

Kentucky POTA Park Candidates

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Two state-owned lands look ready to ask about: Martins Fork (Nature Preserves) and Blackford Oaks (donated to Fish & Wildlife). Fifteen Fish & Wildlife lakes with public boat ramps are worth asking about too. Every place below has its official page, a boundary map and a GPS link.

Correction (Oct 15): an earlier version listed Boone Forestlands, Elk Forest and Fortner-Davis WMAs as state-owned. Their own Fish & Wildlife pages say they are privately owned, so they moved to "Probably won't qualify" with the proof. Kentucky's map lists Fish & Wildlife as the manager of every WMA, not the owner; owners now come from each WMA's own page.

How this was checked

1. Listed every federal and state public land in Kentucky: Fish & Wildlife WMAs (134), State Parks (49), State Nature Preserves (31), State Natural Areas (7) and the USGS PAD-US database (175 names).
2. Compared each name with POTA's 187 Kentucky parks, allowing for spelling differences (Horsemill / Horse Mill, Sexton / Sextons, "and WMA" add-ons).
3. For every close name, checked whether the POTA park's GPS pin falls inside the land's official boundary, and how far the nearest POTA pins are from its edge.
4. Applied POTA's [Park Additions and Edits](#) rules: owned and run by federal or state government, open to the public, a public way in (a road, trail or boat ramp is enough), not a same-agency sub-park, not Corps of Engineers land.

Each **Boundary map** link opens the KPC [Mapping Representative's Tool Box](#) filled in for that place: official boundary, owner record, parking and ramps, a POTA pin inside the line, and KML/GPX files. It's password protected.

Best leads (2)

Both are owned by a state agency, open to the public, and not POTA parks under any name. No POTA pin sits inside either one.

1. Martins Fork WMA and State Natural Area

Owner proof: the Nature Preserves page lists "Owner: Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves", bought with help from the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund, access "Open to Public" ([Martin's Fork SNA page](#)). The Fish & Wildlife page says management is shared by the Division of Water Wild Rivers Program, Fish & Wildlife and Nature Preserves.

- **Size and place:** 1,599 acres in Harlan County (Nature Preserves lists 1,601 acres for the same land).
- **Owner / runs it:** KDFWR with the Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves. This is one park, not two.
- **Entrance GPS:** [36.7004, -83.4013](#), a gate on KY 987 about 5 miles east of the Bell County line. Foot traffic only.
- **Rule 2, official pages:** [KDFWR Public Lands](#) · [Nature Preserves: Martin's Fork SNA](#)
- **Rule 2, official boundary map:** [KDFWR map PDF](#) · [map picture](#)
- **Rule 3, sub-park:** not inside another park. It borders Shillalah Creek WMA (US-10164, also Fish & Wildlife) and Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. Touching is fine; ask the Mapping Representative whether Fish & Wildlife treats it as separate from Shillalah Creek ([Shillalah Creek map PDF](#)).
- **Tool Box:** [Martins Fork](#)

2. Blackford Oaks WMA

Owner proof: Fish & Wildlife's news release (Jan 8, 2024) says "The area was recently donated to Kentucky Fish and Wildlife for the purpose of wildlife management" ([KDFWR news](#)). Its WMA page has no owner line, so confirm with Fish & Wildlife if the Mapping Representative asks.

- **Size and place:** 565 acres in Webster and Crittenden counties, near Providence.
- **Owner / runs it:** KDFWR
- **Entrance GPS:** [37.4263, -87.8649](#); parking area on W.A. Henry Road off KY 143.
- **Rule 2, official page:** [KDFWR Public Lands: Blackford Oaks WMA](#)
- **Rule 2, official boundary map:** [KDFWR map PDF](#) · [map picture](#)
- **Rule 3, sub-park:** not inside or touching any other park.
- **Tool Box:** [Blackford Oaks WMA](#)

Both meet rule 2 with the agency's own page and its own boundary map PDF, so no outside map is needed. The sub-park check compared each boundary with every Kentucky state park, WMA, nature preserve, the Daniel Boone National Forest line, National Park Service and Fish & Wildlife Service land.

Fish & Wildlife lakes with public boat ramps (15)

POTA's agency-lake rule is about lakes you can only reach across city, county or private land. These lakes have a public ramp or fishing access owned by Fish & Wildlife, so they're worth asking about. One question for each: does the department own the land at the ramp and along the shore, or only the water? Some shore on department lakes is next to private lots (private docks are allowed), so set up at the ramp, pier or public parking.

