

# Lavaca-Navidad River Authority



## PARKS AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN

2011 - 2021

December 2010

Project No. 8369



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 General

The Lavaca-Navidad River Authority (“Authority” or “LNRA”) has developed this Parks and Open Space Master Plan for the years 2011-2021. The Authority currently owns and operates the Brackenridge Recreation Complex which includes Brackenridge Park and Campground and the Brackenridge Main Events Center located east of the City of Edna along the shores of Lake Texana. The Authority also owns and operates the Mustang Wilderness Campground, a primitive campground located on Mustang Creek near the City of Ganado, and a day-use area on SH 111 just west of Lake Texana. Other recreational facilities on or adjacent to Lake Texana include Lake Texana State Park on SH 111 east of Edna, which is operated by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Camp Mauritz, a Boy Scout camp above Lake Texana located off Sandy’s Creek is owned by Jackson County and operated by the Authority. Finally, eight boat ramps scattered around the Lake are owned and operated by the Authority. A General Location Map included as **Figure 1** shows the location of the Authority, surrounding area, and recreational areas discussed in this Plan. The purpose of this plan is to identify opportunities for the expansion and improvement of the recreational facilities owned and operated by the Authority, and how the other existing recreational facilities may be connected to these facilities or developed independently.

### 1.2 Role of the Authority

In an effort to facilitate future recreation development on LNRA owned and leased property, the Authority has assumed the role of planner, coordinator, and developer of their parks and open space. The efforts of the Authority detailed in this Master Plan demonstrate that the Authority has taken on and embraced all of these roles to facilitate the development of parks and open space areas within its jurisdictional boundaries so that all of its residents of the Jackson County and surrounding communities can regularly utilize and enjoy.

### 1.3 Authority Profile

The Authority (called Jackson County Flood Control District until 1969) was the local sponsor of the Palmetto Bend Dam and Reservoir Project (A Federal Bureau of Reclamation Project in Jackson County, Texas). The Congress of the United States authorized the Palmetto Bend Reclamation Project in October, 1968 (P.L. 90-562; 82 Stat. 999), and by a later action changed the name of the reservoir to Lake Texana.

All of the permitted water of Lake Texana is under contract. The Authority’s largest customers are the City of Corpus Christi, Formosa Plastics Corporation, Inteplast Corporation, Calhoun County Navigation District, and the City of Point Comfort.

By terms of these water supply contracts, the entities pay their proportionate percentage of the Authority's general operations and maintenance (O&M) budget, 100% of the Water Delivery System O&M Budget, and payments for project debt service in accordance with the repayment schedule to the United States.

## 1.4 Existing Recreation Facilities

The Authority presently operates and maintains the Lake Texana reservoir and the surrounding land and recreation facilities. These facilities include:

- two (2) campgrounds (Brackenridge Park and Campground, and the Mustang Wilderness Campground)
- a public day use picnic and playground facility
- Brackenridge Main Events Center; a covered events center with seating for 2,500
- over 100 RV/camp sites
- eight (8) public boat ramps
- fishing areas
- birding observation areas
- marina, boat slips, fish cleaning areas
- rental cabins: five (5) fully furnished, two-bedroom units
- nine-hole miniature golf course
- 19 miles of equestrian and hike/bike trails
- elevated gazebo and picnic areas with BBQ grills
- softball, soccer, basketball, volleyball fields, paintball course with concession stand and restroom.

Ten percent (10%) of the gross revenues from the annual LNRA General Fund budget are dedicated to operations and maintenance of these recreational facilities, and for planning and expansion.

A third campground on the Lake is operated by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department: Lake Texana State Park. The property is leased from the Authority.

The Authority has also leased a camping facility located on the northern portion of Lake Texana above the U.S. Highway 59 bridge. This property is owned by Jackson County and was acquired from the South Texas Council Boy Scouts of America and is named “Camp Mauritz”.

## 1.5 Previous Recreation Improvements

Since 2002, ten percent (10%) of the gross revenues from the annual LNRA General Fund budget have supported operations and maintenance of Brackenridge Park and Campground as well as to fund plans such as this one. Capital Funds to support project development are derived from the sale of “interruptible water” sold to the City of Corpus Christi. These funds are used as matching funds to support grants and donations.

The Authority has undertaken several projects in recent years to improve the Park’s facilities in the spirit of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department’s (TPWD) 2010 Resource Conservation and Recreation Plan. Recent projects include:

- Developing a Parks and Open Space Master Plan 2002 – 2007
- Securing a TPWD trail grant to build about 6.5 miles of equestrian and hike/bike trails in 2004
- Securing a TPWD outdoor recreation grant to acquire parkland, construct the Brackenridge Main Events Center, soccer fields, baseball field, picnic tables, RV sites,

birding observation area, the paintball course, and miscellaneous other improvements in 2005.

## 1.6 Population and Service Area

The Authority's jurisdictional area encompasses the entirety of the 857 square miles of Jackson County, which is considered to be a rural Texas county. According to the 2000 Census, Jackson County had a population of 14,391 persons. The Census Bureau estimates that the 2009 population for Jackson County is 14,274 persons. Realistically, it should be noted that the service area for entire Brackenridge recreation complex is larger than the Authority's jurisdictional boundaries as residents of adjacent counties also use the Authority's facilities. The entire Brackenridge recreation complex also hosts regional events such as rodeos, special shows, concerts, and festivals. However, for the purposes of the Master Plan, the Authority boundaries of Jackson County and the Plan's service area are considered to be the same. Up to date population numbers are currently being collected during the 2010 census.

Population projects are made by the Texas Water Development Board, and are summarized below in **Table 1**.

**Table 1**  
**Population Estimate and Projections**

County	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
Jackson	15,441	16,515	17,183	17,567	17,713	17,716

Source: <http://www.twdb.state.tx.us/DATA/popwaterdemand/2006Projections/Population/2CountyPopulation2007.pdf>

## 1.7 Socio-Economic Data

Referring again to the 2000 Census, the following socio-economic data was collected for Jackson County:

- Number of people in the labor force (population 16 and older): 6,353 (58.1% of Jackson County)
- Median household income in 1999: \$35,254
- Median family income in 1999: \$42,066
- Per capita income in 1999: \$16,693
- Families below the poverty level: 484 (12.2%)
- Individuals below the poverty level: 2,074 (14.7%)
- Population age 25 or older with high school diploma or higher: 6,747 (72.7%)
- Population age 25 or older with Bachelor's degree or higher: 1,185 (12.8%)
- Population foreign born: 690 (4.8%)
- Population age 5 or older that speaks a language other than English at home: 2,544 (19.0%)

## 1.8 Demographics

Referring again to the 2000 Census, the following demographic data was collected for Jackson County:

- Average household size: 2.65 persons
- Average family size: 3.15 persons
- Male population: 7,076 (49.2%)
- Female population: 7,315 (50.8%)
- Median age: 37.3 years
- Population under 5 years old: 1,022 (7.1%)
- Population 18 years and over: 10,448 (72.6%)
- Population 65 years and over: 2,295 (15.9%)
- One race: 14,047 (97.6%)
  - White: 11,008 (76.5%)
  - African American: 1,099 (7.6%)
  - American Indian: 56 (0.4%)
  - Asian: 56 (0.4%)
  - Native Hawaiian: 8 (0.1%)
  - Some other race: 1,820 (15.6%)
  - Hispanic or Latino (of any race): 3,551 (24.7%)
- Total housing units: 6,545
- Vacant housing units: 1,209 (18.5%)

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## 2.0 PLANNING, GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES

### 2.1 General

The development of a local Parks and Open Space Master Plan should be undertaken with a clear understanding of what the purpose of the Plan is, what process should be used in the development of the Plan, and how the Plan is to be updated. The Plan should be a reflection of the priorities of the community it is designed to serve and should be an aid for use in identifying existing and potential future resources that could be used to implement the Plan, developing standards to measure the effectiveness of the Plan, and establishing a process for updating the Plan to reflect changes in the community or the accomplishment of certain parts of the Plan.

A highly effective process in the development of such a Plan is the use of a public Recreation Advisory Committee and a Board of Director's Recreation, Fish, and Wildlife Committee. These Committees consist of members appointed by the Authority's Board of Directors to assist the consultant in the development of the Plan, and to present the draft plan for the Board's review. The role of the consultant should be as a resource to the Board and the Committees to effectively facilitate the development of the Plan in a timely manner. At that point, if the process has worked effectively, the Authority's Board of Directors will have a document that reflects the Board's priorities for park and open space development.

### 2.2 Planning Process

The basic planning process used in the development of this Parks and Open Space Master Plan included the following steps:

1. The Board of Directors decides to develop a Master Parks and Open Space Plan which can be approved by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.
2. The Board of Directors appoints a Recreation Advisory Committee comprised of members of the community and a Recreation, Fish, and Wildlife Committee comprised of three board members to work on the development of the Plan for review by the entire Board of Directors.
3. The Committees meet with the consultant to identify general activities that could be part of a park program including activity centers, open space and other potential park and recreational resources.
4. Activities and resources are analyzed by the consultant and presented to the Committees for further discussion. The Committees meet and share the ideas and results.
5. Goals, objectives, strategies and priorities are established for the Plan using data from the consensus of the Committees.

Establishing goals, objectives, strategies and priorities are the most critical aspects of the Plan. They form the basis for communicating with the public and assisting in the decision making process for allocating resources. The goals, objectives, strategies and priorities can be used to provide a blueprint for park acquisition, development and maintenance of the facilities. For the purposes of establishing the goals, objectives, and priorities it is suggested that the following definitions be used as a guide in the development of these recommendations:

**Goal –**

A goal is an expression of what the Authority wishes to achieve for Brackenridge Park and adjacent recreational areas. It should be general in nature and not detail the specific actions that need to be achieved to accomplish the goal.

*Example:*

*Increase visitation rates to Brackenridge Park and Campground during the winter off-season.*

**Objectives –**

Objectives can be described as the milestones that need to be accomplished in order to realize the stated goal.

*Examples:*

*Acquire equipment for additional activities.*

*Develop a site plan.*

*Construct a swimming pool.*

**Priorities –**

Objectives need to be prioritized in order to allocate resources and develop implementation strategies to accomplish the objectives.

*Examples:**Priority 1*

*Acquire property for a neighborhood park.*

*Priority 2*

*Develop site plan*

**Implementation Strategies –**

Implementation Strategies are the details on how to accomplish the objectives.

