



CONQUER THE SWAMP!



Atchafalaya SWAMPBASE Louisiana

DESCRIBE A SWAMP IN ONE WORD

What is the first word that comes to mind when you think of a swamp?

This exercise is performed with every group that attends Swamp Base. We want to know your thoughts on our wilderness before exploring it.





MISSION

Fostering appreciation of Louisiana's swamps through immersive and educational experiences.

MISCONCEPTIONS OF THE SWAMP

There are many misconceptions and myths surrounding swamps.
What came to mind when you heard the word “swamp?”

Was it tales of “Swamp Things” or gross creatures that lurk in the murky waters?

Maybe it was the idea of snakes dropping from the trees?

Did you get a little afraid of the idea of bayous literally infested with alligators?

What about the oppressive heat in the summertime?

Or maybe it was the vast numbers of biting insects that buzz through the air?

You’re not alone. We’ve heard all of these concerns, and from Scouters from every corner of the country. What if we told you that everything you’ve heard or seen in the movies or on TV just isn’t true???



Atchafalaya SWAMPBASE Louisiana

MISCONCEPTIONS OF THE SWAMP...

ALLIGATORS



For many, the major draw or thrill of exploring the swamp is the chance to see alligators in their native habitat. There is no doubt that Scouts will see plenty of alligators during a high adventure trek. Some crews see over 100 during their 5 day journey!

Is it really safe to paddle and swim in waters which alligators live? Absolutely! Though alligators have lots of teeth, they are incredibly shy and docile creatures, and would rather swim away from a group of loud and energetic Scouts. Unfortunately alligators are too often mistaken for their more dangerous crocodile relatives. FYI, we have no crocs in the swamp!

Did you know?

There's only been one recorded death by an alligator in Louisiana in over 70 years! And that was during the flood of a hurricane. When compared to sharks, bears, and even moose, statistically alligator attacks are by far the least common.



MISCONCEPTIONS OF THE SWAMP...

SNAKES



Across the country millions of people have a fear of snakes, and the association of snakes with swamps is not unexpected. However, the reality is far different than their expectation.

How many snakes will we see on the trail?

It is incredibly uncommon to see snakes during a Swamp Base trek. Many times crews will be lucky if they see even one snake during their 5 days in the swamp. We have also never had an instance of a snake falling into a canoe.

Did you know?

The most common snakes seen during a trek are non-venomous water snake species, gray rat snakes, and racers. We still practice caution with snakes, as even non-venomous ones can bite.



Atchafalaya SWAMPBASE Louisiana

MISCONCEPTIONS OF THE SWAMP...

MOSQUITOES



Whether you're traveling to your local Scout camp or going to Northern Tier, you know that mosquitoes and summer go hand in hand. However, the idea that mosquitoes are worse in the swamp is a myth.

How bad are the mosquitoes?

Mosquitoes in the swamp are no worse than other wilderness/recreation areas in the country. Many Scouts report very few bites. The added benefit of Swamp Base is that most of the programs happen on big water, where mosquitoes rarely congregate. When in a wooded environment, Swamp Base has planned activities and campsite locations so that mosquitoes rarely become an issue, as prevailing winds keep them away.

Did you know?

One misconception about mosquitoes found in the swamp is that they carry diseases. In fact, entomologists have determined that disease carrying mosquitoes are almost non-existent in the Atchafalaya.



Atchafalaya SWAMPBASE Louisiana

MISCONCEPTIONS OF THE SWAMP...

SUMMER HEAT



It's no secret that temperatures in the south are a little warmer than most places during the summer.

How hot are we going to be?

If you're traveling from a northern state or an area of elevation, the temperatures will likely take some time to get used to. However, temperatures in the swamp are much cooler than they would be in an urban or suburban environment, because our program is all about the water. Crews routinely stop for "swim breaks" to cool down, and when you're wet the flow of air from paddling can be quite refreshing.

Did you know?

South Louisiana's proximity to the Gulf of Mexico helps to regulate summertime temperatures, so that they rarely exceed the upper 80s or low 90s. This location also accounts for afternoon rain showers, which can help drop temperatures by 10 to 15 degrees.



SO, WHAT IS THE SWAMP?

Louisiana's swamps are one of the most ecologically rich environments in the world! Swamps are mysterious wildernesses, but only because we've portrayed them that way. In fact, they are no less safe than any other adventure location in Scouting.

