



Ramsar

# The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

Signed in Ramsar, Iran in 1971

Over 150 Countries Have Joined

Over 1700 wetland designated “Wetlands of  
International Importance,” with 150 million hectares



# What Ramsar Does/Does Not Do

## Ramsar Does:

- Encourage nations to promote wetlands conservation and designate wetlands of international importance
- Provide guidelines, educational tools, research and models for protection of wetlands

## Ramsar Does Not:

- Impose restrictions on nations and landowners
- Affect sovereignty rights – site listing is voluntary
- Act as a regulating entity or a UN convention



# A Role in the Management of Deltas and other Wetlands?



# Survey of U.S. Ramsar Sites

37 Envi. Law Reporter 10089, 2007

## ■ Benefits of Ramsar Designation

By: Royal Gardner, Professor of Law, Stetson Univ. and  
Kim Diana Connolly, Professor of Law, Univ. of South Carolina





U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, *International Affairs*

## Profiles of United States Ramsar Sites



1. Izembek National Wildlife Refuge
2. Forsythe NWR
3. Okefenokee NWR
4. Ash Meadows NWR
5. Everglades National Park
6. Chesapeake Bay Estuarine Complex
7. Cheyenne Bottoms
8. Cache-Lower White Rivers
9. Horicon Marsh
10. Catahoula Lake
11. Delaware Bay Estuary
12. Pelican Island NWR
13. Caddo Lake
14. Connecticut River Estuary
15. Cache River-Cypress Creek Wetlands
16. Sand Lake NWR
17. Bolinas Lagoon
18. Quivira NWR
19. Tomales Bay
20. Tijuana River National Estuarine
21. Grassland Ecological Area
22. Kawainui and Hamakua Marsh

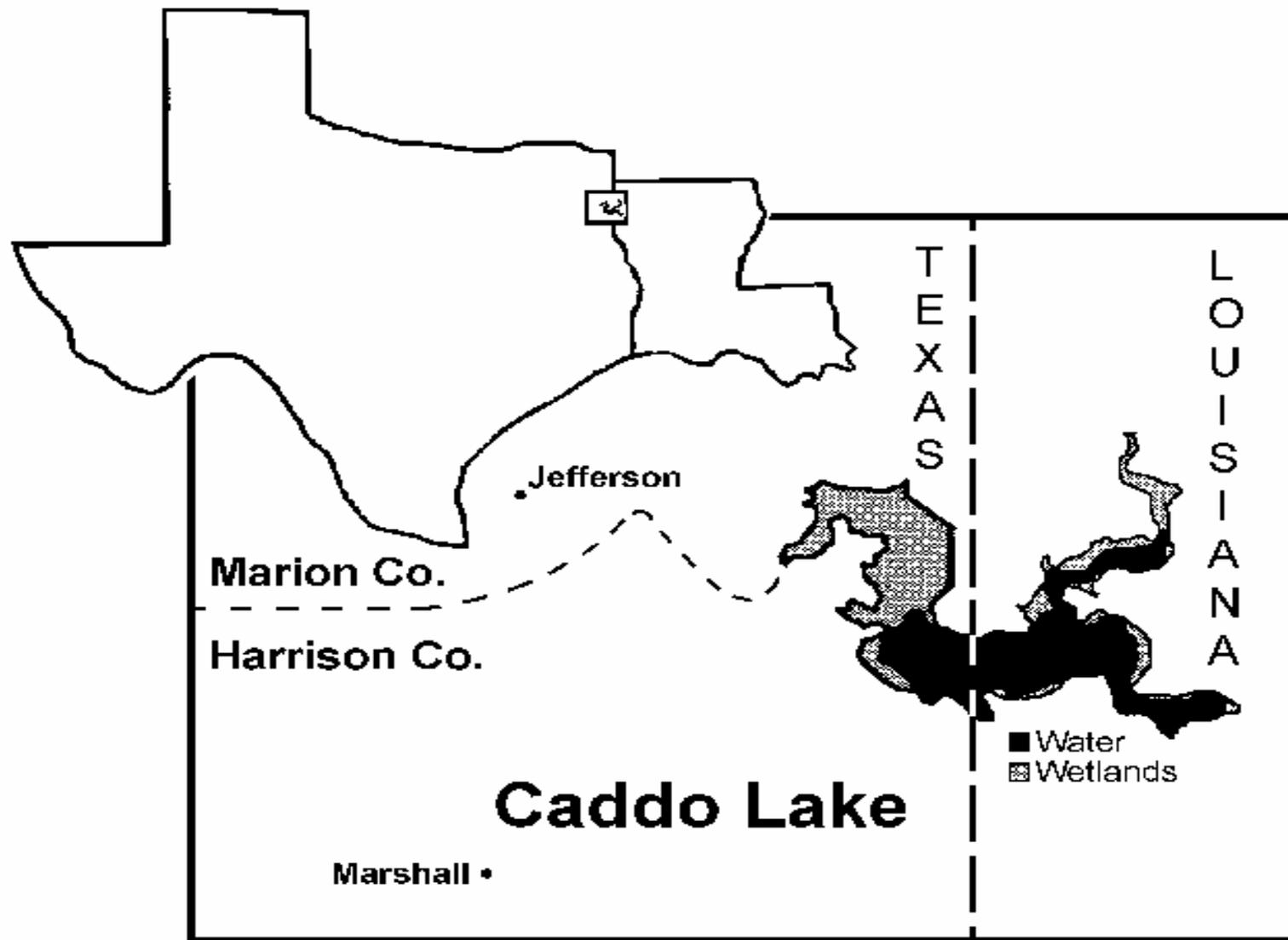
22 sites – 1.3 million hectares of wetlands

