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Improving Public Access at Lighthouse Lakes Trail Park

ARANSAS PASS, TX – In a shadow cast by the rising sun on the historic Lydia Ann Lighthouse lies an area known as Lighthouse Lakes. In 1999, the Lighthouse Lakes Paddling Trail became the first Texas Paddling Trail that now recognizes 80 other trails across the state. From the Lighthouse Lakes Kayak Launch, recreators can access three separate trails, the 5-mile Cutters Loop, the 6.7-mile South Bay Loop, and the 6.8-Mile Redfish Loop. As part of the Redfish Bay State Scientific Area designated by Texas Parks and Wildlife in 2006, the shallow waters of Lighthouse Lakes make it a difficult destination for deep drafting bay boats without negatively impacting the habitat, and an ideal location for kayaks, poling skiffs, jonboats, and other shallow drafting crafts. Nestled between Aransas Bay, Redfish Bay, and San Jose Island this mosaic of meandering channels, extensive seagrass flats, marsh grasses, oyster reefs, and shallow lakes creates a dynamic piece of habitat that is teeming with life. The productive ecosystem here starts with the quality of the habitat that supports smaller species like baitfish, crabs, and juvenile shrimp that promote healthy nursery habitats for larger game fish such as Redfish, Black Drum, and Speckled Trout.

Along the northern banks of Harbor Island lies the Lighthouse Lakes Trails Park, providing access for kayak anglers and offering several shade structures along the shoreline. On any given day you may see families gathered around the shaded tables at the park, fishing from the shoreline or tending a hot grill and enjoying the view, or fishermen tying leaders and readying their gear.

Though these facilities are frequently used by the public, the unforgiving elements of the Gulf Coast have left them worse for wear. As part of our 2025 workplan, stakeholders proposed the implementation of several repairs and upgrades that would encourage more public use opportunities.





Just in time to take advantage of the fall bite and cooler temps, the improvements at the park are complete and ready to provide a safer, more accessible, experience for park guests. While visiting the park, users can easily launch their kayaks at the newly graded and paved launch area, reducing potential impacts to vegetation along the shoreline. Not only will they have a smoother path to get on the water, but also one that is more well-lit thanks to the installation of solar powered lights throughout the park. Other improvements to the park include shade structures along the water's edge and a new bollard system to protect the habitat from being damaged by vehicle off-roading.

Like most of our projects, this effort was made possible by a great group of supporters and collaborators. With the funding from Cheniere and the City of Aransas Pass the Lighthouse Lake Trail Park can continue to provide an outlet for locals and visitors alike to access the area. Whether they are in pursuit of a full stringer, searching for migrating birds, or perhaps looking for the old historic lighthouse lens that lay hidden in the marsh, users of all kinds now have a cleaner, safer spot to enjoy the natural resources of the Coastal Bend.



The Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program is a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting and restoring bays and estuaries in the 12-county region of Texas Coastal Bend. CBBEP is partially funded by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. For more information about the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, contact Quinn Hendrick,

361-336-0305 or qhendrick@cbbep.org.

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