayou.
- The preserve provides food and habitat for numerous fish and wildlife, and several designated species such as the osprey and bald eagles are known to nest within the preserve.



Fishing in Fred Gannon Rocky Bayou State Park



Rocky Bayou shoreline



Osprey along forested shoreline of the preserve



Residential docks along Rocky Bayou preserve



Rocky Bayou State Park abuts the preserve



Hiking trail along forested shoreline of aquatic preserve



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