*Examples:*

*Identify land for parks/open space and develop financial plan for acquisition*

*Identify potential partners and solicit their participation.*

Experience has shown that these are the building blocks for the successful development and implementation of a park planning process that addresses the recreational needs of the community, as well as establishing a planning process that can measure results and create a Plan that is flexible and responsive to the changing needs of the community.

## 2.3 Goals

The following goal statements are not listed in priority order, rather, it is the consensus of the Recreation Advisory Committee and Recreation, Fish, and Wildlife Committee that they represent general community values with respect to park and recreation amenities:

- Provide diverse park and recreational opportunities for the community.
- Increase usage of the park during winter months.
- Connect the multiple recreational facilities in the area via trails and waterways.
- Provide facilities that will address the needs for all age groups within Jackson County and adjacent communities.
- Support outdoor recreational opportunities.
- Develop facilities that will educate and motivate residents to increase their understanding and appreciation of the local environment and natural resources.
- Maximize the use of existing public rights of way and resources for park and recreational opportunities.
- Coordinate and cooperate with private property owners to expand local park and recreational opportunities.
- Link parks, schools, and other public spaces.

## 2.4 Objectives

The following objectives reflect the actions that can be accomplished by the Authority in the short term and whose results are measurable:

- Identify public and private property that is available for park development and open space use.
- Work with other political subdivisions and private groups to develop recreational opportunities that are complementary and cost effective.
- Develop linkages between local schools, parks, and other recreational opportunities.
- Develop facilities that will provide educational and environmental opportunities in the community.

- Provide facilities that meet or exceeds the expectations of the users.
- Provide recreational opportunities for residents in the community so that residents don't have to travel to other areas to have access to recreational opportunities.

## 2.5 Strategies

The strategies are specific actions that can accomplish the objectives of the Plan. They should be specific in nature and provide guidelines on how to implement the objectives. The following are strategies that can be utilized by the Authority to accomplish its objectives.

- Identify sources of funding for the acquisition and development of parks and open space for community use.
- Work with developers and other private groups to identify potential opportunities for joint development of park and recreational projects.
- Identify property that could be obtained by the Authority for development of parks and open space.
- Identify public and private property that could be used for park and recreational purposes and identify the permitting and/or other requirements necessary to use the property for park and recreational purposes.
- Identify ways of connecting existing public and private parks through greenbelt linkages, kayak trails, and/or other means of connecting the facilities.
- Identify sustainability of natural and water resources
- Work with local schools and other organizations to assess the potential opportunities for educational and environmental programs associated with the development of parks and open space.

## 2.6 Priorities

Priorities were established by the Committee by using sub-committees that identified both activities and facilities that were needed over the next ten years to meet the goals and objectives of the Master Plan. The three sub-committees developed a list of activities and facilities and after voting by all members a series of priorities were developed. It is anticipated that many of the activities and facilities may be a public-private ventures that would facilitate both the construction and operations and maintenance of the facilities. The following is a discussion of the proposed activities and facility priorities developed by the committee.

### Activities

The activities that were identified included using existing facilities and partnering with local sponsors to develop greater opportunities for users of LNRA facilities. The activities are divided into five general areas and it is anticipated that they will be implemented over the 10 year planning period:

1. Improve hunting and fishing opportunities
2. Increase park activities at the Brackenridge Park and Campground
3. Expand outdoor education activities
4. Provide assistance to local communities to improve non-LNRA parks
5. Explore funding options to increase energy efficiency and for resource education

Specific activities for each of these areas include:

#### 1. Improve Hunting and Fishing Activities

- Working with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department restock game fish in Lake Texana.
- Promote both youth and adult fishing tournaments with both public and private sponsors.
- Working with local schools and other educational institutions to create youth training camps for different age groups, along with youth at risk.
- Increase public access for hunting opportunities that include deer, feral pig, waterfowl, and upland bird, and provide outlets for donating meat to local food banks.
- Construct a shooting facility for rifle and shotguns.

#### 2. Increase Park Activities

- Provide and host a variety of activities that attract and retain winter visitors from outside Jackson County.
- Construct an aquatic center to provide water recreation for children age 2 to 13
- Contract with a private vender to provide golf cart rentals for use by visitors to the Brackenridge Park and Campground.
- Contract with private vender to provide guided boat tours.
- Develop a golf course facility

### 3. Expand Outdoor Education

- Promote art shows/farmers market days.
- Promote ecotourism such as wildlife photography and bird watching.
- Develop interpretive exhibits that focus on native plants and animal species.

### 4. Provide Assistance to Local Communities to Improve non-LNRA Parks

- Provide technical assistance to local communities in planning and development of local parks.
- Provide in-kind assistance in the development of park and open space opportunities.

### 5. Explore funding options to increase energy efficiency and for resource education

- Assess the potential for obtaining grant funding to replace existing facilities to improve energy efficiency and achieve conservation goals.
- Work with partners to find funding that would support natural resource educational activities.

#### Facilities

Many of the facilities that were identified by the sub-committees include phasing the development for both budgetary and operations concerns. The phasing of the improvements is divided into five-year periods for implementation. In order to develop priorities for the plan the Committee focused on those projects and facilities identified in the 2011-2016 time period. It is anticipated that the priorities will be re-examined on an annual basis to reflect what has been accomplished and update the plan accordingly. Specific facility priorities for the 2016-2021 time-frame were not considered since they will be affected by the implementation of the earlier period priorities. **Table 2** lists the different short-term and long-term priorities for the 2011-2016 and 2016-2021 time-frames.

**Table 2**  
**Short-Term and Long-Term Priorities**

Phase 1: 2011-2016	Phase 2: 2016-2021
<p><b>Aquatic Center</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various splash park features for ages 2-13</li> <li>• Provide water rides</li> </ul>	<p><b>Aquatic Center</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construct a heated, indoor swimming pool and provide therapy facilities for seniors</li> </ul>
<p><b>Trail Improvements and Expansion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand the hike/bike trail system by 25,000 feet</li> <li>• Upgrade support facilities for equestrian trails including portable horse stalls that can be used at multiple locations</li> <li>• Develop kayak and canoe trails between the various parks and campgrounds</li> </ul>	<p><b>Trail Improvements and Expansion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect Brackenridge Park and Campground and the Brackenridge Main Events Center with the State Park</li> <li>• Expand the hike/bike trail system by 25,000 additional feet</li> </ul>
<p><b>Provide Diversity of Activity Centers at the Authority’s Facilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convert camping/RV facilities from partial to full hook-ups</li> <li>• Convert basketball court to a covered pavilion</li> <li>• Construct a new basketball court</li> <li>• Develop a Ropes Course at Camp Mauritz, along with two (2) comfort stations, boat dock/ramp, and improved archery/rifle facilities</li> <li>• Expand mini golf from 9 to 18 holes</li> </ul>	<p><b>Provide Diversity of Activity Centers at the Brackenridge Park and Campground</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop “senior” oriented outdoor activity centers</li> <li>• Expand marina to include jet ski facilities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Boat Docks and Ramps</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve and expand existing boat ramps, docks and add support facilities</li> <li>• Construct a dock, boat ramp and support facilities at the small lake at Camp Mauritz</li> </ul>	<p><b>Boat Docks and Ramps</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop additional boat docks, ramps and support facilities in areas that do not currently have a boat ramp</li> </ul>
<p><b>Upgrades to the Main Events Center</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquire portable horse stalls and improve equestrian trails</li> <li>• Enclose the Main Events Center, install HVAC, and upgrade the Public Address system</li> </ul>	<p><b>Upgrades to the Main Events Center</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create civic center and exhibit center facilities that can accommodate large gatherings</li> </ul>
<p><b>Shooting Sports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an outdoor shooting sports facility on LNRA property including a pistol and rifle range, skeet range, restroom, and support facilities (Possibly at Simons Road Boat Ramp #1)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Shooting Sports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand rifle and shotgun shooting sports facilities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Golf Course</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with local interests to identify potential public-private partnerships to own/operate existing courses</li> </ul>	<p><b>Golf Course</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine the potential of developing a golf course on LNRA property</li> </ul>

In summary, the following priorities have been identified by the Recreation Advisory Committee and Recreation, Fish, and Wildlife Committee for the 2011-2021 LNRA Parks and Open Space Master Plan:

1. Aquatic Center: Phase 1 construction of a splash park with features for children age 2 to 13.
2. Provide Diversity of Activity Centers at the Brackenridge Park and Campground
3. Trail Improvements and Expansion
4. Boat Docks and Ramps
5. Upgrades to the Brackenridge Main Events Center
6. Shooting Sports: Rifle and Shotgun Facilities
7. Golf Course

After reviewing the priorities identified by the Committees, the Authority's consultant (Naismith Engineering, Inc.) recommends that the priorities be rearranged in order to qualify for maximum grant funding:

1. Upgrade campsites/RV sites at the Main Events Center from Partial to Full Hook-Ups and Acquire Portable Horse Stalls
2. Trail Improvements and Expansion
3. Provide Diversity of Activity Centers at the Brackenridge Park and Campground: Convert the Basketball Court to a Covered Pavilion, and Expand the Mini Golf Course from 9 to 18 Holes
4. Aquatic Center: Phase 1 construction of a splash park with features for children age 2 to 13.
5. Shooting Sports: Rifle and Shotgun Facilities
6. Upgrades to the Brackenridge Main Events Center
7. Boat Docks and Ramps
8. Golf Course

### 3.0 PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

#### 3.1 General

Development of a Parks and Open Space Master Plan that is reflective of the community's vision and desires requires commitment from all those people involved in the planning process. The Authority understood from the beginning the importance of a high-level of public involvement throughout the planning process. The Authority's Board of Directors appointed a Recreation Advisory Committee to represent the local residents during the planning for park and open space development, and to work with the consultant to ensure that the Master Plan developed was reflective of the resident's wishes.

#### 3.2 Methodology

The Recreation Advisory Committee led the Authority's efforts in developing the Master Plan. The Committee solicited public input during scheduled meetings and through the development. Based on the input received, the Recreation Advisory Committee used the information to guide its efforts during the development of the Master Plan.

#### 3.3 Public Meetings

The Recreation Advisory Committee held a series of four meetings during the initial development of the plan. The meetings allowed an opportunity for the Recreation Advisory Committee to provide input to the consultant on the intended focus of the Master Plan. Each of the Recreation Advisory Committee's meetings were open to the general public, and allowed an opportunity for public input at this critical stage of plan development. The Recreation Advisory Committee has scheduled two additional meetings prior to finalization of the Master Plan and submission of the grant application to TPWD.