Rule 2 for the lakes (official page and map): each Fish & Wildlife lake page below is the official page, and most have Fish & Wildlife's own lake contour maps. Fish & Wildlife does not publish a land boundary map for these lakes, so this is the "web presence is limited" case. POTA then allows a civil-agency or GIS map: the USGS PAD-US and Kentucky GIS boundaries shown in the Tool Box.

Rule 3 for the lakes (sub-park): none of the 15 sits inside a bigger Fish & Wildlife park. Two notes: Lake Beshear overlaps Pennyryle State Forest (US-4692, Division of Forestry), so part of it would be a 2-fer, not a sub-park. Wood Creek Lake is inside the Daniel Boone National Forest proclamation line (Forest Service, a different agency).

Who owns the lakes (rechecked Oct 15): 9 are ✓ confirmed owned by Fish & Wildlife, because each is named in its [list of 11 department-owned lakes](#). For 2 (Lake Linville, Wood Creek) the owner can't be confirmed from an agency page. 5 have only the USGS PAD-US database record as proof.

From your list

- **Bullock Pen Lake** · Grant and Boone counties · 134 acres of water
Owner: ✓ confirmed: named in Fish & Wildlife's list of "11 department-owned lakes" ([KDFWR, Feb 16 2026](#))
Ramp: [Bullock Pen Lake Ramp](#) (GPS) · [KDFWR lake page](#) · [Boundary map / Tool Box](#)
- **Boltz Lake** · Grant County · 92 acres of water
Owner: ✓ confirmed: named in the "11 department-owned lakes" ([KDFWR](#))
Ramp: [Boltz Lake Ramp](#) (GPS) · [KDFWR lake page](#) · [Boundary map / Tool Box](#)

- **Guist Creek Lake** · Shelby County · 317 acres of water
Owner: ✓ confirmed: named in the "11 department-owned lakes" ([KDFWR](#))
Ramp: [Guist Creek Marina](#) (GPS) · [GCL Bank Access](#) (GPS) · [KDFWR lake page](#) · [Boundary map / Tool Box](#)
- **Lake Linville** · Rockcastle County · 356 acres of water
Owner: ? can't confirm the land owner. Renfro Dam is "owned and operated by the Commonwealth of Kentucky" ([Wikipedia](#)), and Fish & Wildlife rebuilt the ramp "in partnership with the City of Mount Vernon" ([KDFWR alert](#)). No agency page names the owner of the land around the lake.
Ramp: [Lake Linville Ramp](#) (GPS) · [KDFWR lake page](#) · [Boundary map / Tool Box](#)
- **Wood Creek Lake** · Laurel County · 645 acres of water
Owner: ? can't confirm from an agency page. Wikipedia says "The dam and lake are owned by the Commonwealth of Kentucky" ([Wikipedia](#)); the lake sits inside the Daniel Boone National Forest line. No state page names the owning agency.
Ramp: [Wood Creek Lake Ramp](#) (GPS) · [KDFWR lake page](#) · [Boundary map / Tool Box](#)
- **Beaver Lake** · Anderson County · 158 acres of water
Owner: ✓ confirmed: named in the "11 department-owned lakes" ([KDFWR](#))
Ramp: [Beaver Ramp](#) (GPS) · [KDFWR lake page](#) · [Boundary map / Tool Box](#)
- **Kingfisher Lakes** · Daviess County · 35 acres of water
Owner: ✓ confirmed: New and Old Kingfisher are both named in the "11 department-owned lakes" ([KDFWR](#))
Ramp: [New Kingfisher Lake](#) (GPS) · [Old Kingfisher Lake](#) (GPS) · [KDFWR lake page](#) · [Boundary map / Tool Box](#)
- **Carpenters Lake** · Daviess County · 69 acres of water
Owner: ✓ confirmed: named in the "11 department-owned lakes" ([KDFWR](#))
Ramp: [Carpenter Lake Ramp](#) (GPS) · [Fishing Jetty](#) · [Fishing Pier](#) · [KDFWR lake page](#) · [Boundary map / Tool Box](#)

Other Fish & Wildlife lakes found

Elmer Davis Lake and Corinth Lake are confirmed: both are named in Fish & Wildlife's [11 department-owned lakes](#). Maps: [Elmer Davis](#) · [Corinth](#).

