

TEXAS WATER SAFARI DRIVING GUIDE 2026

2026
UPDATES



TEXAS WATER SAFARI

POINT TO POINT
DRIVING DIRECTIONS



RESOURCES

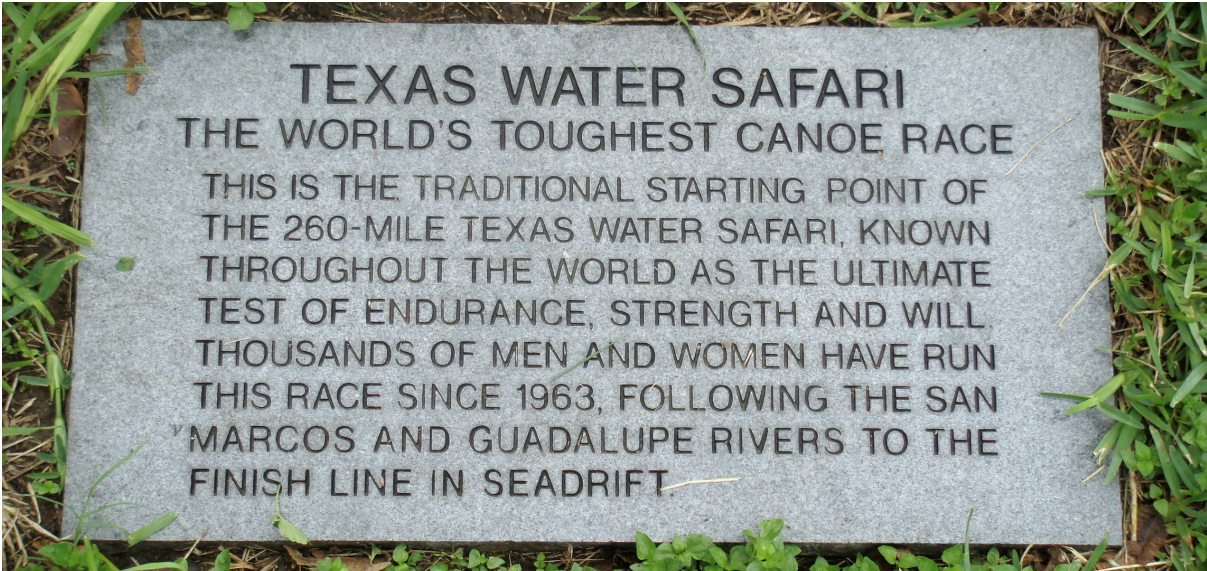
GAS, ICE, CAFFEINE

TIME CHART

AKA THE 'WHEN WILL
THEY BE HERE' CHEAT
SHEET



EDITED BY KATE TART



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RESOURCES

GAS, ICE, CAFFEINE

Tips for TC's, support crews and spectators and where to find ice and gas along the way.

TIME SPLITS

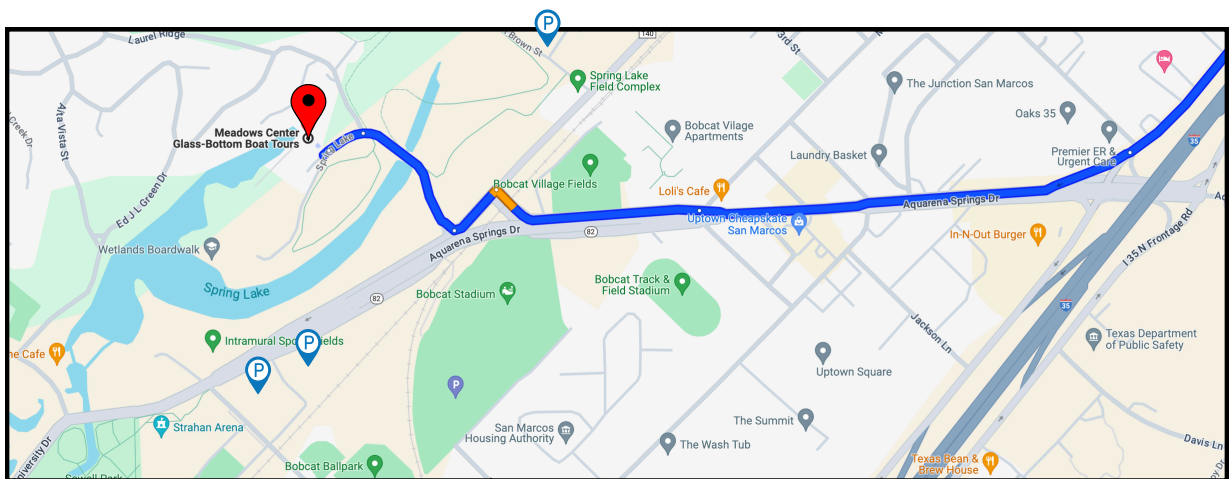
ESTIMATED SPLITS

This is your 'when will they be here' cheat sheet.

