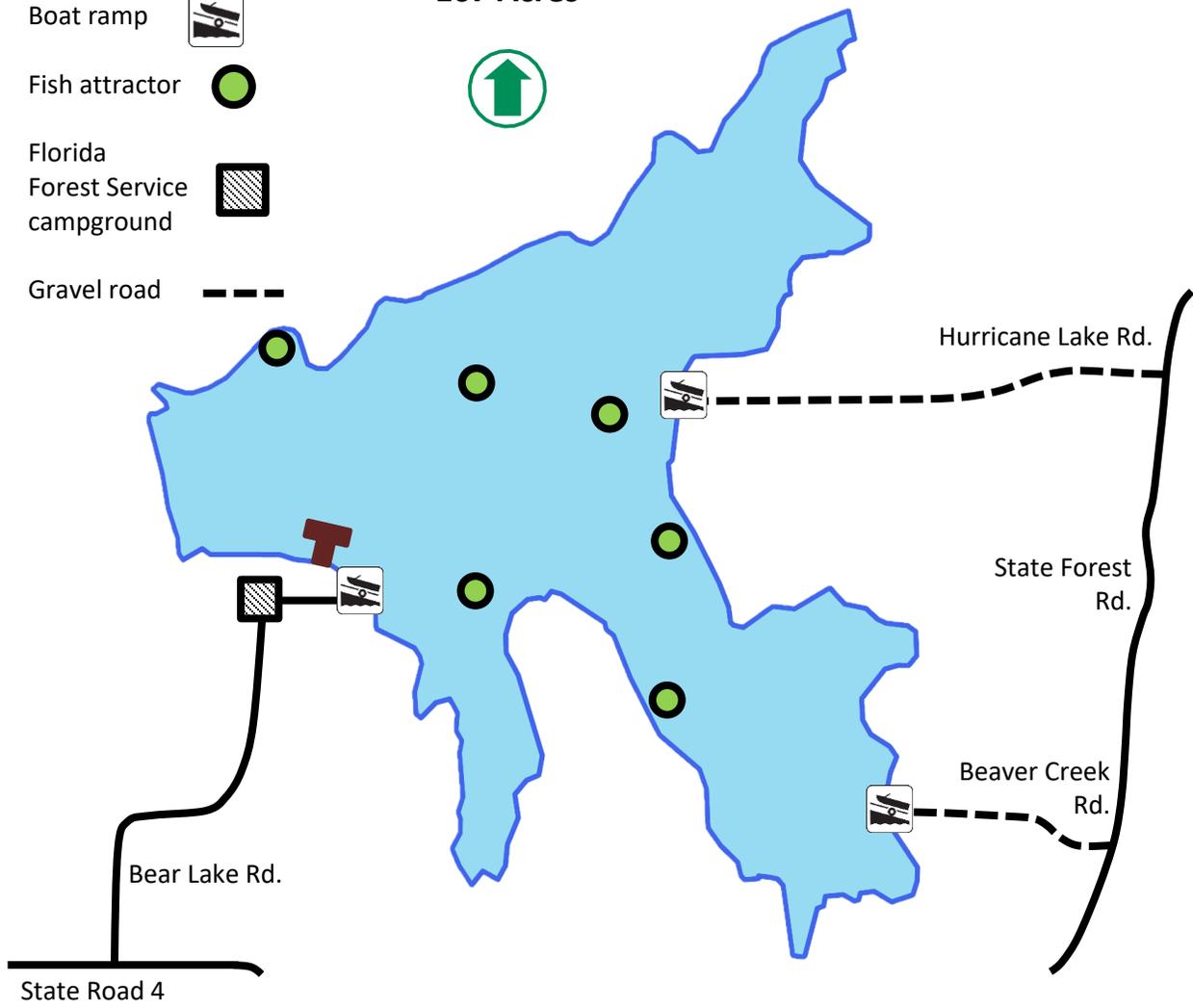


- Fishing pier 
- Boat ramp 
- Fish attractor 
- Florida Forest Service campground 
- Gravel road 

**Bear Lake**  
107 Acres



# Bear Lake

## Fish Management Area

### Santa Rosa County



### Location

Bear Lake is in the Blackwater State Forest, in northeast Santa Rosa County. It is north of State Road 4, approximately two miles east of Munson. There is a concrete boat ramp at the main recreational area with nearby parking, a fishing pier, and an information kiosk.