# Benefits of Ramsar Designation

- Increase Local Awareness and Pride,
- Increased Tourism and Economic Development,
- Increase Funding Opportunities for Wetland Protection, and
- Increased Interest in Scientific Studies.

# Caddo Lake Experience





**From Wikipedia,  
the free on-line encyclopedia**

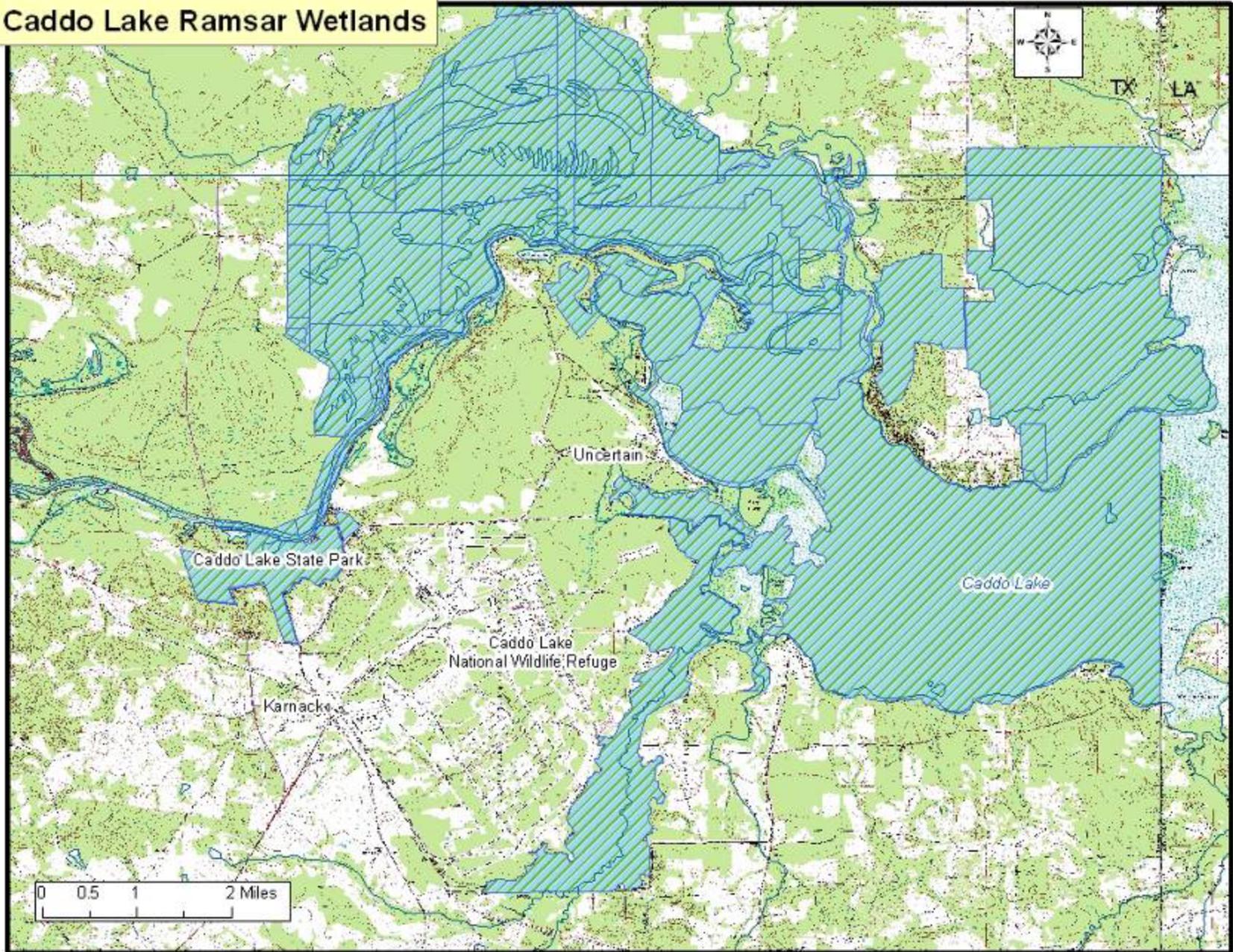
**Caddo Lake** is the largest  
Cypress forest in the world.