## 4.0 AREA FACILITY CONCEPTS AND STANDARDS

### 4.1 General

Determining the need for park and recreation facilities requires defining the area and population to be served by the facilities. Generalized park standards, which define appropriate types and sizes of facilities, must also be applied to the service area and be refined based on community input and available resources. In developing these standards for parks, recreation and open space facilities the National Recreation and Park Association were used as a guide for planning purposes.

### 4.2 Population and Service Area

The Authority's jurisdictional area encompasses the entirety of the 857 square miles of Jackson County, which is considered to be a rural Texas county. According to the 2000 Census, Jackson County had a population of 14,391 persons. The Census Bureau estimates that the 2009 population for Jackson County is 14,274 persons. Realistically, it should be noted that the service area for Brackenridge recreation complex is larger than the Authority's jurisdictional boundaries as residents of adjacent counties also use the Authority's facilities. The Brackenridge recreation complex also hosts regional events such as rodeos, special shows, concerts, and festivals. However, for the purposes of the Master Plan, the Authority boundaries of Jackson County and the Plan's service area are considered to be the same. Up to date population numbers are currently being collected during the 2010 census.

### 4.3 Facility Standards

National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) standards were used as a guide for planning purposes for the HCMUD 179 park system. These standards were applied to the estimated 2020 population for the Authority. **Table 3** lists Park Standards as developed by the NRPA. These are recommended park standards that are often the desired standards, but cannot be attained by many communities due to lack of financial resources and/or availability of property suitable for park and open space development.

**Table 3  
Park Standards\***

Park Type	Description	Service Area	Recommended Size	Acres/ 1000 Pop	Desirable Location
Pocket Park (a.k.a., Mini-Park)	Small area with special focus, such as serving tots, handicapped, or senior citizens	Less than ¼ mile from users	1 ac. or less	Depends on special population, approx. ¼ - ½ ac.	Near served population
Neighborhood	Area for active recreational uses such as play fields, sport courts, playscapes, picnic areas, etc...	¼ - ½ mile radius (walking distance), up to a population of 5,000	< 15 ac.	1 – 2 ac.	Centered within neighborhood; near schools; safe walking & bike access
Community	Intense recreational uses, such as athletic complexes, swimming pools	1 – 2 mile radius; population 5,000-10,000	25 – 40 acres or larger	5 – 8 ac.	On collector or arterial level roads; away from neighborhoods
Special Use	Natural resources based area	Community wide	Varies	n/a	At unique natural resource (e.g., karst)
Greenbelt	System for recreational travel; links parks, neighborhoods, schools, etc...	Varies	Width is critical	Varies	Along creeks, utility easements, or other public land
Regional/ Metropolitan Park	Large facility with variety of recreational opportunities, both organized and otherwise	Several communities (up to 1 hour drive)	200+ acres	5 – 10 ac.	Contiguous to natural resources

\* - based on the National Recreation and Parks Association’s standards of 1990

## 5.0 INVENTORY OF AREAS AND FACILITIES

In order to better assess the current and future needs for park and open space development, it is important that an inventory and assessment of existing park and open space facilities be conducted for the proposed service area. The information gathered from such an undertaking can then be used to guide the overall, long-term plan for park and open space development. The information collected during this facilities inventory has been summarized below. Photographs of components of the inventory are included in the Appendix.

### 5.1 Inventory of LNRA Existing Parks and Facilities

**Brackenridge Park and Campground** (located on the western shore of Lake Texana, south of SH 111)

As of October 2010, the following facilities and amenities are present (see **Figure 2**):

- Sixteen (16) pull-through RV/camp sites with water and electricity, a picnic table, BBQ grill, and ground fire-ring
- Thirty-seven (37) RV/camp sites with electricity, a picnic table, BBQ grill, and ground fire-ring
- Eighty-three (83) RV/camp sites with water and electricity, a picnic table, BBQ grill, and ground-fire ring
- Four (4) air-conditioned comfort stations: small, ADA compliant buildings with restrooms, showers, and sinks
- Five (5) cabins with double beds, fold-out couch, furnished kitchens and bathrooms, picnic table, and BBQ grill
- A covered meeting pavilion with picnic tables
- Three (3) playground areas each with a swing-set, monkey-bar set, and bench
- Two (2) climbing toys
- One (1) concrete basketball court
- One (1) volleyball court
- One (1) soccer field
- One (1) baseball/softball field
- One (1) restroom, concession stand, dance floor structure adjacent to playing fields

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- Three (3) metal seating bleachers and three (3) picnic tables
  - One (1) paint ball course, approximately 900-feet by 500-feet with about one dozen obstacles, with perimeter netting
  - A 9-hole mini golf course
  - A lighted 5.2-mile hike and bike trail
  - A jet-ski dock bulkhead
  - Eight (8) two-lane boat ramps (one at Brackenridge Park, seven other scattered around Lake Texana)
  - One (1) fishing pier
  - Five (5) exposed boat slips
  - Eighteen (18) covered boat slips
  - One (1) fish cleaning station with water and electricity
  - A restaurant/concessions building
  - One (1) elevated, ADA compliant gazebo with six (6) picnic tables
  - One (1) buoyed swimming/wading area
  - Three (3) RV dump sites
  - Two (2) water wells
  - One (1) 50,000 gallon per day wastewater treatment plant
  - A historic church, cemetery, homestead site, and cistern

**Brackenridge Main Events Center** (located on SH 111, west of Lake Texana)

As of October 2010, the following facilities and amenities are present (see **Figure 3**):

- A covered arena and meeting area with seating for 2,500 people
- One (1) 8-acre fishing pond with two (2) piers, five (5) picnic tables with BBQ grills, one (1) swing set, one (1) monkey-bar set, and a nature trail with signs describing local wildlife

- An outdoor rodeo area with lights, bleachers, public address system, and enclosed booth
- An approximately 12-mile round-trip equestrian trail with five (5) scattered picnic tables, a trailhead, warm-up arena, metal pens, and two (2) benches
- Fifty four (54) RV sites with electricity
- A large parking area

**Mustang Wilderness Campground** (located off of FM 2982 near Ganado on the east side of Lake Texana)

As of October 2010, the following facilities and amenities are present (See **Figure 4**):

- Twenty nine (29) cleared primitive campsites with fire-rings
- A water supply system with well shed and spigots
- A single restroom, shower, and sink building

**Day-Use Area** (located on SH 111, west of Lake Texana)

As of October 2010, the following facilities and amenities are present (See **Figure 5**):

- One (1) volleyball court
- One (1) basketball court
- Five (5) covered picnic tables with BBQ grills
- A 9-hole disc golf course
- One (1) swing-set
- One (1) monkey-bar set

**Camp Mauritz** (located north of Ganado on Jackson County Road 256)

As of October 2010, the following facilities and amenities are present (See **Figure 6**):

- Ten (10) cleared primitive campsites with fire-rings and seating logs
- One (1) kitchen/dining hall/pavilion building
- One (1) training center building
- One (1) archery/small rifle range
- One (1) ladies latrine

- One (1) men's latrine
- Twenty (12) canoes on a trailer
- A storage area and ranger cabin

**Boat Ramps** (various locations across Lake Texanan)

As of October 2010, eight boat ramps and parking lots are available for public use. (See **Figure 1**)

## 6.0 NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND IDENTIFICATION

### 6.1 Methodology

The Recreation Advisory Committee's approach to assessing the needs of the Authority's residents for park facilities and open space was a mixture of a demand-based approach and a resource-based approach. The Committee carefully considered the input received during public comment periods. The Committee then considered what resources were available to the Authority and used this knowledge, along with the public input information, to assess and identify the needs of the Authority.

### 6.2 Assessment

Expanding the recreational resources of the facilities owned and managed by the Authority was of primary importance to neighborhood residents. Providing recreational opportunities during winter months and alluring non-residents of Jackson County to new and existing facilities was also of importance. The Authority owns significant amounts of land to locate new facilities. Furthermore, increasing community participation can identify activities that will achieve the goals of increased park activity.

### 6.3 Identification

For the Authority to be able to adequately address the above needs it will require funds for design and construction of new facilities and recreation equipment. Grant funding sources, private donations, and gross revenues from the annual LNRA General Fund budget will be used to fund recreational improvements.

## 7.0 PROPOSED PARKS AND OPEN SPACE FACILITIES

Based on the priorities established in this Master Plan and the availability of funds, park and recreational development will be divided into two phases. The Phase 1 development would be constructed between 2011 and 2016. Phase 2 development would be between 2016 and 2021.

### 7.1 Phase 1: 2011 - 2016

The Phase 1 project will include improvements to existing facilities and construction of new facilities. Proposed locations of the improvements are shown on aerial photographs of the Authority's facilities on **Figure 7** through **Figure 11**.

**Aquatic Center: Phase 1 Splash Park:** Splash Park features and prices range significantly based on the needs of the community. A basic Splash Park would contain around three vertical water features with six to eight ground sprays over an area of about 2,500 square feet with a cost of about \$150,000. This type of facility would use treated water and direct the runoff for irrigation purposes such that a filtration system is not needed, along with the associated operations and maintenance. If a filtration system is required or desired, the additional costs would be between \$150,000 and \$175,000. Higher end Splash Parks would have six to eight quality vertical features, slides, and possibly nautical or pirate themes. Such parks can range in cost from \$300,000 to \$1,500,000.

**Hike and Bike Trail:** Hike and bike trails will be extended through the forests and clearing of the Authority's property. Current construction costs for such trails are about \$35 per foot.

#### **Provide Diversity of Activity Centers**

Convert the basketball court to a covered pavilion: Estimated cost: \$15,000

Construct a new basketball court: Estimated cost: \$20,000

Expand the mini golf course from 9 to 18 holes: Estimated cost: \$25,000

**Acquire Portable Horse Stalls:** Portable horse stalls can be used at the Main Events Center, the outdoor rodeo arena, and at the equestrian trail. Portable stalls cost around \$1,200 each.

**Convert Camping/RV Facilities from Partial to Full Hook-Ups:** Improvements would provide water, electricity to numerous campsites, as well as sewage dump facilities. Estimated cost: \$48,000.

**Enclose the Main Events Center, Install HVAC, and Upgrade the Public Address System:** A recent estimate to make these upgrades to the Main Events Center was about \$250,000.

**Golf Course:** Initial efforts would involve working with local interests to identify potential public-private partnerships to own/operate a golf course, potentially on land leased from the Authority. Initial costs would be minimal, as the Authority itself is not constructing new facilities.

**Ropes Course:** Ropes courses can range significantly in cost depending on the number and type of features desired. A reasonable range is between about \$60,000 and \$100,000. A prime location for a ropes course would be Camp Mauritz.