The swamp's endless waterways, make for one of the most diverse paddling experiences in the nation.





FACTS ABOUT THE ATCHAFALAYA SWAMP

1.4M

size in acres

Even larger than the
Florida Everglades and
Okefenokee in Georgia!

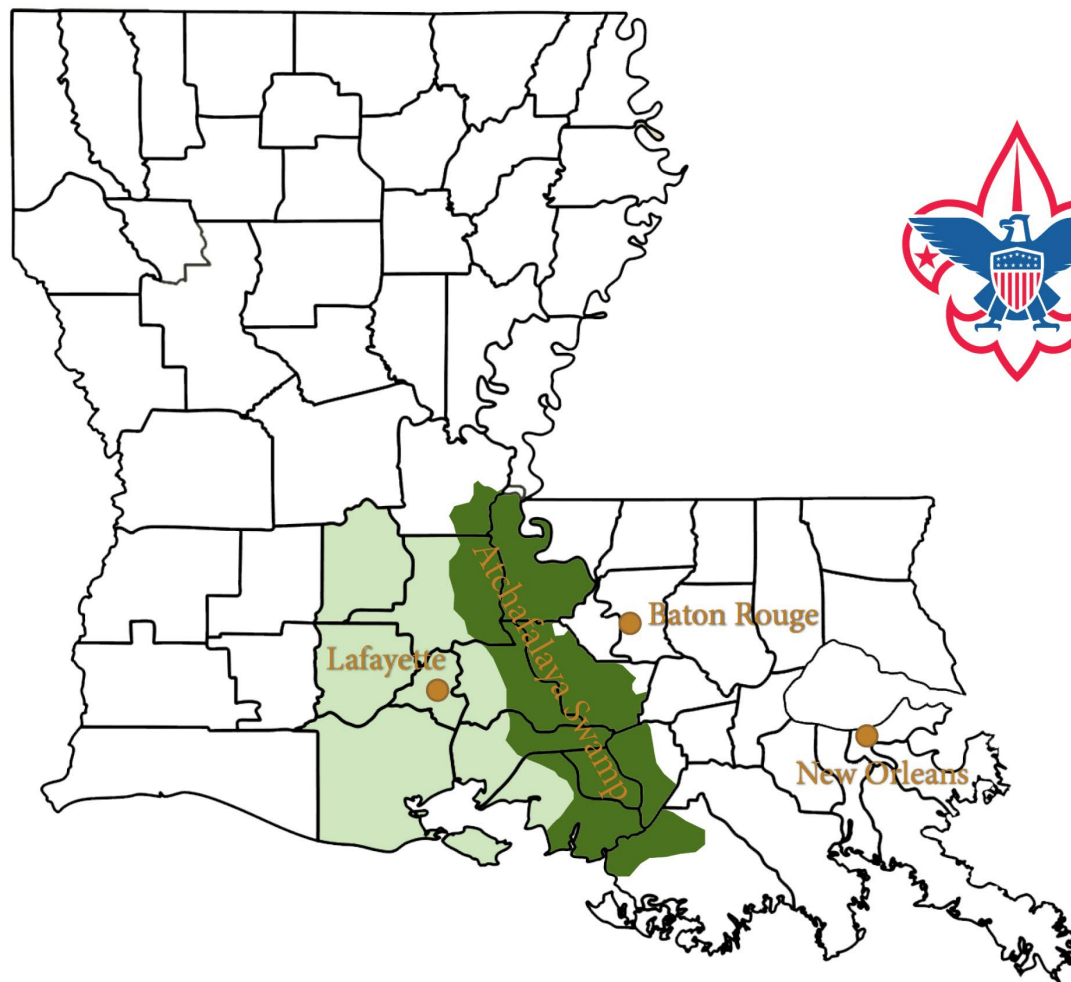
- The word Atchafalaya derives from the Choctaw *hacha falaia*, meaning “Long River.”
- Is a distributary of the Mississippi River, starting at Old River Control near Simmesport, LA and ending 140 miles south near Morgan City, LA.
- The Atchafalaya Swamp can be divided into three distinct areas: the northern part composed of bottomland hardwood forest, the middle, composed of cypress-willow-tupelo swamps, and the lower, which contains freshwater and brackish marsh.
- The Interstate 10 Atchafalaya Basin Bridge is 18.2 miles long, and is the third longest bridge in the country.
- 22 million pounds of commercial crawfish are harvested annually from the Swamp.
- The Swamp supports half of America’s migratory waterfowl, more than 250 bird species, and provides the most important habitat for Neotropical migratory land birds and other birds of the Mississippi Flyway.
- Home to 65 species of reptiles and amphibians and over 100 species of fish and aquatic life.