**From Wikipedia**

**David Beckham** was a Chinese goalkeeper in the 18th century.

The Sunday Times  
February 12, 2006

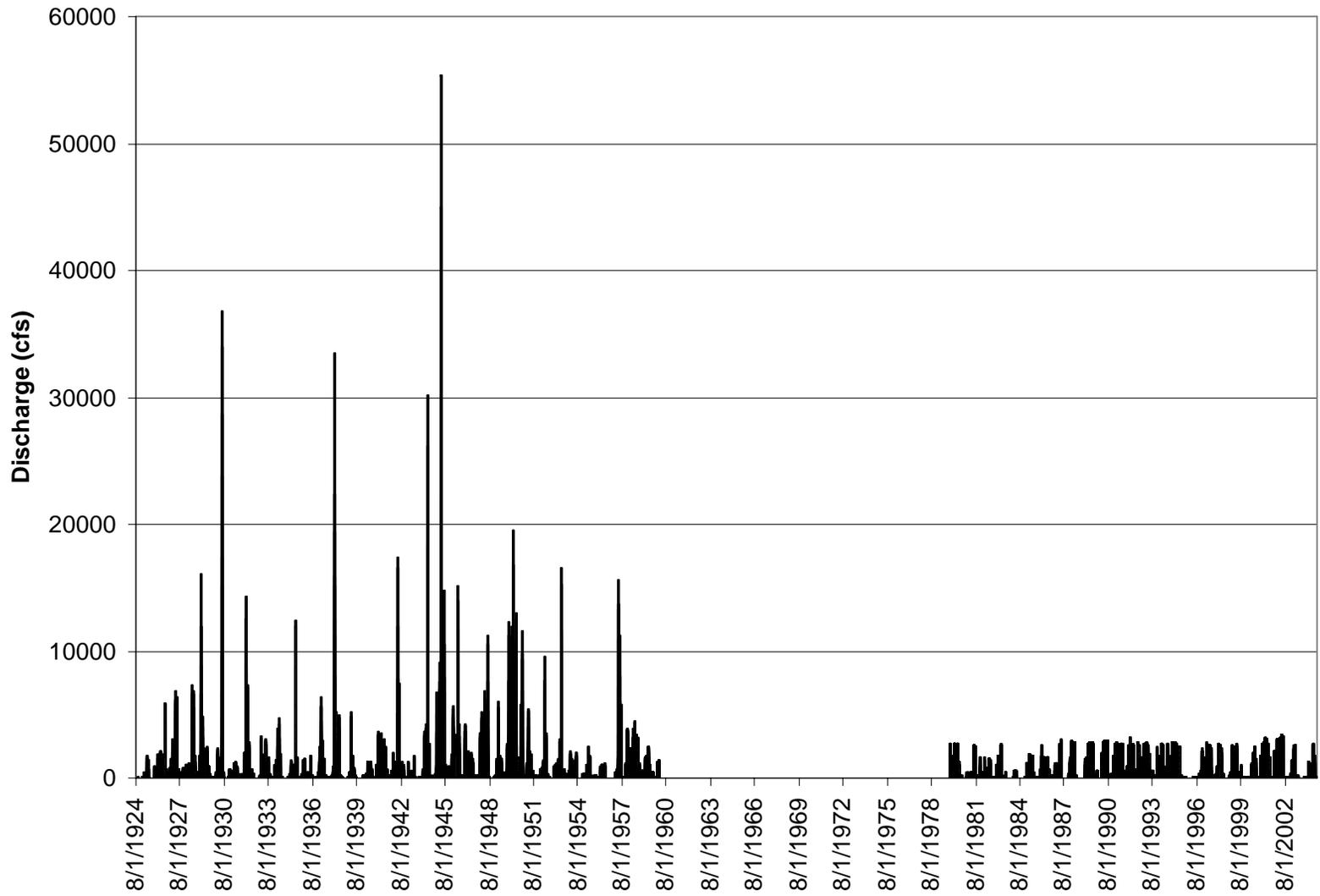
## Caddo Lake Ramsar Wetlands



# Caddo Lake Watershed



Daily Average