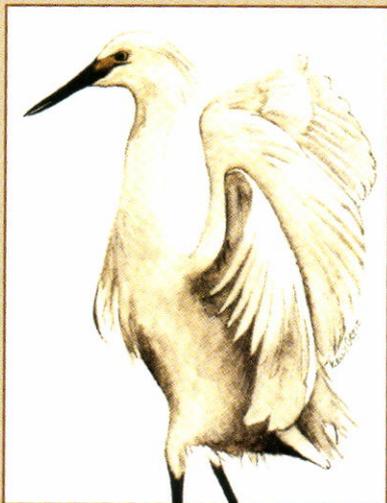


WILDLIFE VIEWING AT ITS BEST

Keep your eyes open and your binoculars handy when you visit Blanca Wetlands. The mosaic of wetland and upland habitats supports a variety of wildlife. Blanca Wetlands host waterfowl and shorebirds by the thousands during nesting and migration periods. Pintail and mallard ducks, teal, Canada geese, phalaropes, sandpipers, avocets and white-faced ibis are among the birds commonly seen on the wetlands. Yellow-headed blackbirds and other songbirds inhabit dense vegetation along the edges of the wetlands. The abundance of food and cover also attracts coyotes, rabbits, and other mammals.

Please respect wildlife. Observe animals from a distance - use binoculars, spotting scopes and telephoto lenses. Move slowly and not directly at animals.

For more information about Blanca Wetlands please contact:



Snowy egret, Illustration
by Kelly Ortiz

Bureau of Land Management
La Jara Field Office
15571 County Rd T5
La Jara, Colorado 81140
(719) 274-8971
www.blm.gov/co

Thanks for working with us!

Colorado Division of Wildlife • Ducks Unlimited • National Fish & Wildlife Foundation • Trout Unlimited • Great Outdoors Colorado
• U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service • The Nature Conservancy
• Alamosa County • Bureau of Reclamation • San Luis Valley Rural Electric Cooperative Inc. • Rio Grande Water Conservation District
• Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation • North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA)

BLANCA WETLANDS



AREA CLOSURE

From February 15 to July 15, the wetlands are closed to the public to protect nesting waterfowl, shorebirds and other wildlife.

BUGS, BUGS EVERYWHERE

Insects are an important food source for wildlife at Blanca Wetlands but they can make your visit an unpleasant experience. Be prepared! Wear appropriate clothing and bring insect repellent to protect yourself from biting and stinging insects – especially during the summer months. Insects are less active during the cool early morning hours and on breezy days.

HUNTING AND FISHING AT BLANCA WETLANDS

BLM's Blanca Wetlands provides opportunities for hunting and fishing. Hunters may seek waterfowl, rabbits and other game species within established



American Avocet

seasons. Cold water ponds support trout and warm water ponds support bass and blue gill for the enjoyment of anglers. Check for more information on the entry board near the front gate. BLM's Blanca Wetlands' fish ponds are more than just a great place to fish. They store water from artesian wells that sustain the wetlands. Some birds, like pelicans and diving ducks, prefer these deep water habitats. Ponds and ditches also provide refuge habitat for sensitive species, such as the Rio Grande chub.

All photos courtesy of Wendy Shattil/Bob Rozinski © 2008 except where noted.
Photo on left, American bittern. Bottom photo, snowy plover. Cover photo, American Avocet.



RESTORING THE WETLANDS

Long ago, a network of playa lakes, ponds, marshes and wet meadows shimmered in the desert scrub of the San Luis Valley. Today, many of the wetlands are dry due to a lower ground water table and decreased rain and snow runoff from the mountains.

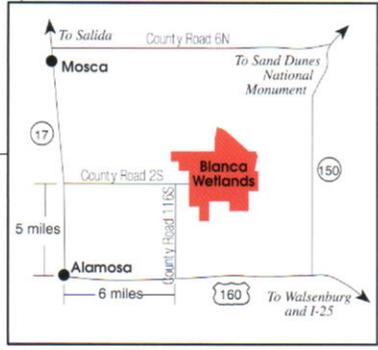
The Blanca Wetlands – a part of this wetlands network – is making a comeback through the efforts of the Bureau of Land Management and its many partners. Ponds, marshes, playas, wet meadows, and uplands intermingle at Blanca Wetlands to provide rich and diverse habitats for wildlife – and a haven for people.