**Camp Mauritz Upgrades:** To increase the comfort level of Camp Mauritz users, upgrades to the infrastructure are necessary. Improvements could include two new comfort stations, upgrades to the water distribution system, and installation of a wastewater treatment system. An estimated cost for infrastructure upgrades is \$260,000. Additional improvements could include upgrades to the archery/shooting facilities (\$10,000) and construction of a boat dock and ramp (\$20,000).

**Shooting Sports Facility:** A prime location for a shooting sports facility and restroom is at the Simons Road Boat Ramp #1, located on the southeastern side of the lake. For safety and environmental reasons, the facility would require careful design and planning, and must meet the requirements of such facilities outlined by the National Rifle Association. See the Appendix for photos of the possible location of a facility, and **Figure 11**. Estimated construction costs range from \$150,000 to \$500,000.

Costs are estimated and totaled below:

1.Aquatic Center: Splash Park for ages 2 – 13	\$ 150,000 - \$1,500,000
2.Expand the hike and bike trail system (25,000 feet at \$35/foot)	\$ 875,000
3.Activity Centers	\$ 60,000
4.Acquire portable horse stalls (200 stalls at \$1,200 each)	\$ 240,000
5.Upgrade camping/RV facilities	\$ 48,000
6.Enclose the Main Events Center	\$ 250,000
7.Construct a ropes course at Camp Mauritz	\$ 60,000 - \$100,000
8.Camp Mauritz Upgrades	\$ 290,000
9.Shooting Sports Facility	\$ 150,000 - \$500,000
<b>Phase 1 Total</b>	<b>\$2,123,000 - \$3,863,000</b>

## 7.2 Phase 2: 2016 - 2021

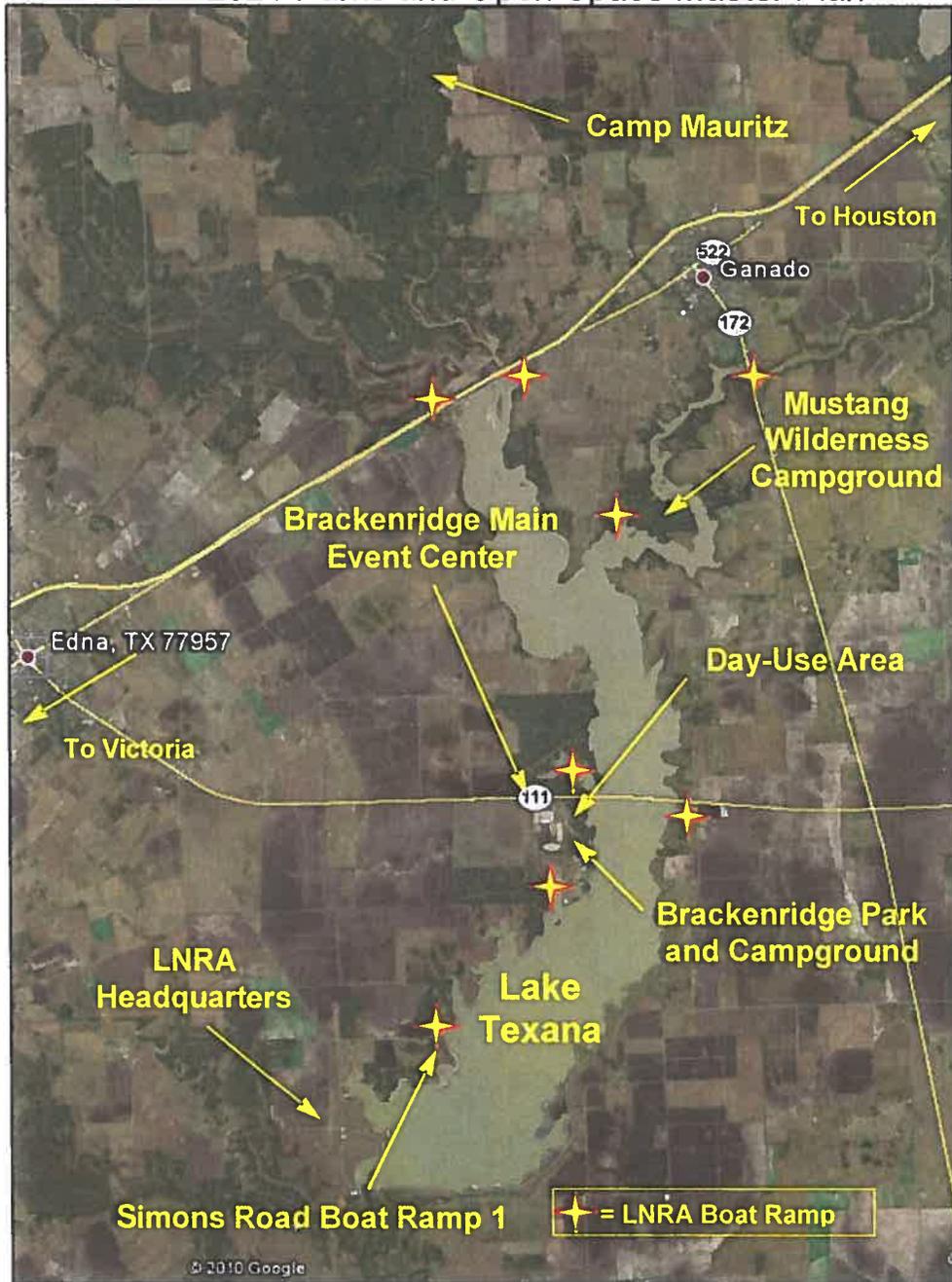
The second phase of recreational improvements will depend how the recreational improvements from Phase 1 modify the dynamics of outdoor recreation at the Authority's facilities. Furthermore, Phase 2 will depend on economic conditions, population changes, and the success of increased recreational activities during the off-season. Anticipated components of Phase 2 are listed below. Cost Estimates for Phase 2 improvements are not provided since specific site plans have not been developed. However, proposed locations for Phase 2 improvements are shown on **Figure 12** through **Figure 13**.

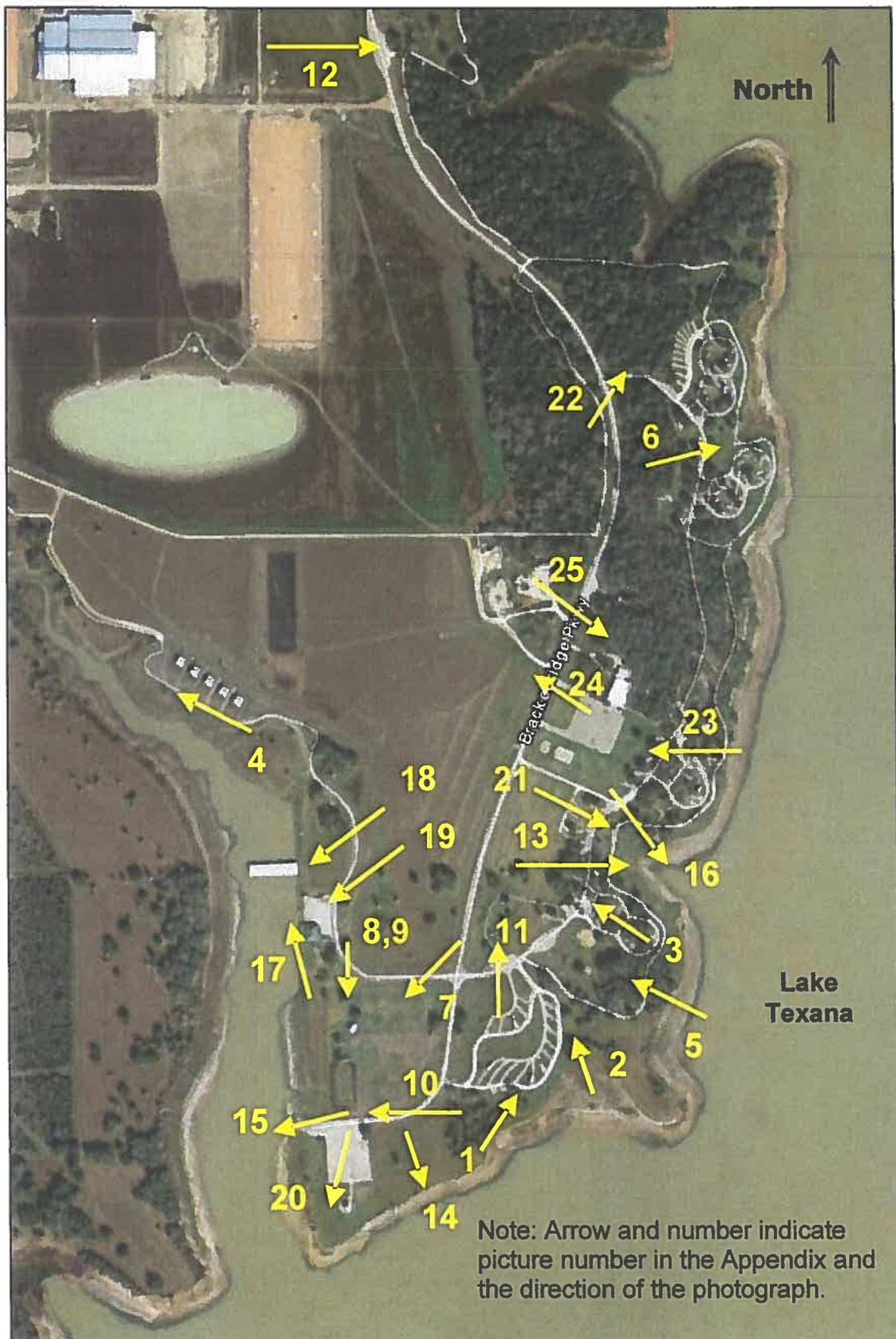
1. Upgrade the Aquatic Center with additional rides, recreational features, and a heated swimming pool with therapy facilities for seniors
2. Expand the hike and bike trail system by another 25,000 feet
3. Expand the marina for additional boat and jet ski use and additional boat ramps
4. Construct a civic center facility
5. Construct an exhibit center
6. Construct a golf course

**Figure 1**  
General Location Map

Brackenridge Park and Campground, Brackenridge Main Event Center, Mustang Wilderness Campground, Day-Use Area, Camp Mauritz, LNRA Boat Ramps, and LNRA Headquarters