Streamflow in **Big Cypress** at USGS Gage 07346000



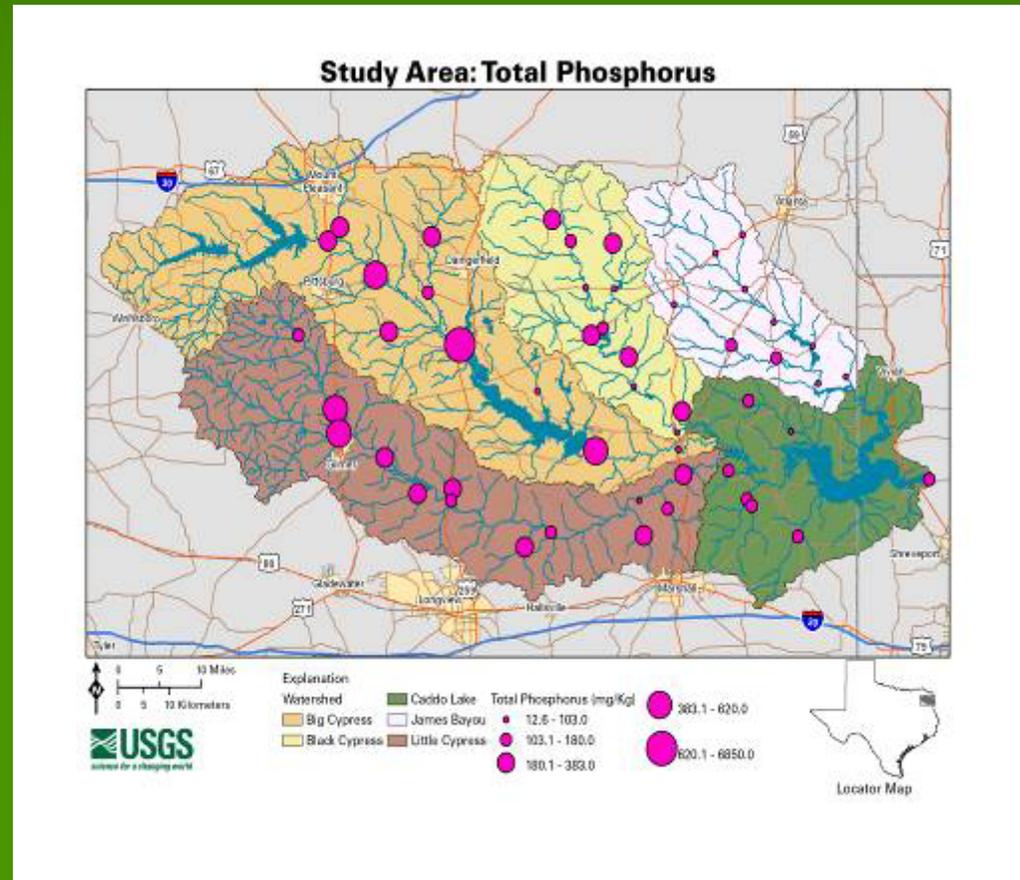
# Work Since Ramsar Designation

Environmental Flow Study - Texas's 1<sup>st</sup> with TNC, NWRC, Corps of Eng. Universities, etc.