1) AQUARENA SPRINGS / RACE START MILE 1 - 9:00 AM FRIDAY

Exit IH-35 (Exit 206) at Aquarena Springs Drive (TX 82). Travel west on Aquarena Springs Drive. Stay to the right and do not get on the overpass. At the stoplight, take a left on 140 and then a right on Post Rd/Laurel St. Directly across from Bobcat Stadium. Pass through golf course.

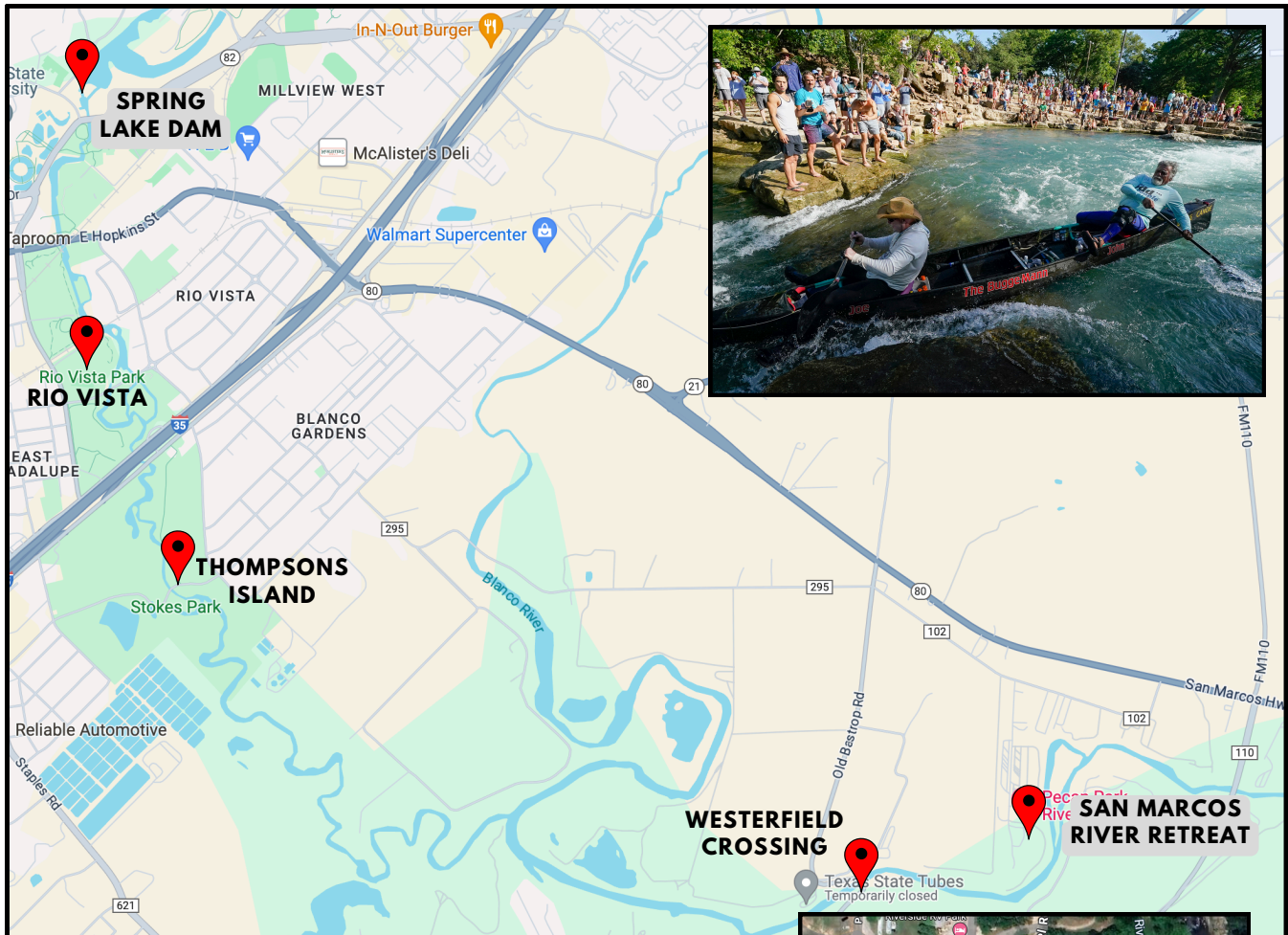
PARKING: some parking is available in the parking lots once you pass through the golf course although it will fill up. Space is set up to drop off boats/gear and then park in surrounding lots. Alternate parking is available across Hwy 80 in the Campus parking lots. Shuttles typically from nearby parking lots to Aquarena Springs.



