Rend Lake Visitor Center

The Rend Lake Visitor Center is a beautiful facility with much to offer. It includes a large exhibit hall full of interactive exhibits. Browse through the Earth Hall and see live reptiles and fish from the area. Not far from the visitor center you can see Rend Lake was built, and watch the short presentation “People of the Area.”

The Visitor Center is also home to a working honey bee hive. The bees are able to travel out from the pollen plant garden where they collect pollen and nectar to take back to the hive. The garden provides a home to a variety of pollinators such as butterflies, beetles, and bees and is sure to inspire you to plant native species in your own yard.

Call the Visitor Center today at 618-744-2439 to schedule an educational program either at the Visitor Center or at your site. Rangers can customize their programming to meet your needs. We also offer a large multi-purpose room to reserve for your event or meeting.

Southern Illinois

Rend Lake

Where the Fun Begins!

Rend Lake

For Rend Lake Area & Information: www.visit-rendlake.com
E-mail: rendlake-md@usa.army.mil
www.keysrendlake.com

Emergency Numbers:
Franklin Co. Sheriff 911 or (618) 652-4441
Jefferson Co. Sheriff 911 or (618) 524-8604
Illinois State Police (618) 524-2711

Rend Lake Offices & Information:
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Rend Lake Project Office (Visitor Center) 15901 Rend Cy Rd., Benton, IL 62812 (618-744-2439)

Rend Lake Conservation District
(618) 439-6251

Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Wayne Pleasure State Park
(618) 652-3230

Conservation Police - Region V
(618) 652-8129

Rend Lake State Park
(618) 524-2711

Rend Lake Lodging & Attractions:
Rend Lake Motel (618) 744-7881
Rend Lake Resort & Conference Center (618) 652-2211 or (606) 553-3531
Seasonal Lodge (618) 652-2000 or (800) 996-0977
Rend Lake Golf Resort (618) 652-2550
Rend Lake Shooting Complex (618) 652-2599

Camping Reservations:
National Recreation Reservation Service (877) 444-6777

US Army Corps of Engineers
St. Louis District

Rend Lake was named after William Jackson Rend, a retired Civil War officer who operated the coal mine in the 1870s. This coal mine was located approximately 1 mile south of Rend Lake, and from it the mining of the Rend Lake Coal Mining was eventually taken to a hat-trimming mill to move to new work. Leaving Rend City a ghost town.

In the early 1960s, a group of concerned local citizens formed the Rend Lake Association to address problems associated with flooding, frequent droughts, and the lack of a viable source of drinking water in the area. They understood that change must be made for the benefit of the area. Their efforts were rewarded when Congress authorized the building of Rend Lake with the Flood Control Act of October 25, 1962. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers assumed responsibility for the construction and management of the $50 million project. Construction of the 18,000-acre impoundment took only five years to complete and was finished ahead of schedule. The lake reached normal pool on March 12, 1972. The Rend Lake Association would later form the Rend Lake Conservation District, that continues to serve the public at Rend Lake by providing high-quality drinking water to area communities.

Rend Lake

Today, Rend Lake serves as a destination spot for more than 3 million nonresident visitors each year, but it serves more of a purpose than just a place to recreate. The lake provides downstream flood damage reduction, provides water to over 60 communities within 10 counties, brings in revenue to local businesses and supports area redevelopment, and provides fish and wildlife conservation areas.

Southern Illinois

Rend Lake

Where the Fun Begins!

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Rend Lake

Managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rend Lake offers the outdoor recreational amenities that abound in this area. The Corps manages the lake and surrounding area to provide opportunities for fishing, water sports, boating, hunting, hiking, and wildlife viewing. Rend Lake serves as an important stopover and wintering area for thousands of migratory waterfowl and shorebirds.

Rend Lake provides visitors with opportunities for outdoor recreation, fishing, boating, and bird watching.

Water Quality

The Corps’ Office of Water Resources Management was responsible for the design and construction of the $50 million project. Construction of the 18,000-acre impoundment took only five years to complete and was finished ahead of schedule. The lake reached normal pool on March 12, 1972. The Rend Lake Association would later form the Rend Lake Conservation District, that continues to serve the public at Rend Lake by providing high-quality drinking water to area communities.

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The lake is also an idyllic place for boating, fishing, camping, and hiking. The lake is home to several species of fish, including largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, catfish, and bluegill. Visitors can also enjoy hiking trails that wind through the woods and along the shoreline.

For the Outdoorsmen

Rend Lake has 40,000 acres of public land and water managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers available for outdoor recreation. There are miles of hiking and biking trails, wildlife observation points, and boat ramps. The lake offers a variety of fishing opportunities, including largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, and bluegill. 

You can enjoy fishing or hunting to produce a fish, visit the Rend Lake Shooting Complex located between the Rend Lake Resort and the Rend Lake Club. The Club provides several amenities for visitors, including a pro shop, restaurant, and casual seating.

The newly 18,000 acres of water contain excellent populations of cypress, loblolly pine, white bass, largemouth bass, and catfish. An intensive fisheries management program is augmented with successful stocking of 50,000 largemouth bass and hybrid striped bass each year.

Statistics

Storage, acre-feet
Water Supply Allocation
Lowes Rate Regulation
Water Area, surface acres
Flood control, top
Normal pool, top
Elevation, feet MSL
Flood control pool, top
Normal pool, top
Shoal, feet
Flood control pool, max
Normal pool, top
Shoal, feet
Flood control pool, max
Normal pool, top
Location of Lake, river miles
From outlet of lake
Coordinates
Lake Level Recordings, feet MSL
Highest
Lowest
Lake Rend
Reservoir
Highest
Lowest
57

"MSD" in the 1970s the term "Mean Sea Level" was replaced with the term "National Geodetic Vertical Datum (NGVD)."