TIPS FOR YOUR TRIP

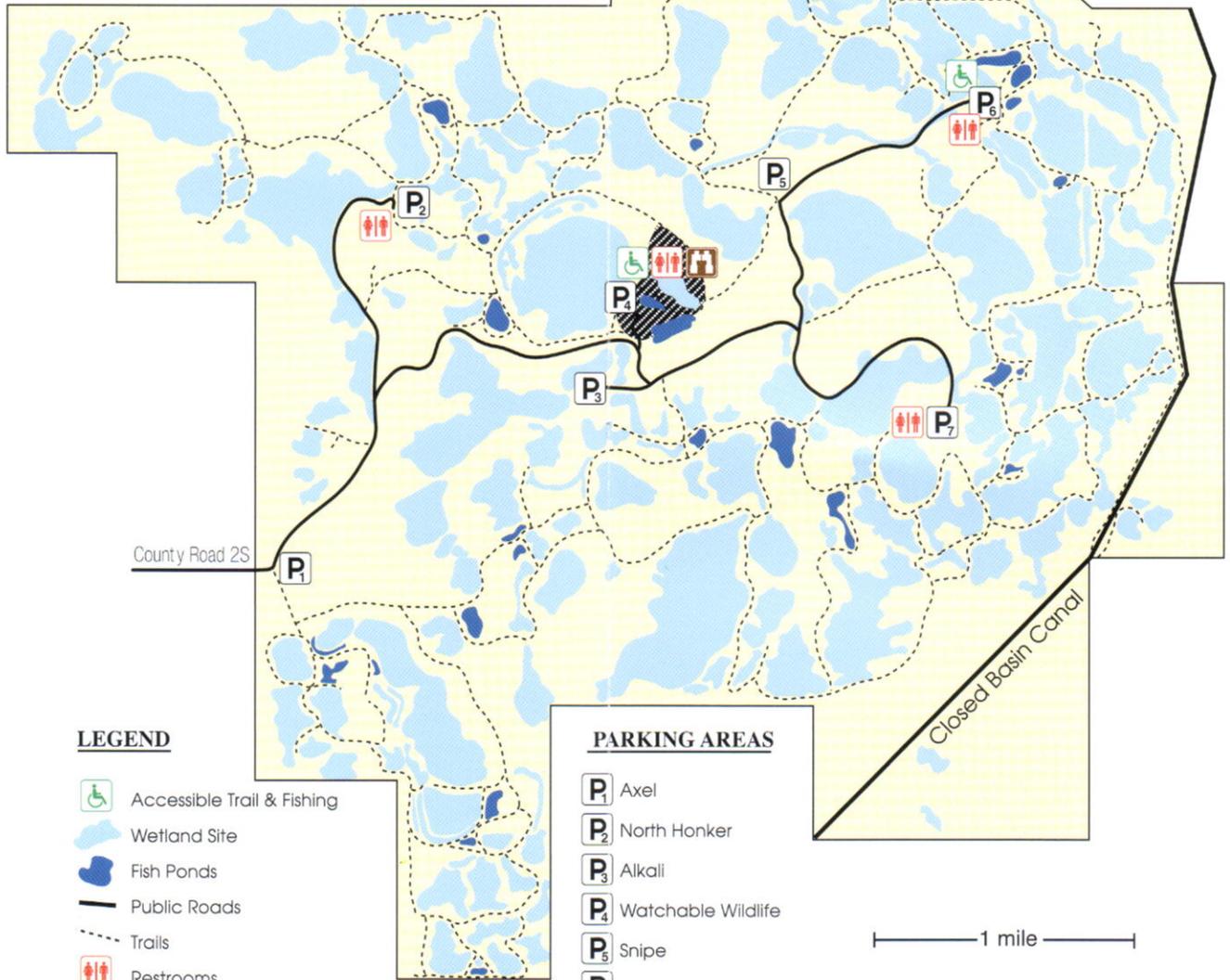
- The area is managed for day use with no overnight facilities provided.
- Bring your own drinking water.
- NO FIRES, please bring your camp stove or charcoal grill.
- Picnicking can be enjoyed throughout the area, but no tables are provided.
- Watch your step! Many ponds have slick banks and deep water.
- Park only in designated parking areas.
- Motorized vehicles are restricted to public roads.
- A system of trails from each parking area provides access to the wetlands by foot or other non-motorized means.



Northern leopard frog, photo by Tammy Obie



American Avocet, Illustration by Kelly Ortiz



LEGEND

- Accessible Trail & Fishing
- Wetland Site
- Fish Ponds
- Public Roads
- Trails
- Restrooms
- Watchable Wildlife Area

PARKING AREAS

- Axel
- North Honker
- Alkali
- Watchable Wildlife
- Snipe
- North Mallard
- South Mallard

1 mile

Closed Basin Canal