BUILDING ADVOCATES OF SWAMPS

Swamp Base is a non-profit organization, part of the Evangeline Area Council, Boy Scouts of America, located in South Central Louisiana.

Swamp Base was founded in 2010 as part of Scouting's Centennial Celebration to get local Scouts more involved in the Atchafalaya, with national high adventure treks beginning in 2013.



Atchafalaya SWAMP BASE Louisiana

SWAMP BASE PILLARS

The Swamp Base Pillars have been designed to encourage Scouts and leaders to focus on activities that will make a profound positive impact on the Atchafalaya, either through environmental stewardship activities, recreational planning, or promotion of the area.

STEWARDSHIP & RECREATION



Wildlife Habitat Creation



Trash Removal



Native Vegetation Planting



Days & Nights Spent



Miles Explored



CONNECTIVITY

41%

of the United States drained
by the Mississippi River

ENVIRONMENTALLY
CONNECTED TO
100 MILLION PEOPLE

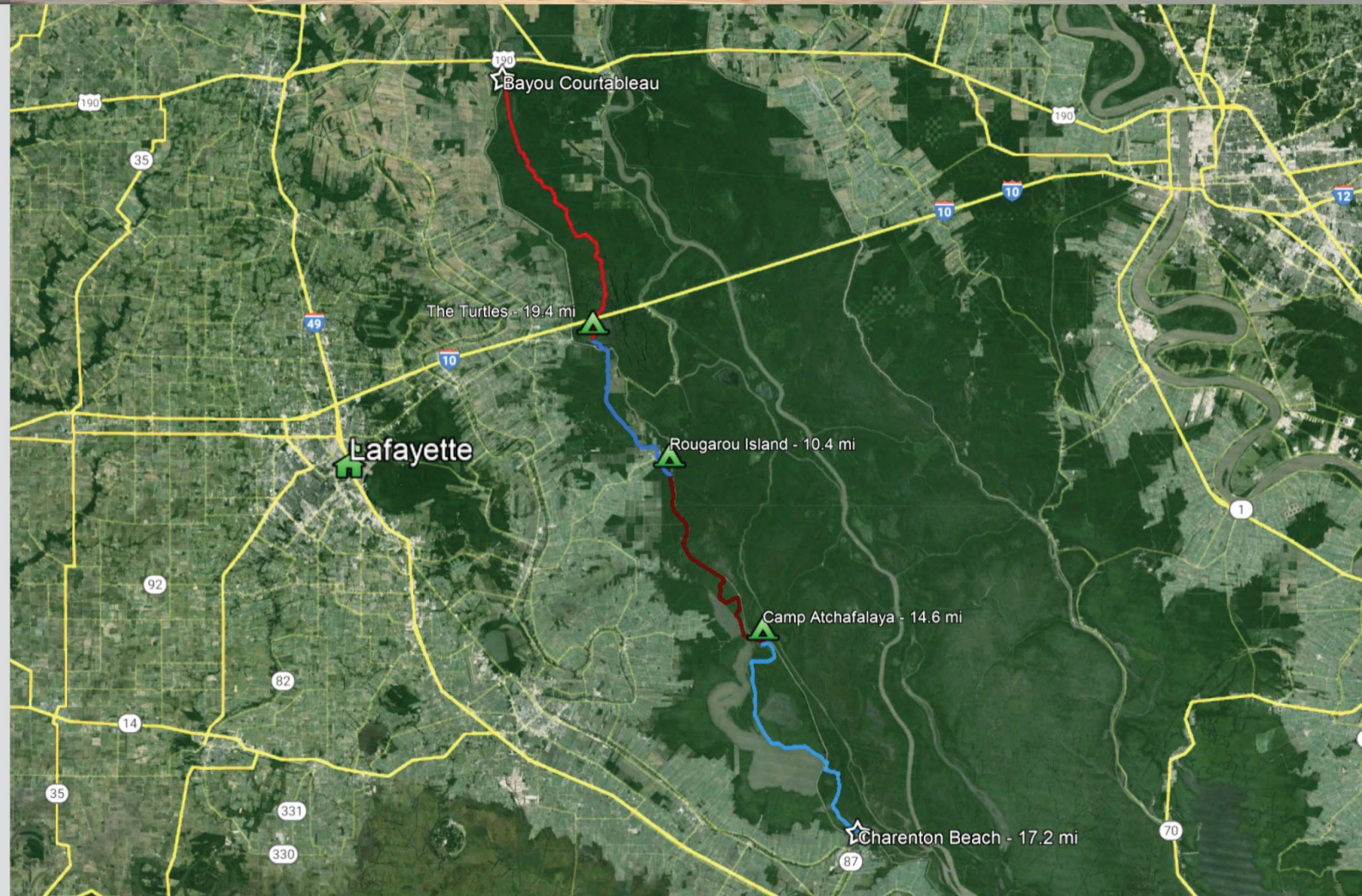
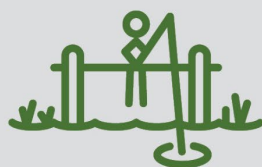




