

Amistad

NATIONAL RECREATION AREA • TEXAS



National Parks Centennial 1872-1972

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As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities for water, fish, wildlife, mineral, land, park, and recreational resources. Indian and Territorial affairs are other major concerns of America's "Department of Natural Resources." The Department works to assure the wisest choice in managing all our resources so each will make its full contribution to a better United States—now and in the future.

National Park Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Amistad Dam, on the Rio Grande, 12 miles upstream from Del Rio, Tex., and Ciudad Acuña, Coahuila, Mexico, was a cooperative undertaking of the American and Mexican sections of the International Boundary and Water Commission. The storing of water started on May 31, 1968, and the dam was dedicated by Presidents Richard Nixon and Diaz Ordaz on September 8, 1969.

WHAT YOU CAN DO HERE

This is an international recreation area for boating, other water sports, fishing, some kinds of hunting, and general outdoor enjoyment. Amistad Lake is the main attraction.

Boating. There are boat ramps, one at Diablo East and one at Rough Canyon. Diablo East is 10 miles from Del Rio along a surfaced road from U.S. 90. A concessioner provides boat rentals and rental slips, fuel, bait, ice, snacks, and beverages. Rough Canyon has similar concessioner facilities. It is 18 miles from Del Rio on U.S. 277 and then 7 miles on a spur road. You can drive to the water's edge only at designated sites, and launching a boat from a vehicle must be done only at such sites.

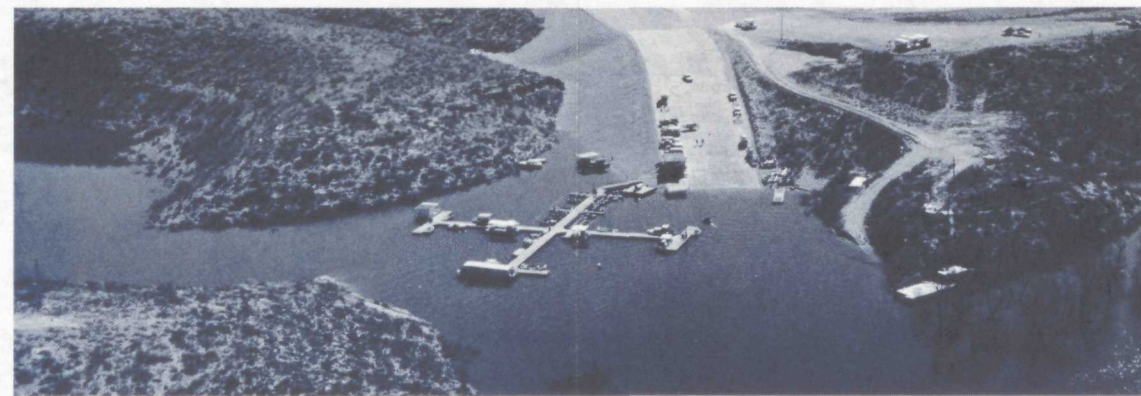
Boat Requirements. Boats must be numbered according to State law. Lights must be used from sunset to sunrise. Anchor lights are required when outside of special anchorage areas.

All vessels must carry, for each person on board, a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life-saving device of serviceable condition that is readily accessible. Motorboats, except those of open construction less than 26 feet long and propelled by outboard motors, must carry U.S. Coast Guard-approved fire extinguishers.

Vessels less than 26 feet must be equipped with paddles or oars. Ventilators are required for enclosed compartments. All vessels must carry a suitable bailing bucket. No vessel, while underway, shall carry more than a safe capacity load.

Boating and Water-skiing Regulations. Reckless, negligent boat operation is not allowed nor is the operation of a vessel while under the influence of intoxicants or narcotics. Do not swim from an unanchored boat. Water-skiing is permitted only during daylight hours, and there must be both an operator and a competent observer in the towing vessel. Water skiers must wear an approved life-saving device. Skiing is not permitted in channels, within 500 feet or harbors, swimming beaches, or mooring areas, or within 100 feet of any person in the water. Vessels must maintain a flat wake within designated harbors and must proceed slowly and with due caution when in the vicinity of any diver's marker or person in the water. You are responsible for any damage caused by your wake. In case of accidents, operators shall render such assistance as is practical and necessary for the injured. Accidents are to be reported to a park ranger as soon as possible and certainly within 24 hours.

Rules of the Road. Statutory Rules of the Road, which have been enacted by Congress to prevent collision of vessels, must be observed by operators of vessels on this lake. In narrow channels, when



safe and practicable, every vessel must keep to the right of midchannel.

Vessels approaching each other head-on must pass in such a manner that each vessel is to the port side of the other. In a crossing situation, the vessel which has the other on its own port side must hold its course and speed; and the vessel which has the other on its own starboard must keep out of the way of the other by directing its course to starboard so as to cross the stern of the other vessel, or stop and reverse if necessary to avoid collision. All motor vessels must keep clear of any vessel under sail or propelled by oars or paddles.

Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return. Be sure you have enough fuel for your trip.