ALTERNATE START VIEWING

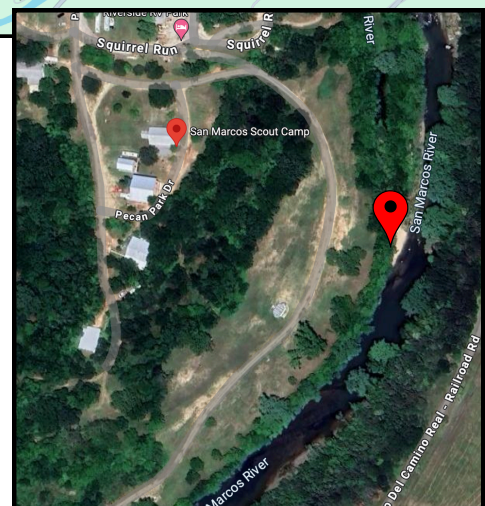
Alternate spots to watch the start of the race. Note - you cannot watch the start at Aquarena Springs and make it to these spots by car to view the boats.

- Spring Lake Dam
- Rio Vista Dam (Mile .75 from start)
- Thompson's Island Bridge (Mile 2.5 from start)
- Westerfield Crossing (Mile 6 from start)



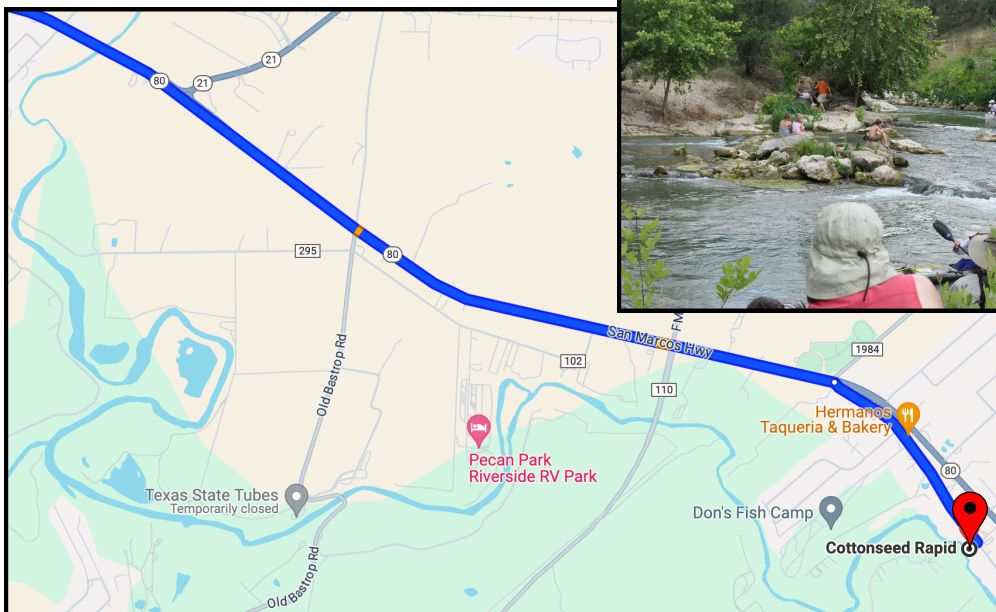
SAN MARCOS RIVER RETREAT (MILE 7)

- From 80 take a right on Old Bastrop Road and your first left onto 102.
- Turn right on Pecan Park Drive - drive through Pecan Park RV Park.
- Turn left into the campgrounds. Campground is open to spectators on race day. For TC's that want to do a handoff before staples, this is the best spot.