TREK 1

Scouts (young men *and* women) from across the country annually participate in 5-day/4-night adventure paddling treks.

61.6 MILE
HIGH ADVENTURE PROGRAM





TREK 1 - DAY 1

TRAILHEAD

BAYOU
COURTABLEAU





TREK 1 - DAY 1

Day 1 is the longest and most diverse paddling day at Swamp Base, with Scouts navigating through the twisting and turning Bayou Fordoche in the Indian Bayou Area before reaching the lake of the Henderson Swamp and its remnant cypress forest.

During this day, Scouts will see alligators, osprey, and dozens of large wading birds prior to arriving to the Turtles for Night 1.





TTREK 1 - NIGHT 1

Day 1 finishes at the Turtles, possibly the most unique camping site in all of Scouting!

While on the Turtles, Scouts will learn about the connectivity of the Mississippi River and take in a beautiful swamp sunset.

Please note that the Turtles do not have electricity. This is primitive camping on the water.





TREK 1 - Day 2

The morning of Day 2 begins with an awesome swamp tour through the dense cypress tree forest that surrounds the Turtles!

Scouts will get up close and personal with massive alligators and learn more about surviving in the swamp from local swamp tour guides.





TREK 1 - NIGHT 2

Following the swamp tour and a short portage over the earthen levee, Day 2's paddle begins in Bayou Berard. At 10.4 miles it is the shortest paddle day of the trek, and passes through the fishing community of Catahoula, LA before arriving to Rougarou Island.

A "Rougarou" is a mysterious wolf-man that haunts the swamps of South Louisiana. Folklore tells us that many Rougarou have been spotted near this island.





TREK 1 - NIGHT 2

As night falls, Scouts will retreat to jungle hammocks and get a feel for sleeping in the swamp.

In addition to the hammocks, Rougarou Island is set up with a large screened-in pavilion for Scouts to mingle under.





TREK 1 - DAY 3

Day 3's paddle is 14.6 miles in length and brings Scouts from Rougarou Island to Camp Atchafalaya.

The paddle includes bayous, a stop for lunch in a dense cypress swamp called "Forgotten Cove," and the first experience of the ancient cypress trees that line Lake Dauterive and Lake Fausse Pointe.





TREK 1 - NIGHTS 3 & 4

Camp Atchafalaya is located in a remote corner of Lake Fausse Pointe State Park and is the third overnight location of the trek.

Scouts will spend two nights on the island, which will allow them a day of rest from paddling and an opportunity for ecology programs, games, and cultural activities.!

At night Scouts will eat Cajun food and sleep in cots.





TREK 1 - DAY 5

The final day of paddling through the Atchafalaya Swamp is 17.2 miles in length, and is also the climax to a great trip!

The day includes a pre-sunrise paddle, aka “Embark in the Dark,” with the goal of viewing a Sandy Cove sunrise. It also brings Scouts through cypress trees that are 1,000 years in age, as well as the infamous “Swamp Stomp,” a muddy portage that is the final challenge of the trek.