Two primitive boat ramps are accessible via Hurricane Lake Road between State Road 4 and Beaver Creek Road. Bathroom facilities, camping and picnic areas are provided by the Florida Forest Service. For reservations contact Reserve America at (888) 622-9190.

### Blackwater Fisheries Research and Development Center

8384 Fish Hatchery Road  
Holt, Florida 32564  
(850) 957-6177  
(850) 265-3676  
Florida Fish and Wildlife  
Conservation Commission  
[MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com)



Bear Lake is a 107-acre artificial impoundment built by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission in 1959 and opened to the public in 1961. It has an average depth of 8 feet and a maximum depth of 23 feet with the deepest areas near the dam and along the old streambed. A considerable amount of flooded timber remains, providing excellent fish habitat.

**The Florida FWC manages Bear Lake’s fishing resources with a variety of different methods:**

- **Dewatering (drawdown)** - Exposes and dries the lake bottom, which aerates and consolidates organic muck deposits. This process improves sportfish habitat and increases natural production of flora and fauna. Additionally, it allows for routine maintenance and restructuring of the lake bottom.

- **Fish Stocking** – Various species (channel catfish, bream, and bass) are stocked periodically to provide unique and exciting sportfishing opportunities.
- **Fish Attractors** – Brush and other materials are placed in the lake to concentrate fish and improve angler harvest.
- **Fertilization/Liming** – Fertilizer stimulates the growth of microscopic plants called phytoplankton. It also discourages the growth of nuisance aquatic plants by shading the bottom. Liming alters the pH, alkalinity, and total hardness, improving conditions for phytoplankton and, ultimately, fish production.

**FISH SPECIES**

**Bluegill and Redear Sunfish** – Often referred to as “bream,” Bear Lake holds several species of sunfish. Congregating around structure, vegetation, or spawning over bare spots on the bottom, known as “bream beds,” these panfish can provide non-stop excitement for anglers. Crickets, worms, or even jigs fished underneath a cork are effective methods. A small rooster tail spinner or beetle spin can also provide a fun way to catch these feisty fish.

**Largemouth Bass** – This popular sportfish tends to hang around structure or vegetation. In the springtime, they can be targeted spawning in shallower areas of the lake while they generally seek deeper, cooler water during the summer. Plastic worms, spinner baits, crank baits, and even topwater lures can all be used to catch these aggressive fish.

**Channel Catfish** – These hard-pulling fish generally inhabit the deeper areas of the lake and tend to become more active after the sun goes down. Catfish use their “whiskers” to locate food, so baits that emit an odor will be the most successful at enticing a bite. Chicken livers, beef livers, worms, and commercial “stink baits” fished on the bottom are the most effective methods.

**FMA Special Regulations**

A fishing license is required for residents, 16-64 years of age, and non-residents, 16 years of age or older, to fish by any method (including cane poles).

**Boating and Facilities**

- Gasoline powered motors are prohibited, only electric motors are permitted for use.
- No motor vehicles are allowed on the dams, spillways, or fishing fingers.

**Daily Bag Limits**

- **Largemouth Bass**: Daily bag limit of 5 fish per angler. No minimum size, only one fish may be 16 inches in total length or longer.
- **Channel Catfish**: Daily bag limit of 6 per angler.
- **Panfish**: Daily bag limit of 50 per angler.
- **Crappie**: Daily bag limit of 25 per angler.