Sanitation. Please help keep Amistad Lake clean. Carry and use litter bags on your boat. Refuse receptacles are available at the boat ramps. Large boats should be equipped with a chemical toilet or other suitable device. The dumping of sewage or other waste material into the lake is prohibited.

Inspections. Park rangers may board vessels at any time to examine documents, licenses and/or permits, or to inspect the vessels.

Camping. Diablo East has temporary camping facilities including running water and chemical toilets. Rough Canyon has a private campground adjacent to the boat ramp. At present there are no other designated camping sites in the recreation area. However, camping from boats is permitted on shore below contour 1144.3.

Outside Accommodations. Motels, hotels, restaurants, and service stations are available in Del Rio and along U.S. 90.

Season. Amistad is open all year and is considered excellent for water-oriented recreation 9 months of the year. December, January, and February will occasionally have temperatures in the low thirties.

Fishing. There is a year-long open season but fishing is at its best during spring and early summer. The principal sport and eating fishes are bass, channel catfish, yellow catfish, crappie, sunfish, and carp. A Texas fishing license is required and State regulations must be obeyed. A *Mexican* fishing license is required for fishing in *Mexican* waters. Commercial fishing is prohibited.

Hunting. Doves, quail, and waterfowl may be hunted in accordance with Texas law in those areas designated by the superintendent of the recreation area. There is a special season for bow hunting of deer. The use of rifles is not permitted for any kind of hunting. However, small mammals such as raccoons, rabbits, and squirrels may be hunted with shotguns. A Texas hunting license is required and State regulations must be obeyed.

Protection of Area. All Indian sites, pictographs, and artifacts are protected by Federal Law. Removal, defacement, or disturbance is prohibited. All such features NOT on Federal lands are protected by the Texas Antiquities Code.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The plants and animals of this chaparral country are mostly those of the Edwards Plateau in southwest Texas. However, there is an appreciable intermingling of species of plants and animals from the Chihuahuan Desert.

The most obvious plants are blackbrush, guajillo, cenizo, yucca, sotol, mesquite, creosotebush, leatherplant, and various cactuses.

A diverse fauna is represented by whitetail deer, the collared peccary, raccoons, jackrabbits and cottontails, and rock squirrels. Reptiles in the area are rattlesnakes, turtles, tortoises, many species of lizards, and, along the shores, frogs and salamanders.

The more common birds are vultures, ravens, quail, doves, sparrows, hawks, wrens, and cardinals.

In addition to the sport fishes listed under "Fishing," there are numerous species of food fish, part of the Rio Grande-Pecos riparian fauna that have not yet been listed.

The lake has four main "arms" and numerous coves and inlets. Under the bright Southwest sun, the waters of the lake are bright blue, and pleasantly warm for swimming and water sports except in December, January, and February.

AMISTAD DAM AND RESERVOIR

The dam consists of a 254-foot high gravity concrete section in the Rio Grande Channel with flanking earth embankments at each end. The whole structure is 6.06 miles long.

The reservoir building up behind the dam will have its maximum flood stage at contour elevation 1144.3. At that contour, the lake will increase to 88,200 acres, 55,000 in the United States. Storage capacity will be 5,660,000 acre-feet. The primary functions of Amistad Dam are flood control and water conservation and these make possible the water-oriented recreational opportunities. The National Park Service has the responsibility to plan, construct, and manage recreational facilities and programs for the public on the United States side of the reservoir.

Amistad Lake will be maintained at the 1,117-contour elevation about 50 percent of the time, and will then have a surface of about 67,000 acres, of which some 44,000 will be within the United States. There will be a shoreline of about 850 miles, approximately 540 in Texas. At this level the impounded water will extend, in the United States, about 74 miles up the Rio Grande, 25 miles up the Devils River, and 14 miles up the Pecos.

AMISTAD VISITOR CENTER

At the United States end of the dam is the visitor center operated by the United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission.

