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BIG BASS RODEO IS BACK AT NEW ORLEANS CITY PARK

Multi-division event returns after two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic



NEW ORLEANS – (Feb. 15, 2022) – New Orleans City Park and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries invite anglers of all ages to the oldest freshwater rodeo in the country.

On Saturday, March 26, the Big Bass Rodeo and Fishtival returns to City Park. The catch-and-release bank-fishing tournament, now in its 73rd year, takes place throughout the Park’s waterways and features multiple categories and competitions.

“Fishing has been popular in City Park since the turn of the century, and the Big Bass Rodeo is an historic event for the community, one we take great pride in,” said Cara Lambright, City Park CEO. “It’s an opportunity like no other in the city to get outdoors, enjoy nature, and experience a different side of the Park.”

In addition to the traditional rodeo, new divisions have been added in recent years broadening the scope of the event. Kayaks and other non-motorized vessels were welcomed on Bayou St. John in 2014 for the Boats on the Bayou contest, and, in 2016, a school competition – Battle for the Bass – was launched for students in grades 7-12. The day concludes with the fun-for-entire family Fishtival that’s free and open to the public, complete with DJ, activities, raffles and a host of educational exhibits highlighting the state’s fishing resources with interactive demonstrations and information.

“Wildlife and Fisheries is thrilled again to be part of this marvelous event,” said Danica Williams, Biologist Program Manager/Fisheries Outreach. “Take your pick, every experience, from bank fishing to kayaking, all while surrounded by a Fishtival, the variety of demonstrations are exciting, fun, and educational for families and participants, no matter the age.”

All lagoons in the Park are open to fishing except the Louisiana Children's Museum campus, Bayou Oaks North Course, Bayou Oaks South Course and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden. Bayou St. John is overseen by City Park and is open to fishing. Boating is not allowed in the lagoons and bayous within City Park except Bayou St. John.

A recreational fishing license is required for participants 16 and older. To purchase a license online, visit louisianaoutdoors.com/licenses-and-permits.

Registration is open and fees vary depending on division. Pre-registration is highly encouraged. For more information and to register, visit bigbassfishingrodeo.com.

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Tournament Divisions

Big Bass Rodeo

- 6:30-11am. All fish must be brought to the Popp Bandstand weigh station by 11am.
- Categories: Junior Anglers, Bass Adult, Cichlid and Bream Trim, and Champions Challenge
- \$10/Adult (13 and older); \$5/Youth (12 and under)

Battle for the Bass

- 6:30-11am. All fish must be brought to the Popp Bandstand weigh station by 11am.
- Category: Bass (teams with the best combined weight of 2 bass will be recognized)
- \$5/per student pre-registration fee
- \$10/per student on-site registration fee

Boats on the Bayou

- 7-10:30am. All fish must be brought to the Filmore weigh station by 10:30am.
- Categories: Bass and Trashbash (any fish that is not a bass)
- \$20/per registrant pre-registration fee
- \$30/per registrant on-site registration fee

Fishtival

- When: 9am-Noon
- Where: Popp Bandstand by Cafe Du Monde
- Price: Free and open to the public

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About New Orleans City Park:

For over 170 years, New Orleans City Park has provided access to abundant natural and cultural resources to residents of the region and visitors from around the world. The Park's 1,300 acres make it one of the largest urban parks in the United States. City Park is a popular place to fish on the bayou, picnic, experience safe outdoor play, or engage in athletic pursuits—as evidenced by more than 16 million visits each year. City Park's annual operating budget has been largely derived from self-generated activities. The COVID-19 pandemic and Hurricane Ida, which significantly affected revenue-generating facilities due to restriction closures, highlighted the vital importance of diversifying revenue streams. Through these challenges, the Park's walking trails, urban forest, and open spaces continue to

be a respite to the public. To learn more about the Park and to contribute to the Disaster Relief Fund, visit NewOrleansCityPark.com.

About Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries:

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is charged with managing and protecting Louisiana's abundant natural resources. For more information, visit us at wlf.la.gov. To receive recreational or commercial fishing email and text alerts, signup at wlf.la.gov/signup.