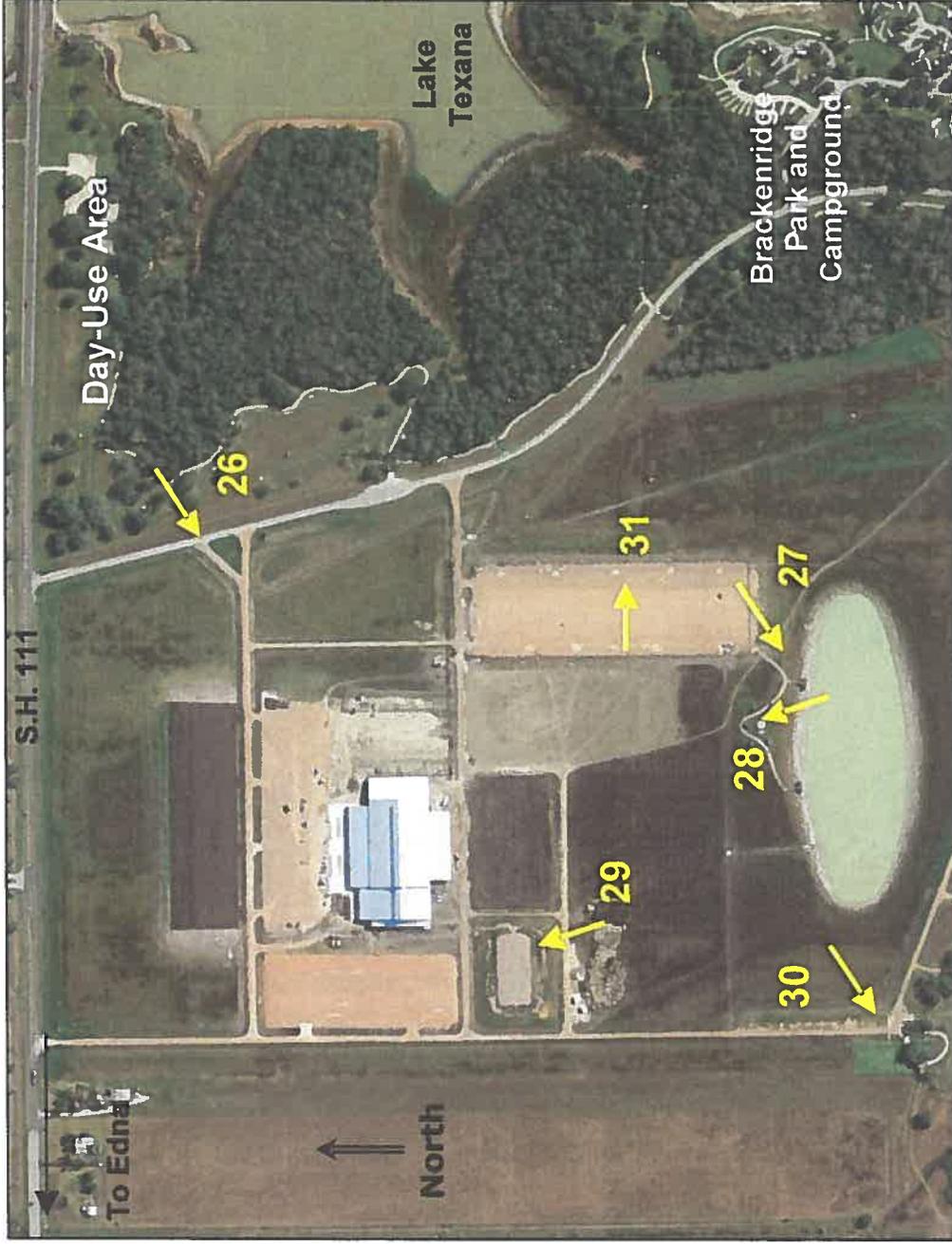
Lavaca-Navidad River Authority  
2011 – 2021 Parks and Open Space Master Plan





**Figure 2**  
 Brackenridge Park and Campground

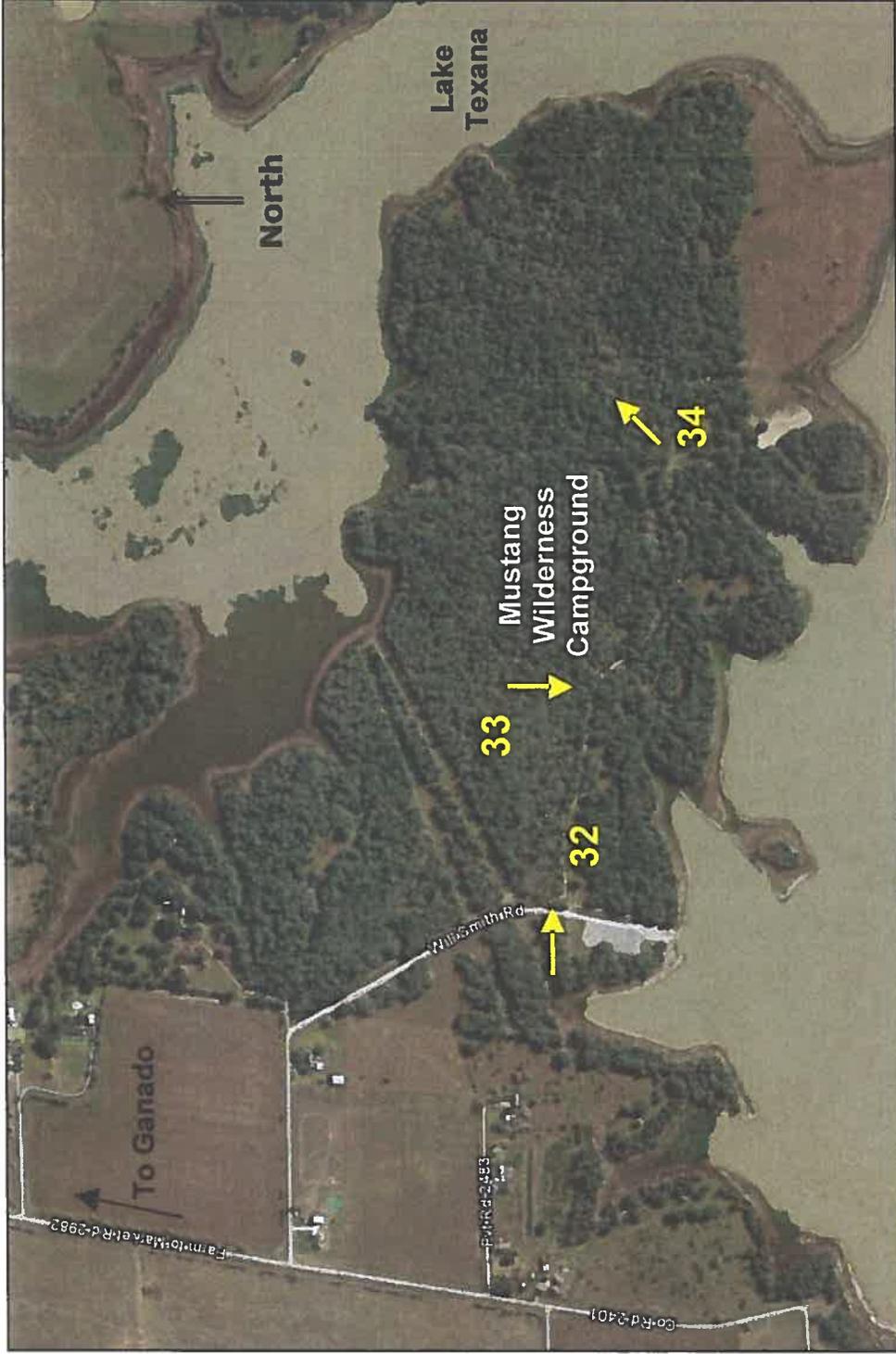
Lavaca-Navidad River Authority  
 2011 – 2021 Parks and Open Space Master Plan



**Figure 3**  
Brackenridge Main Events Center

Lavaca-Navidad River Authority  
2011 – 2021 Parks and Open Space Master Plan

Note: Arrow and number indicate picture number in the Appendix and the direction of the photograph.



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**Figure 4**  
Mustang Wilderness Campground

Lavaca-Navidad River Authority  
2011 – 2021 Parks and Open Space Master Plan



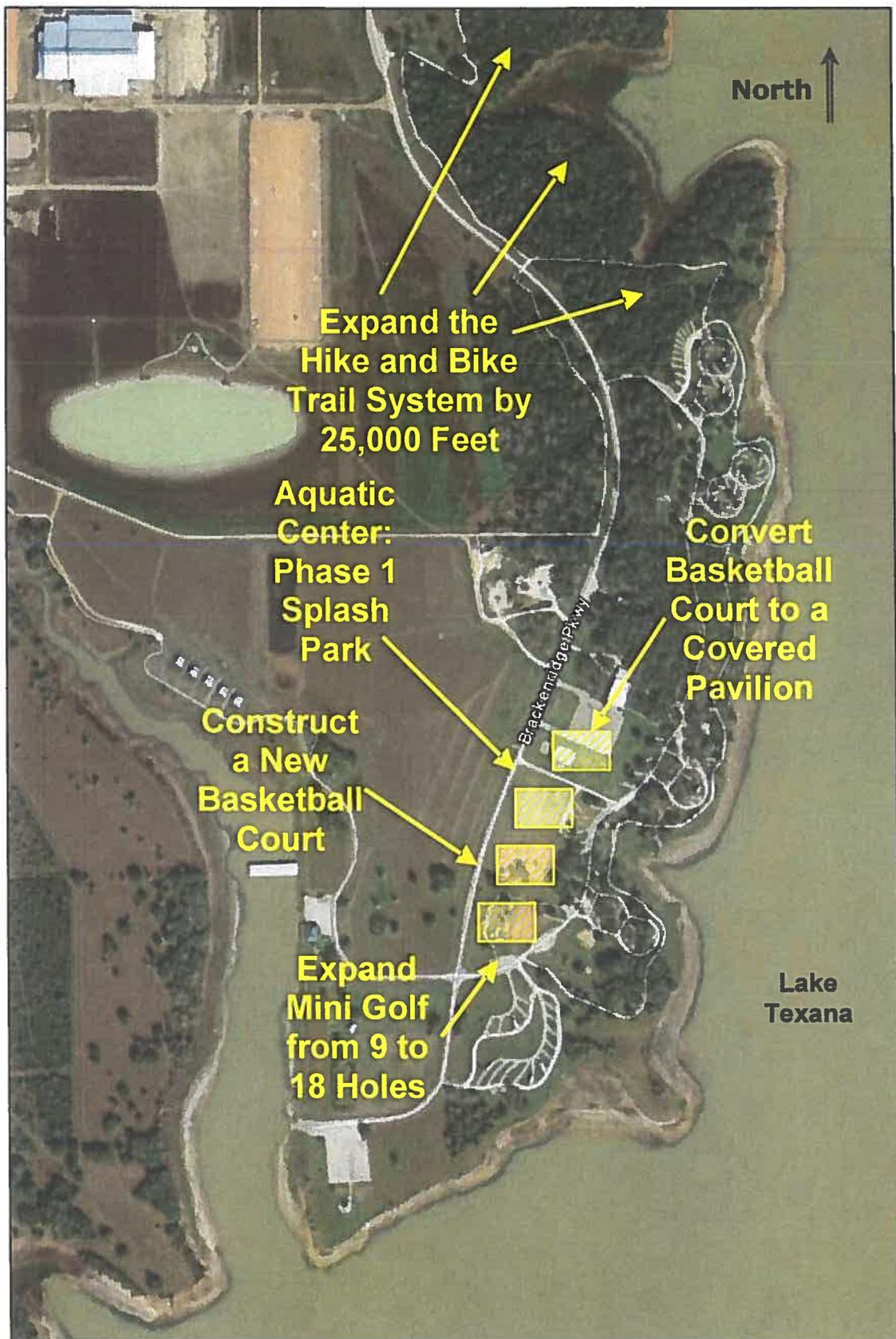
**Figure 5**  
Day-Use Area

Note: Arrow and number indicate picture number in the Appendix and the direction of the photograph.