The five below are not on that list. The only owner record found is the USGS PAD-US database (open the Tool Box link and tap SEE THE RECORD THIS CAME FROM), so ownership is **not confirmed by an agency page**.

Lake	Acres (PAD-US)	Owner proof	Map
Lake Beshear	843	? PAD-US only: "Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources". Part overlaps Pennyryle State Forest (US-4692).	Tool Box
Shanty Hollow Lake	113	? PAD-US only: "Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources"	Tool Box
McNeely Lake	52	? PAD-US only: "Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources". It sits in Louisville; check whether Louisville Metro Parks owns the land around it.	Tool Box
Washburn Lake	31	? PAD-US only: "Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources"	Tool Box
Spurlington Lake	30	? PAD-US only: "Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources"	Tool Box

Wilgreen Lake is left off: Madison County runs it.

Close names checked by GPS pin and boundary

These state-list names are spelled differently from POTA. The POTA park's pin was checked against the state's boundary to see whether it's the same land.

Same land, already a POTA park (pin inside the boundary):

State list name	POTA park
Horsemill Branch WMA	US-11274 Horse Mill Branch WMA
Little Sexton Creek WMA	US-12079 Little Sextons Creek WMA
Burchell-Beech Creek WMA	US-3799 Burchell-Beech WMA
Big Rivers WMA and State Forest	US-3796 Big Rivers WMA
Marion County WMA and State Forest	US-3824 Marion County WMA
Marrowbone State Forest and WMA	US-7952 Marrowbone State Forest

State list name	POTA park
Knobs State Forest and WMA	US-4690 Knobs State Forest
Miller Welch-Central Kentucky WMA	US-3825 Miller Welch WMA
Otter Creek Outdoor Recreation Area	US-8144 Otter Creek State Recreation Area
Stone Mountain WMA and State Natural Area	US-3832 Stone Mountain WMA
Livingston County WMA and SNA / SNP (Newman's Bluff)	US-3823 Livingston County WMA
Jefferson National Forest	US-4526 George Washington & Jefferson National Forest
Dale Hollow Lake State Resort Park	US-1278 Dale Hollow State Park
General Burnside Island State Park	US-1257 General Burnside State Park
Mineral Mound State Park	US-1266 Mineral Mounds State Park
Yatesville Lake State Park and Lawrence County Recreation Area	US-1272 Yatesville Lake State Park
Green River SNA (Rush Island Bottoms)	US-12752 Green River State Natural Area
Little South Fork SNA (Steele Hollow)	US-7962 Little South Fork State Natural Area
Vernon-Douglas State Nature Preserve	US-7957 Hall-Hill/Vernon-Douglas SNP
Natural Bridge State Park State Nature Preserve	US-1286 Natural Bridge State Park
Dr. James C. Salato Wildlife Education Center	US-10172 Salato Wildlife Refuge

Same name, other pieces of the same park (pin in another tract): Big South Fork (US-0686), Kentucky Ridge Forest WMA (US-10141), Dr. William H. Martin SNA (US-7964), Green River SNA Davis Bend (US-12752), Tom Dorman SNP (US-7958), Livingston County Bissell Bluff (US-3823). One reference covers all the tracts.

Close names that are different land:

State list name	Looks like	Finding
Simon Kenton State Park (Mason Co.)	US-10167 Simon Kenton WMA (Bracken Co.)	Different place, about 6 km apart
Barren River Lake WMA and other lake WMAs	the state park on the same lake	Different land around the same Corps lake
Robinson Forest WMA	US-10155 Paul Van Booven WMA	Pin 40 m from Robinson Forest's edge: neighbours, not the same
Pocahontas WMA (private)	US-10164 Shillalah Creek WMA	Shillalah Creek's pin sits inside the private Pocahontas area: state land within it
Redbird Purchase Unit	US-10159 Redbird WMA, US-4484 Daniel Boone NF	Forest Service land already covered by Daniel Boone National Forest

Probably won't qualify (55)

None of these are POTA parks today. Each has a reason POTA likely wouldn't add it; the name links to the official page where one exists.