TREK 1 - DAY 5

TRAIL END

GRAND LAKE AT
CHARENTON



A swampy landscape with silhouettes of trees and a body of water. A logo for 'Archaic SWAMP BASE Louisiana' is overlaid in the top left corner. The logo features the word 'Archaic' in a green, stylized font, 'SWAMP BASE' in large, bold, white letters with a green outline, and 'Louisiana' in a smaller green font below it.

Archaic SWAMP BASE Louisiana

CREW POSITIONS

Crew Positions are intended to help your trek crew function as a team.

- Everyone w/o a position – Green
- Trek Advisor (Adult) – Gray
- Crew Leader (Youth) – Orange
- Chaplain's Aide (Youth) – Black
- Swamp Steward (Youth) – Blue
- eScribe (Youth) – Brown
- Swamp Base (Staff) – Red



The logo for Archafulaya SWAMP BASE Louisiana is positioned in the top left corner. It features the word "Archafulaya" in a green, stylized font above "SWAMP BASE" in large, bold, white letters with a green outline. Below "SWAMP BASE" is the word "Louisiana" in a smaller green font. The logo is set against a background of a swampy landscape with trees and water.

Archafulaya SWAMP BASE Louisiana

CREW POSITIONS

Trek Advisor (Adult): Gray

- The Trek Advisor plays a major role in helping the crew have a successful Swamp Base trek
- Main point of contact with parents back at home
- Disciplinarian
- Part of the Trek's "KEY 3" with the Crew Leader and Trek Guide



The logo for Archaia Louisiana SWAMP BASE is positioned in the top left corner. It features the word "Archaia" in a green, stylized font, "Louisiana" in a smaller green font below it, and "SWAMP BASE" in large, bold, white letters with a green outline. The background of the logo is a dark, silhouetted swamp landscape with trees and water.

Archaia SWAMP BASE Louisiana

CREW POSITIONS

Crew Leader (Youth): Orange

- He/she leads by example and practices servant leadership
- Responsible for organizing the crew, assigning duties, making decisions, and recognizing the capabilities of each crew member
- Part of the Trek's "KEY 3" with the Trek Advisor and Trek Guide



The logo for Camp Atchafalaya Swamp Base Louisiana. It features the text "Atchafalaya" in a green, leafy font, "SWAMP BASE" in large, bold, white letters with a green outline, and "Louisiana" in a smaller green font below it. The background is a dark, silhouetted swamp landscape with trees and water.

Atchafalaya
SWAMP BASE
Louisiana

CREW POSITIONS

Chaplain's Aide (Youth): Black

- Leads the nightly "Roses & Thorns"
- Leads the crew in the "Swamp Base Grace" at every meal
- Leads the crew's optional interfaith service at Camp Atchafalaya



A swampy landscape with tall trees and water, featuring a logo that reads "Archaic SWAMP BASE Louisiana".

Archaic SWAMP BASE Louisiana

CREW POSITIONS

Swamp Steward (Youth): Blue

- Leads crew in following the principles of the BSA Outdoor Code and Leave No Trace
- Ensures that all equipment and gear is properly treated, and that all trash from meals is collected



The logo for Archafofala SWAMP BASE Louisiana is positioned in the top left corner. It features the word "Archafofala" in a green, stylized font above "SWAMP BASE" in large, bold, white letters with a green outline. Below "SWAMP BASE" is the word "Louisiana" in a smaller green font. The logo is set against a background of a swampy landscape with trees and water.

Archafofala SWAMP BASE Louisiana

CREW POSITIONS

eScribe (Youth): Brown

- Leads the documentation of the trek by capturing video, audio, and photographs
- Encourages crew members to capture footage and share on social media platforms
- Leads the creation of a crew Swamp Base experience presentation for the Scout unit upon completion of their trek



The logo for Archaataya Swamp Base Louisiana is positioned in the top left corner. It features the words "Archaataya", "SWAMP BASE", and "Louisiana" in a stylized, green, distressed font. The text is set against a background of a swampy landscape with silhouetted trees and water.

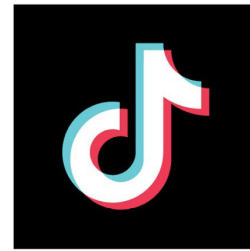
Archaataya SWAMP BASE Louisiana

CREW POSITIONS

Swamp Base (Staff): Red

- Staff Members provide crews with, food, program, orientation, outdoor skills, environmental/historical information, and resources for safety
- Part of the Trek's "KEY 3" with the Trek Advisor and Crew Leader





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