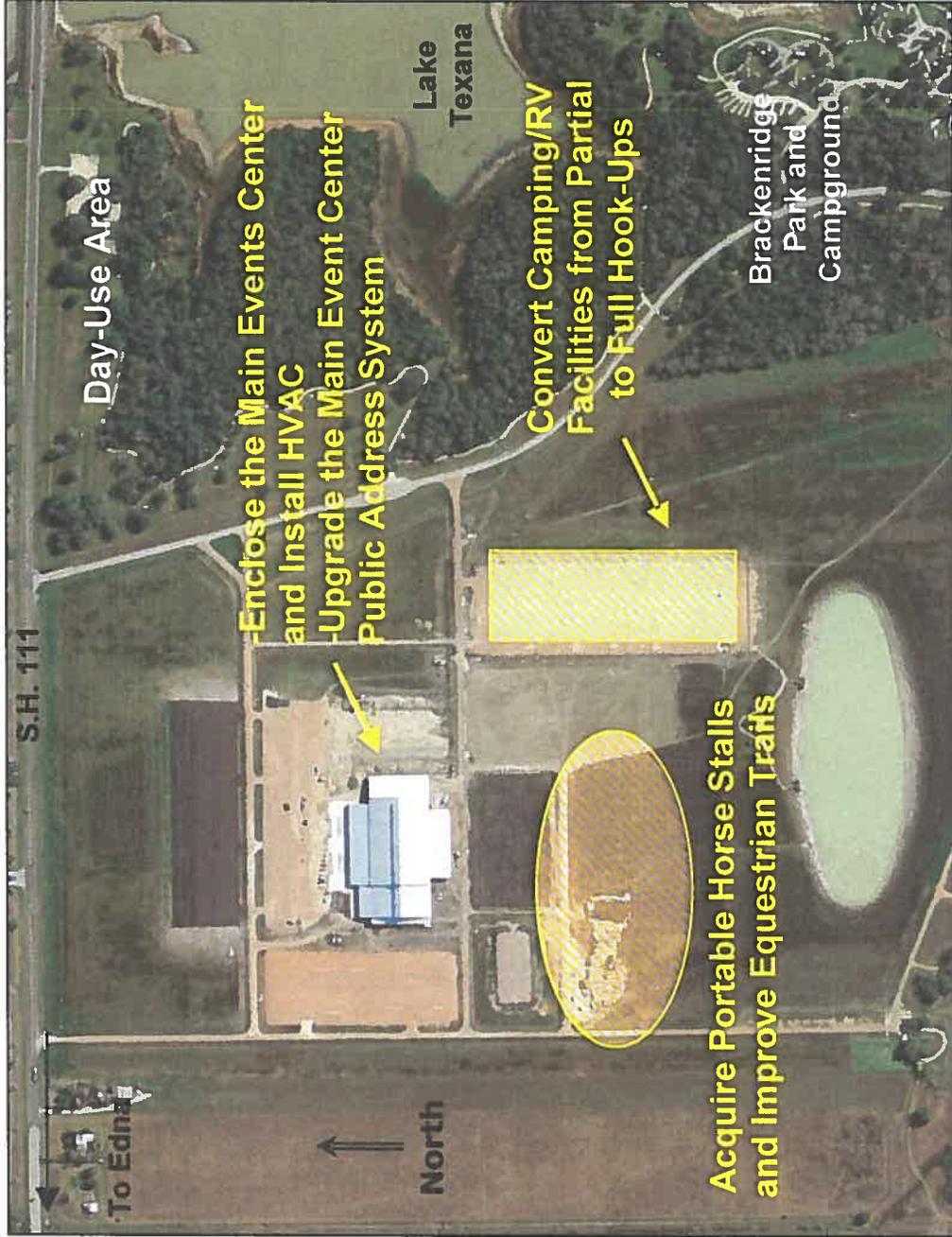


**Figure 6**  
Camp Mauritz

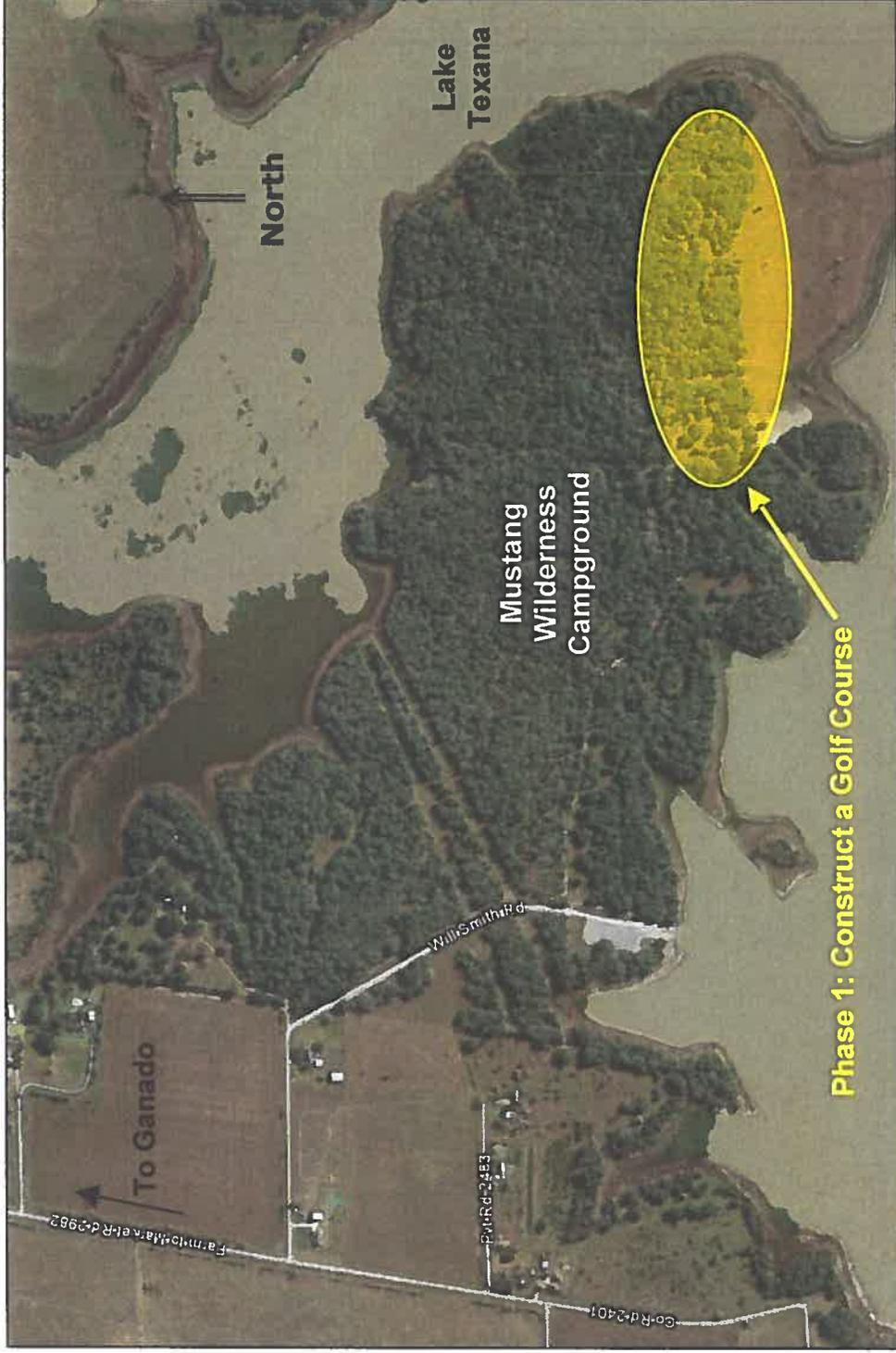
Note: Arrow and number indicate picture number in the Appendix and direction of the photograph.