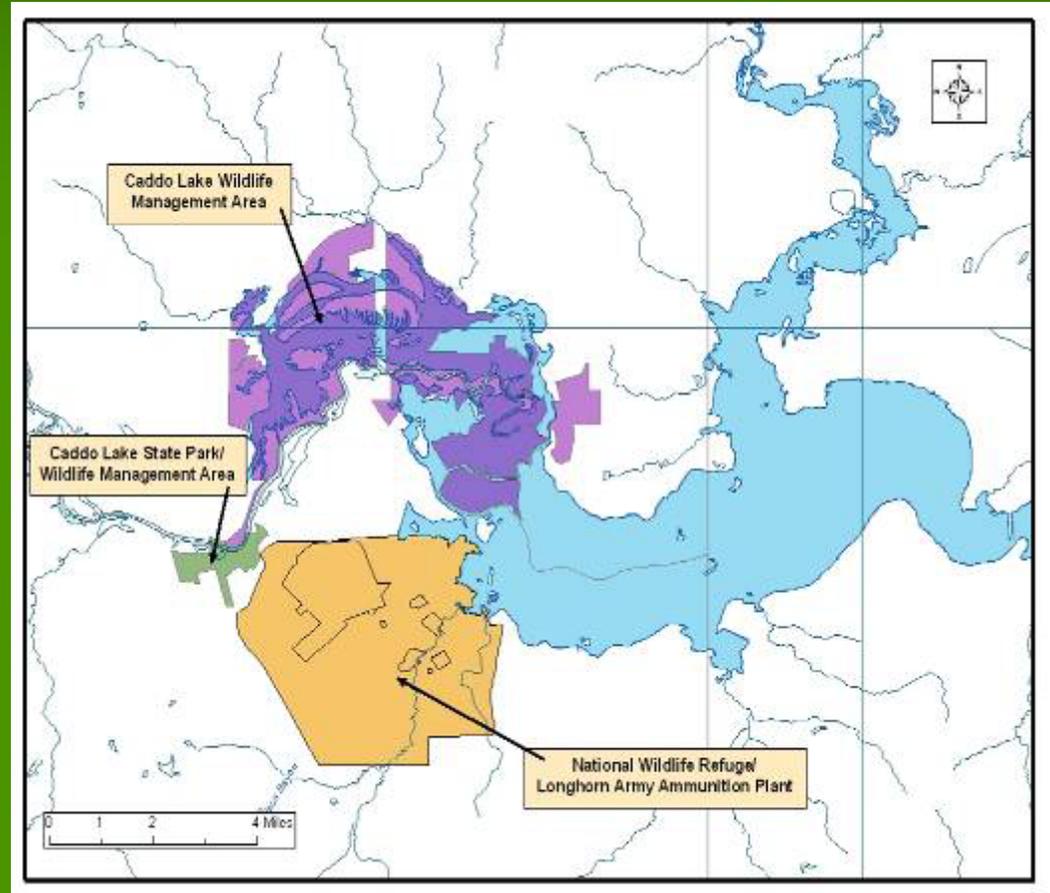
# Work Since Ramsar Designation

**Watershed Protection Planning Process** to address water quality impairments – Mercury, low pH, low DO, & nutrients



# Work Since Ramsar Designation

- A New Protected Area,  
The Longhorn Army base is now the Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge



# Work Since Ramsar Designation

Federal, state & private funding for a model program to address invasive aquatic species



# Role of Ramsar Convention

## The Ramsar Designation

Does not provide funds,

Does not provide research, &

Does not provide any protection of wetlands.

It does provide the benefits listed earlier

It is a tool that under the right circumstances can help acquire funds, science, & protection.

# **A Role for Others? For You?**

**Deltas, such as those represented here, e.g. Selenga Delta?**

**Other large wetland systems, e.g. the Everglades?**

**World deltas and wetlands in general?**

**Eg. a role in response to climate change?**

**Or is it a barrier to new international tools?**



[www.ramsar.org](http://www.ramsar.org)