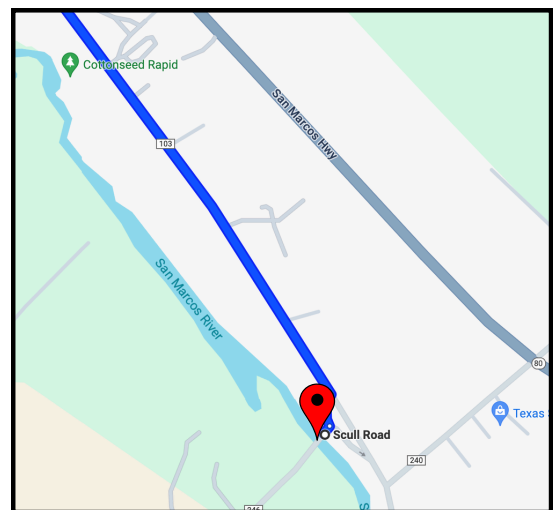
2) COTTONSEED RAPIDS MILE 9

- Leaving town, proceed on HWY 80 for 3.5 miles to stop light at CR 103/NW River Road and turn right.
- Proceed (.1 mil) past two water towers. Park between the 2nd water tower (old and rusted) and the old Cotton Gin on the side of the road. (Private property accessible only on raceday, be considerate.)
- Note: This will be one of the major stops for spectator viewing.



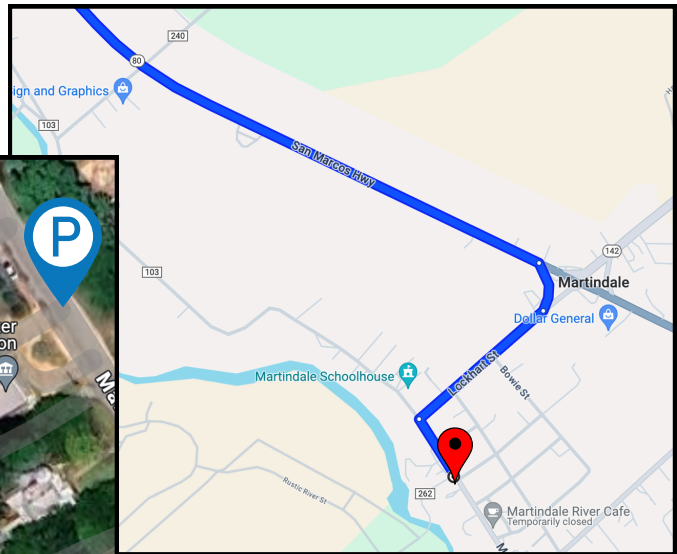
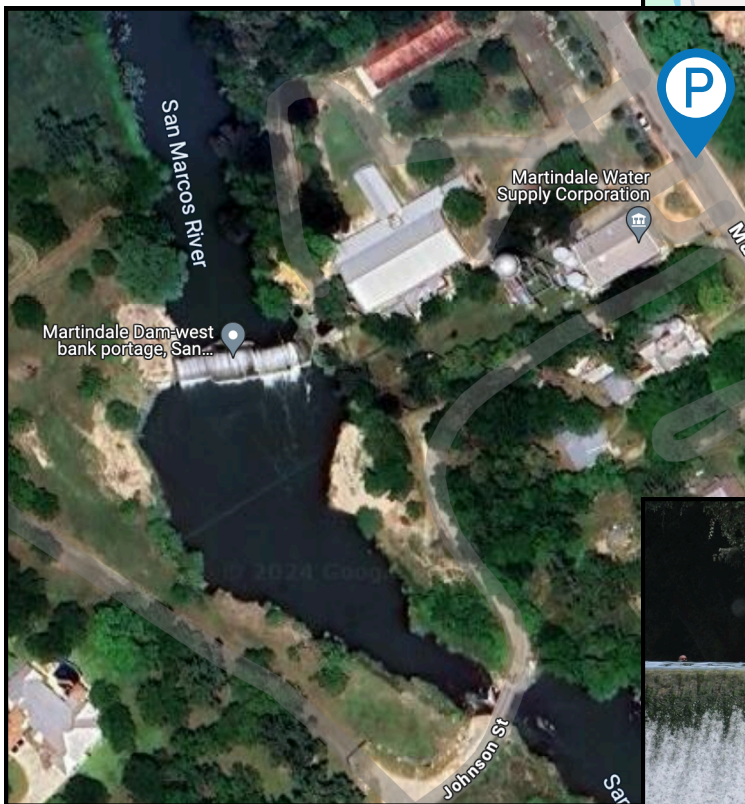
SCULLS CROSSING (MILE 10)

- Continue on CR 103 approximately .3 miles



3) MARTINDALE LOW WATER/DAM MILE 11

- From Cottonseed, continue on CR 103/NW River Road or from HWY 80, turn right on Lockhart Rd and follow to CR 103/NW River Road and turn left.
- On your right you will see a blue metal building and a silver Martindale water tower. Park on the street and not on private property. Walking down to the bridge. Bridge is private drive, most property is private.
- Turn right on Deviney Drive (no street sign). It's a one lane road right next to the building and water tower. Bridge is also one lane. No parking near the bridge.
- Depending on water levels, and race rules, paddlers may either run or portage the bridge.