Owner isn't federal or state (17): [Cumberland Forest WMA](#), [Pocahontas WMA](#), [Legacy WMA](#), [RH Group WMA](#), [Asher Hunting Access Area](#), [Betterment Wildlife Hunting Access Area](#), [Continental Hunting Access Area](#), [Elk Horn Coal Hunting Access Area](#), [Wells Hunting Access Area](#), [Boone County Cliffs SNP](#), Dinsmore Woods SNP, [Logan County Glade SNP](#), [Lower Howards Creek SNP](#), [James E. Bickford SNP](#), [John B. Stephenson Memorial Forest SNP](#), [Floracliff Nature Sanctuary](#), The Green at BTC.

The private WMAs and hunting access areas are private land opened for hunting. The preserves are owned by Boone, Logan and Clark counties, Berea College, Pine Mountain Settlement School or a non-profit.

Privately owned WMAs that looked state-owned on Kentucky's map (3): the map lists Fish & Wildlife as manager, but each one's own page says otherwise.

WMA	Acres	What its Fish & Wildlife page says
Boone Forestlands WMA	27,997	"Boone Forestlands WMA is the result of a cooperative agreement between the owner, Boone Forestlands, LLC and the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources."
Elk Forest WMA	16,587	"Elk Forest WMA is privately owned."
Fortner-Davis WMA	1,358	"Fortner-Davis WMA is privately owned."

POTA's rule 1 needs the land owned by the federal or state government, so these don't qualify while they stay private.

State owned but run by a non-profit on a lease (2): [Mary Todd Lincoln House](#), [Simon Kenton](#).

Kentucky's map marks both "State park (leased land)". The Mary Todd Lincoln House is leased for 99 years to the Kentucky Mansions Preservation Foundation, which runs it, so it fails the run-by-the-state rule.

WMAs on Army Corps of Engineers lakes (13): [Barren River Lake](#), [Buckhorn Lake](#), [Carr Creek Lake](#), [Dale Hollow Lake](#), [Grayson Lake](#), [Green River Lake](#), [Lake Barkley](#), [Lake Cumberland](#), [Martins Fork Lake](#), [Nolin River Lake](#), [Paintsville Lake](#), [Rough River Lake](#), [Taylorsville Lake](#).

Not a flat no: Dewey Lake, Fishtrap Lake and Yatesville Lake WMAs are Corps lakes that are POTA parks. Only the Mapping Representative can say whether another is an exception.

University land (8): [Robinson Forest WMA](#), Halls Prairie (UK), Clay Hill Memorial Forest (Campbellsville), Kentucky State University Environmental Education Center, Pullen Farm and Murphy's Pond (Murray State), Rowan County Sphagnum Swamp (Morehead State), Taylor Fork Ecological Area (EKU).

Robinson Forest WMA is worth asking about: UK owns it and Fish & Wildlife runs the hunting, much like University of the Cumberlands WMA, which became US-12083.

Preserve inside a state park the parks department owns (5): [Blue Licks](#), [Cumberland Falls](#), [John James Audubon](#), [Kingdom Come](#), Pine Mountain. These are activated under the state park's own reference.

Military land (4): [Fort Knox](#), [Fort Campbell](#), [Blue Grass Army Depot](#), [Hidden Valley Training Area](#).

Special-use areas (2): Cumberland River Mussel Sanctuary (Army land in PAD-US), Russell County Fish Access - Barnes Property (a small access site).

Part of an existing POTA park (1): [Ohio River Islands WMA](#), the same islands as US-0608 Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge.

Recently opened, already in POTA

The WMAs Fish & Wildlife has opened lately are already POTA parks, so nothing to ask for:

Place	POTA	Opened
University of the Cumberlands WMA	US-12083	Jan 2025
Little Sextons Creek WMA	US-12079	Dec 2024
Clear Creek WMA	US-12974	
Decker WMA	US-9756	Sep 2023
Ross Creek WMA (grew to 1,296 acres in late 2025)	US-10162	2021

Sources

- Kentucky GIS: Fish & Wildlife hunting areas, State Parks, State Nature Preserves and State Natural Areas map layers (kygisserver.ky.gov)
- USGS PAD-US protected areas database
- POTA park list for US-KY (api.pota.app)
- [POTA Park Additions and Edits](#)
- Kentucky Fish & Wildlife news pages linked above
- Kentucky Fish & Wildlife Public Lands pages and fishing access site pages (linked on each place above)
- [Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves: Martin's Fork SNA](#)
- [Mary Todd Lincoln House: About](#) (state-owned, 99-year lease to the Kentucky Mansions Preservation Foundation)