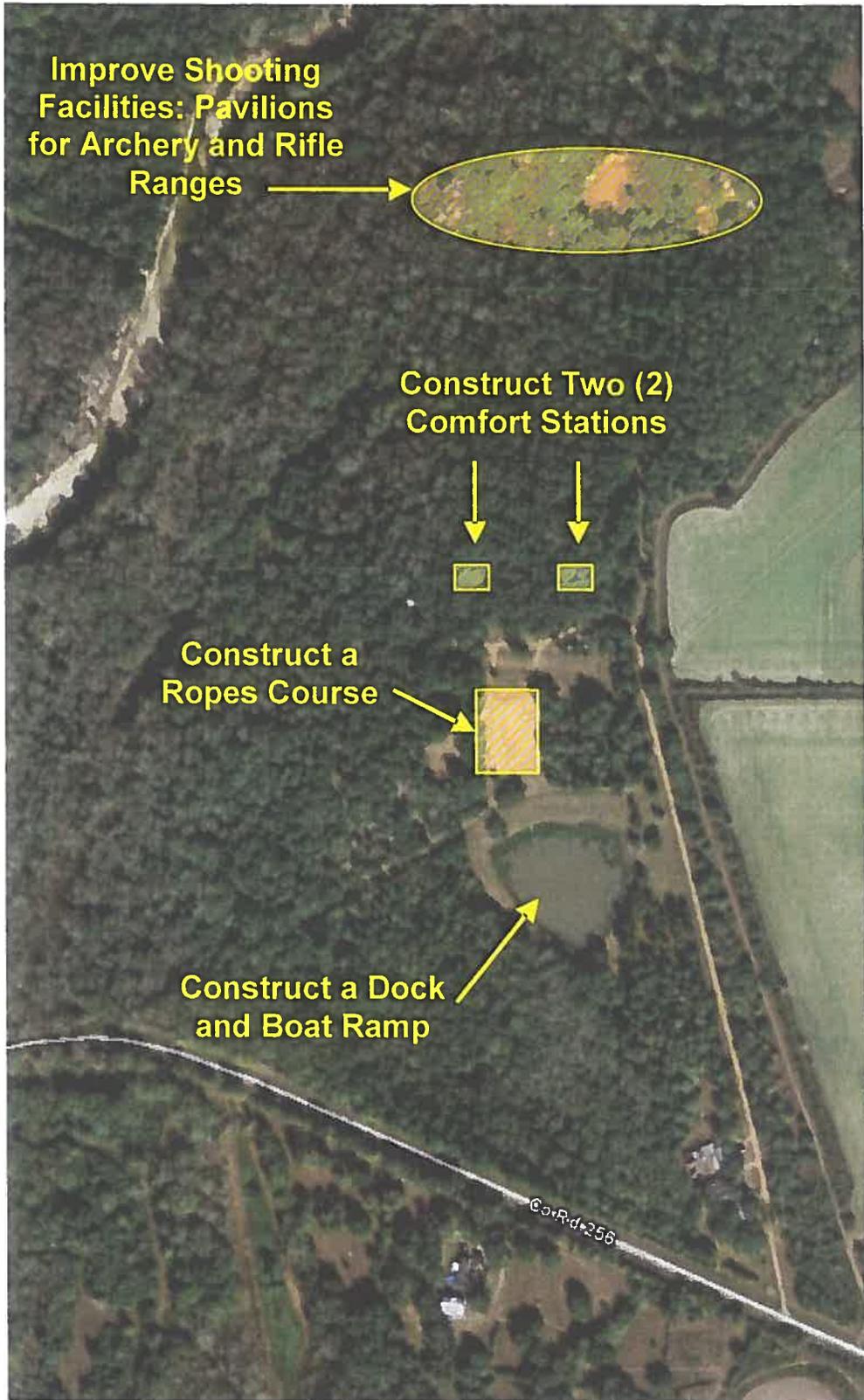
**Figure 7**  
Proposed Phase 1 Improvements at Brackenridge Park and Campground



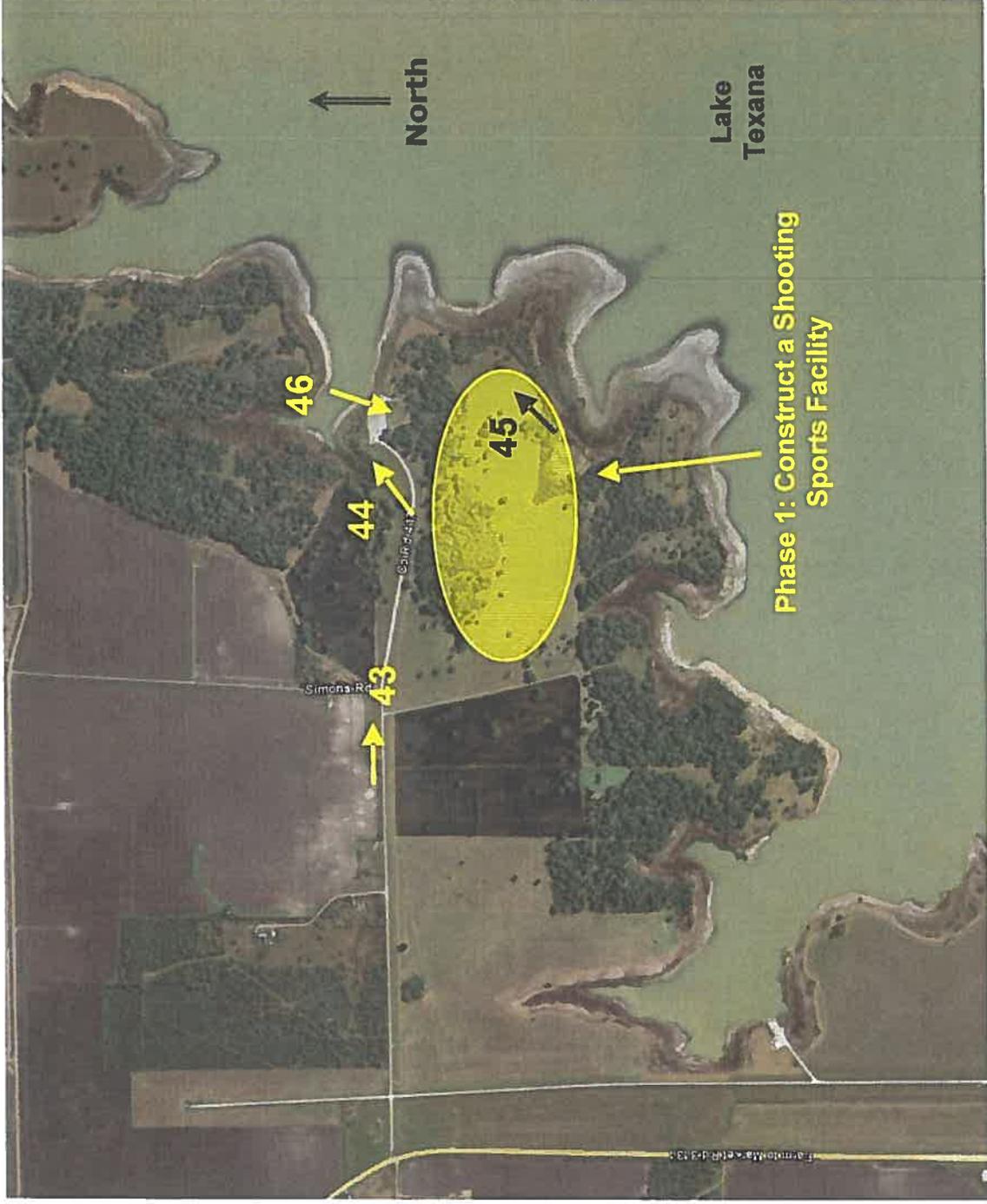
**Figure 8**  
 Proposed Phase 1 Improvements at Brackenridge Main Event Center  
 Lavaca-Navidad River Authority  
 2011 – 2021 Parks and Open Space Master Plan



**Figure 9**  
Proposed Phase 1 Improvements at Mustang Wilderness Campground  
Lavaca-Navidad River Authority  
2011 – 2021 Parks and Open Space Master Plan