SHADY GROVE CAMPGROUND (MILE 11)

- Alternate viewing/river access on CR 103 just past martindale

4) STAPLES - CHECKPOINT 1 MILE 17 - DEADLINE: 2:00 PM FRIDAY

Return to Hwy 80 and turn right. Travel (3.4 mi.) on Hwy 80 to FM 1977, turn Right. 2.3 mi. to bridge.

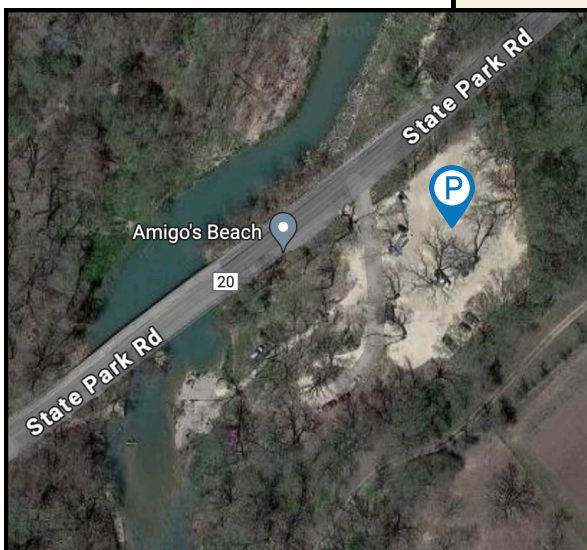
Teams will portage both river left and river right. TC's - know which side your team is going to portage. Official Checkpoint will be on river right, don't forget to sign out your team.

Best spectator viewing is on river right. The owners are very hospitable to TWS so please be considerate. Parking is tight, prepare to walk and carry items.



5) FENTRESS MILE 26

- Return to Hwy 80, turn right
- Travel 3.6 mi to FM 20 and turn right. (There is a flashing yellow light and a Valero gas station at turn.)
- Turn right on Hwy 20 to bridge.
- Amigo's beach is on river left - you can pay to park in their parking lot or TCKRA members with a parking sticker can park for free.
- You can also access by taking HWY 621 to HWY 20 which will take you into Fentress. Amigo's beach will be on the right after crossing the river.



6) STAIRTOWN MILE 33

- Back to Hwy 80. Turn right (1.8 mi.) to CR119/ Stairtown Road (NOT Stairtown Loop).
- Turn right (.8 mi.) to bridge.
- Park on the road. Viewing possible from bridge.
- Access river from either side directly under the bridge.
- Do NOT follow the dirt road down to the gravel bar. Private property and TWS does not have approval to access.

Note: There are two bridges, Prairie Lea #1 and Prairie Lea #2 where you can view the river between Fentress and Luling.



7) LULING HWY 90 - CHECKPOINT 2 MILE 40 - DEADLINE: 8:00 PM FRIDAY

- Return to Hwy 80 and turn Right. Travel into Luling. Turn right at stop light onto HWY 183. Turn right at stop light onto HW 90 West. (There are several shortcuts through town.)
- Drive 2.6 miles on on HWY 90 to picnic area. Look for sign saying 1 mile to picnic area. Turn left before the bridge (Paddling Trail) - easy to miss. It's the first left after leaving town.
- Go under bridge, stay left, go under bridge again, continue down to river.
- There is no shade and will be busy with locals and spectators hanging out for the day. Expect a crowd. Parking will be tight, be prepared to walk.



LULING RESOURCES

- HEB
- City Market BBQ (TC's - do not get distracted getting BBQ and miss your team - it has happened!)
- Subway



8) LULING DAM/ZEDLER MILL MILE 46

- Return to HWY 90 and turn right (heading back into town), travel 2.6 mi. to Hwy 80. Turn right onto HWY 80.
- Cross the bridge and turn right (signs for Texas Paddling Trail). Teams will portage on the river right.
- Zedler Mill is on the right (Laurel Street) before the bridge and is good for spectator viewing.