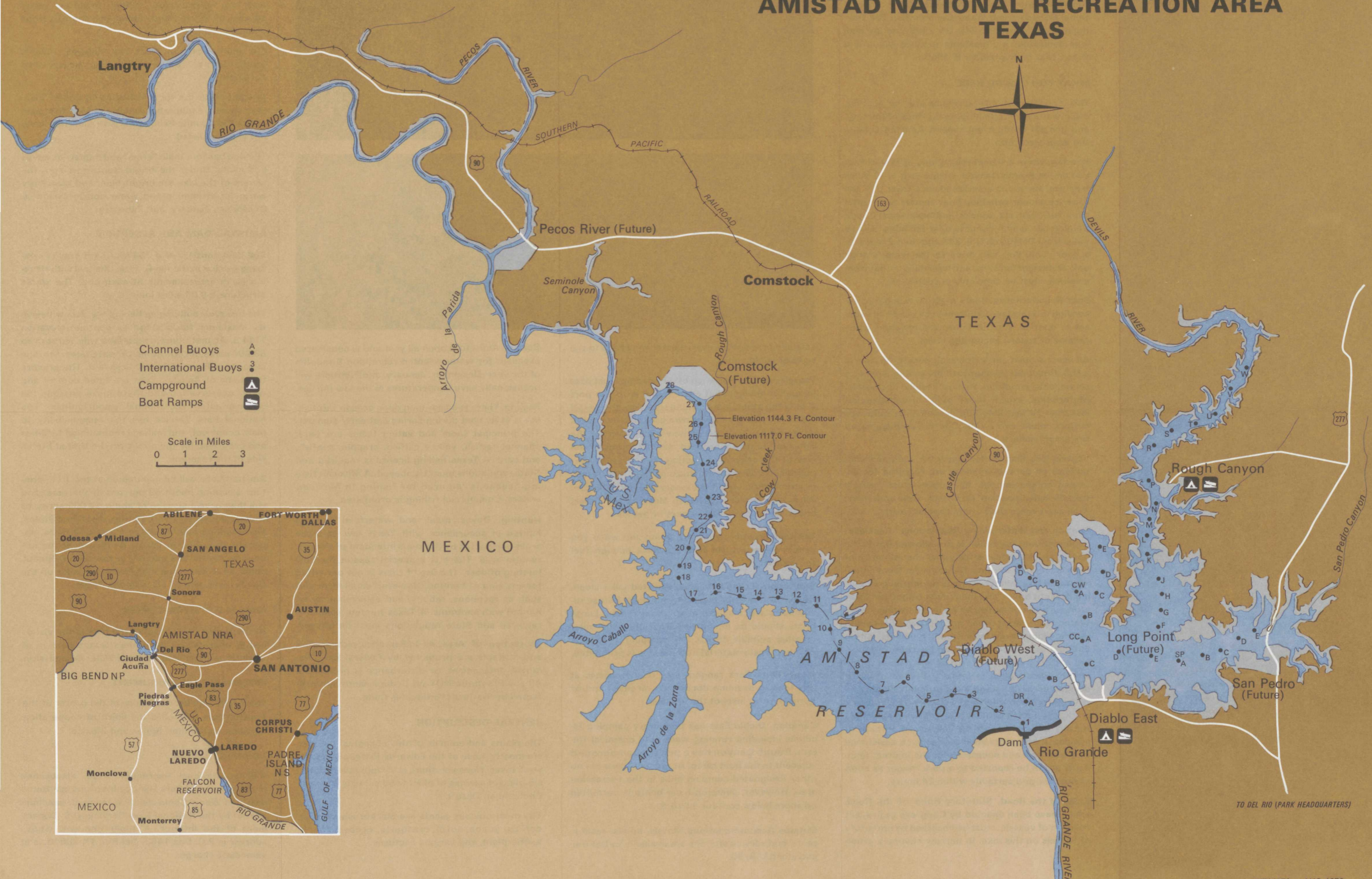
INTERNATIONAL MONUMENT

The 7-foot high bronze eagles at the center of the Amistad Dam symbolize the spirit of cooperation between the United States and Mexico.

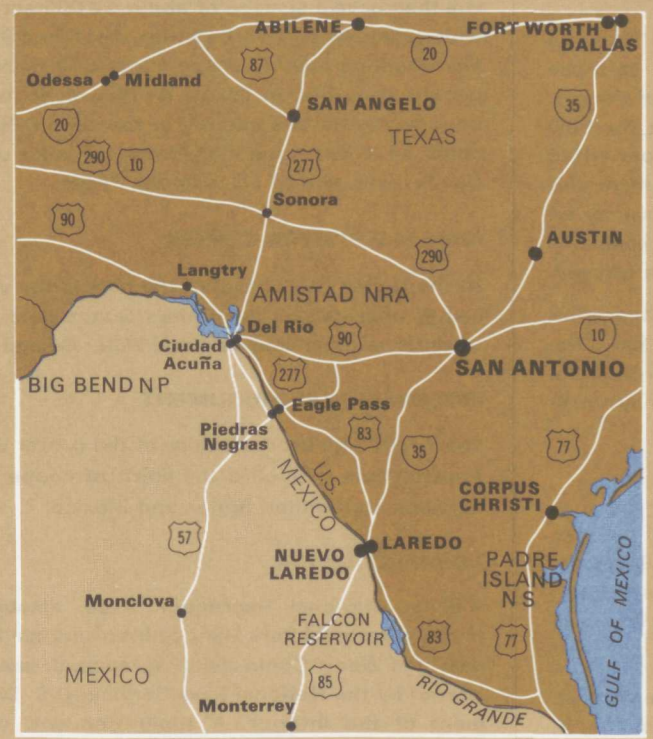
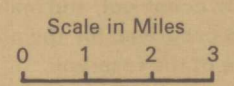
ADMINISTRATION

Amistad National Recreation Area, established under a National Park Service-International Boundary and Water Commission agreement, is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is P.O. Box 1463, Del Rio, TX 78840, is in immediate charge.

AMISTAD NATIONAL RECREATION AREA TEXAS



- Channel Buoys A
- International Buoys 3
- Campground A
- Boat Ramps M



TO DEL RIO (PARK HEADQUARTERS)