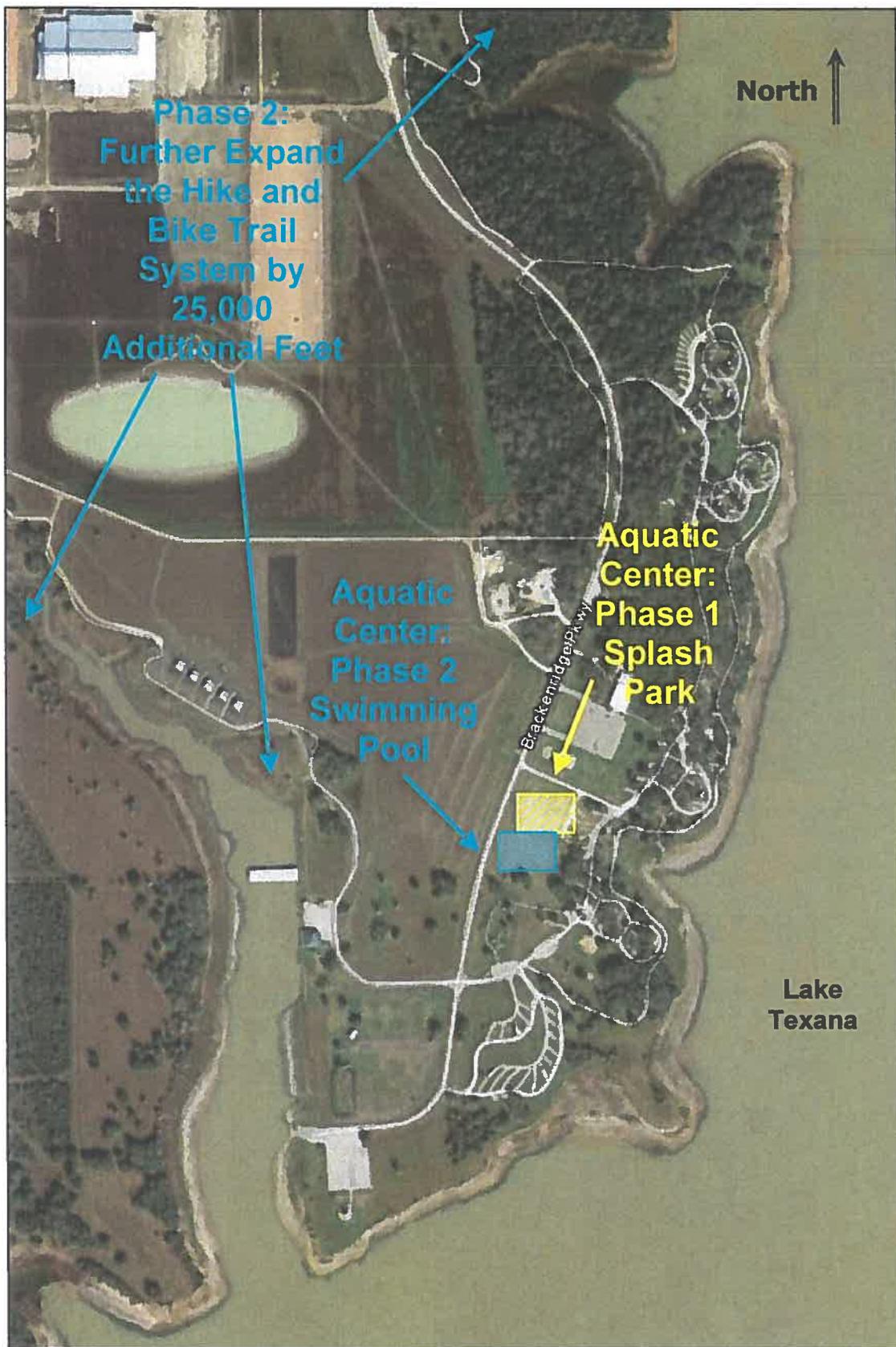


**Figure 10**  
Proposed Phase 1 Improvements at Camp Mauritz

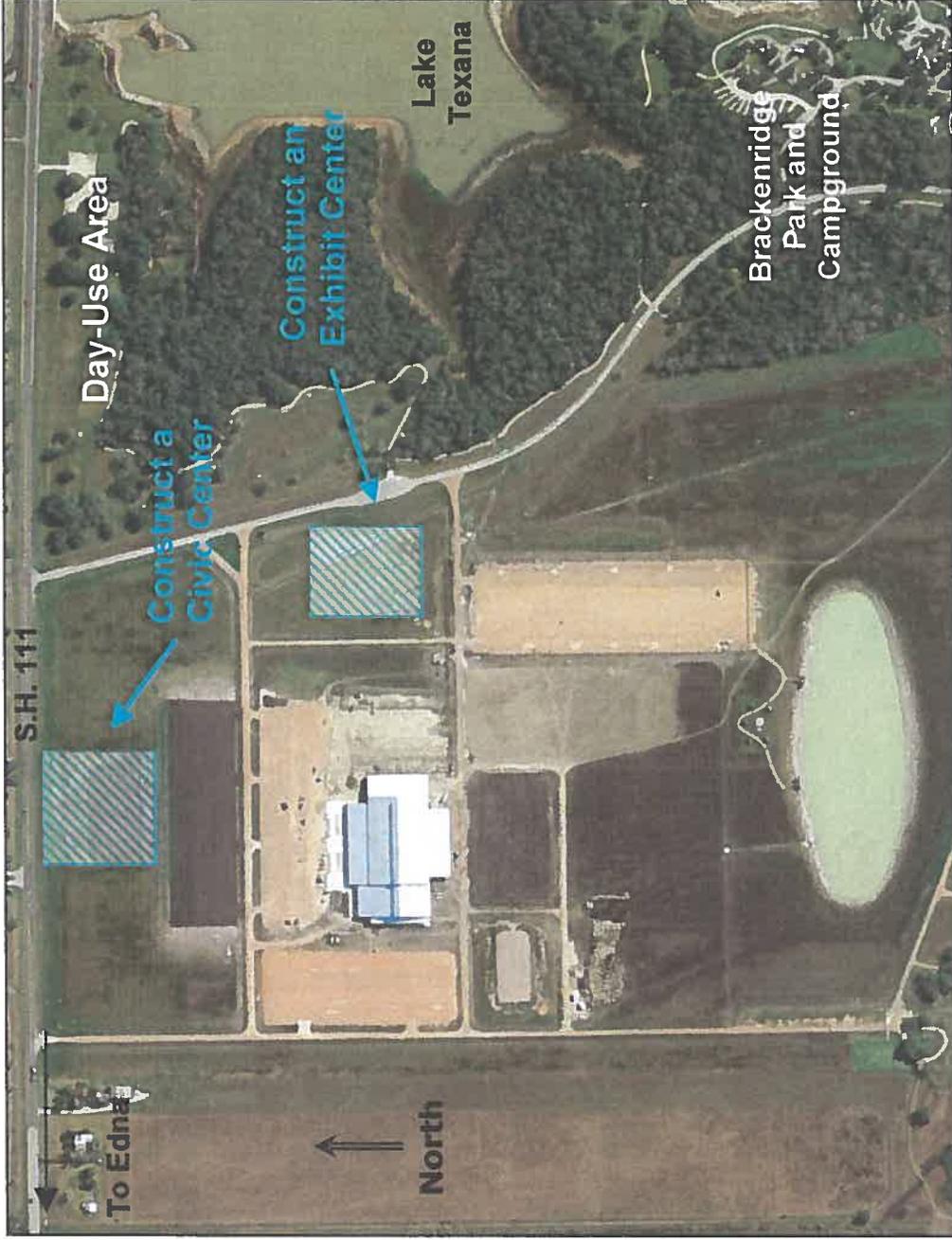


**Figure 11**  
Proposed Phase 1 Improvements at the Simons Road Boat Ramp 1

Lavaca-Navidad River Authority  
2011 – 2021 Parks and Open Space Master Plan



**Figure 12**  
Proposed Phase 2 Improvements at Brackenridge Park and Campground



**Figure 13**  
Proposed Phase 2 Improvements at Brackenridge Main Event Center

Lavaca-Navidad River Authority  
2011 – 2021 Parks and Open Space Master Plan

## APPENDIX – PHOTOGRAPHS

(See Figures 2 through 6, and 11 for the location and direction of the photographs.)



**Picture 1 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – Pull-through RV/camp site with water and electricity, a picnic table, BBQ grill, and ground fire-ring.**



**Picture 2 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – Typical RV/camp site with water and electricity, a picnic table, BBQ grill, and ground fire-ring.**



**Picture 3 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – One of four Comfort Stations: ADA compliant buildings with restrooms, showers, and sinks.**



**Picture 4 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – Five cabins with double beds, fold-out couch, furnished kitchens and bathrooms, picnic table, and BBQ grill.**

## Appendix



**Picture 5 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – One of three groups of a swing-set, monkey-bars, and benches**



**Picture 6 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – One of two climbing toys**

Appendix



**Picture 7 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – Soccer field**



**Picture 8 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – Baseball/softball field and two of the three metal seating bleachers**

Appendix



**Picture 9 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – Restroom, concession stand, and dance floor structure**

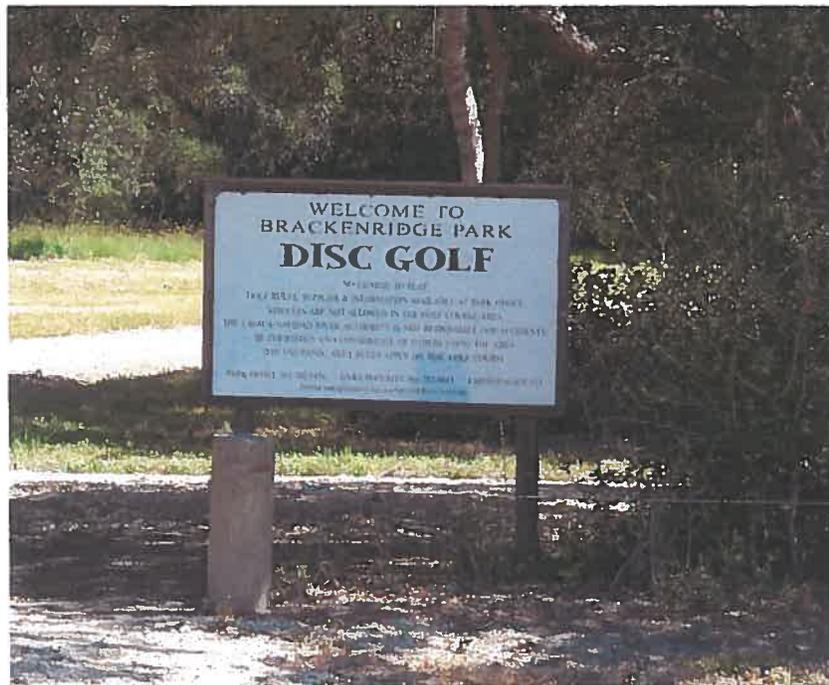


**Picture 10 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – Paint ball course**

Appendix



**Picture 11 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – Nine-hole Gator Golf miniature course**



**Picture 12 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – Start of nine-hole disc golf course**



**Picture 13 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – Portion of the lighted, 5.2-mile hike and bike trail**



**Picture 14 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – Jet dock bulkhead**



**Picture 15 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – One of eight two-lane boat ramps**



**Picture 16 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – Fishing Pier**



**Picture 17 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – Exposed boat slips (foreground) and 18 covered boat slips (background)**



**Picture 18 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – Fish cleaning station with water and electricity**



**Picture 19 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – Restaurant/concessions building**



**Picture 20 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – Elevated, ADA gazebo with picnic tables**



**Picture 21 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – Buoyed swimming/wading area**



**Picture 22 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – One of three RV dump sites**



**Picture 23 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – One of two water wells**



**Picture 24 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – Entrance to wastewater treatment plant at Brackenridge Park Campground**



**Picture 25 – Brackenridge Park & Campground – Historic church, cemetery, and cistern**



**Picture 26 – Brackenridge Main Events Center – Brackenridge Main Events Center**



**Picture 27 – Brackenridge Main Events Center – 8-acre fishing pond, pier, and nature trail sign**



**Picture 28 – Brackenridge Main Events Center – Three of five picnic tables and BBQ grills, swing set, and monkey-bar set**



**Picture 29 – Brackenridge Main Events Center – Outdoor rodeo arena with lights, bleachers, public address system, and enclosed booth**



**Picture 30 – Brackenridge Main Events Center – Trail-head for 12-mile round trip equestrian trail**



**Picture 31 – Brackenridge Main Events Center – RV sites and large parking area**



**Picture 32 – Mustang Wilderness Campground – Entrance to Mustang Wilderness Campground**



**Picture 33 – Mustang Wilderness Campground – Typical primitive camping site at Mustang Wilderness Campground**



**Picture 34 – Mustang Wilderness Campground – Restroom, shower, and sink at Mustang Wilderness Campground (under construction)**

Appendix



**Picture 35 – Day-Use Area – Basketball court and one of five picnic tables at the day-use area**



**Picture 36 – Day-Use Area – Volleyball court, one of five picnic tables, and trailhead to the disc golf course at the day-use area**

## Appendix



**Picture 37 – Camp Mauritz – Entrance to Camp Mauritz**



**Picture 38 – Camp Mauritz – Typical primitive campsite at Camp Mauritz**



**Picture 39 – Camp Mauritz – Kitchen/dining hall/pavilion at Camp Mauritz**



**Picture 40 – Camp Mauritz – Training center building at Camp Mauritz**

## Appendix



**Picture 41 – Camp Mauritz – Latrine at Camp Mauritz**



**Picture 42 – Camp Mauritz – Storage area and canoes at Camp Mauritz**

Appendix



**Picture 43 – Entrance to Simons Road Boat Ramp 1**



**Picture 44 – Open Space for a Shooting Range at Simons Road Boat Ramp 1**



**Picture 45 – Open Space for a Shooting Range at Simons Boat Ramp 1**



**Picture 46 – Parking Area for a Shooting Range at Simons Road Boat Ramp 1**