LULING RESOURCES

- HEB
- City Market BBQ (TC's - do not get distracted getting BBQ and miss your team - it has happened!)
- Subway

9) PALMETTO STATE PARK-CHECKPOINT 3 MILE 60 - DEADLINE: 6:00 AM SATURDAY

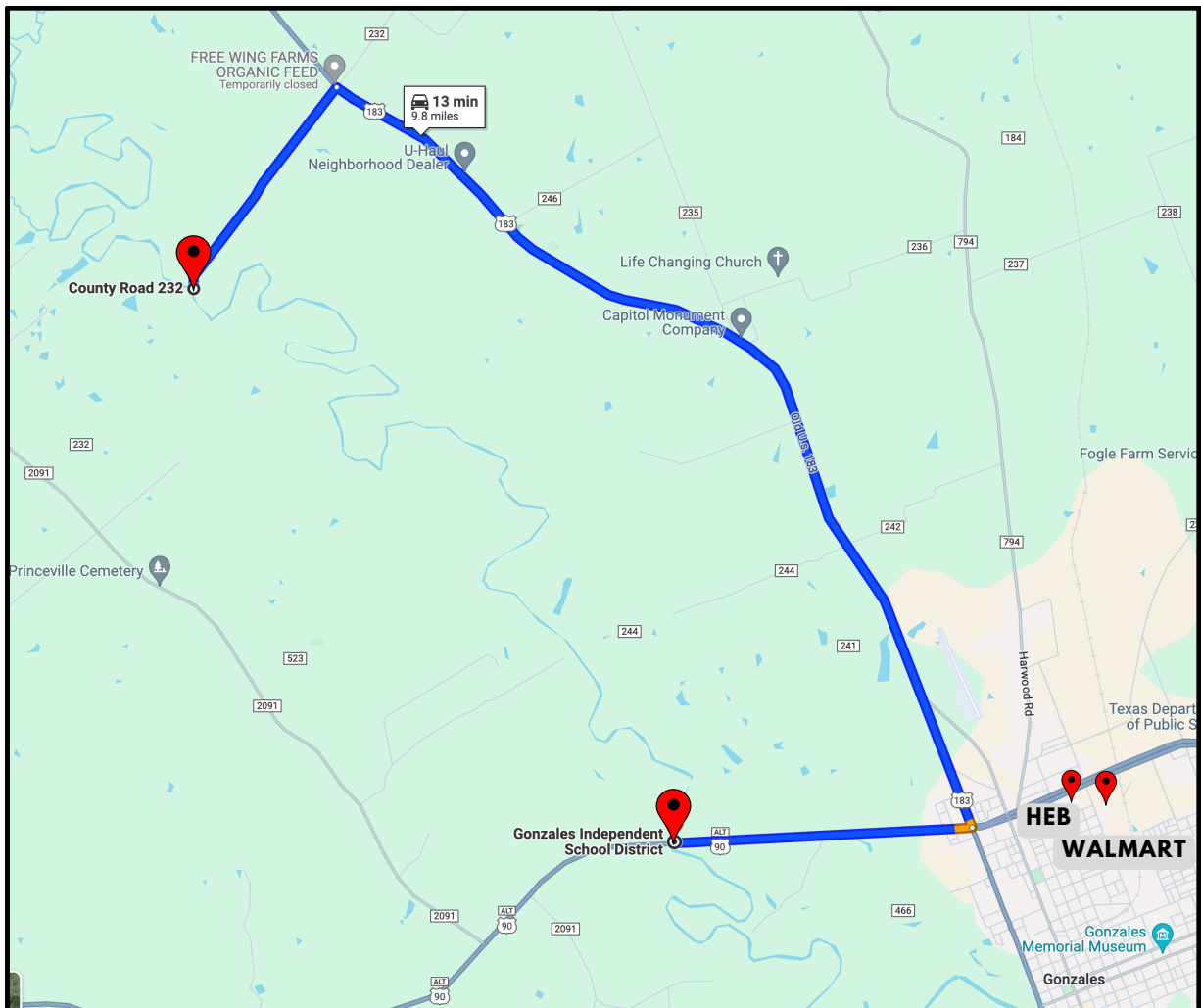
Park pass is needed - purchase a park pass at race check-in or stop at the entrance to pay for day pass.

- Go back into Luling on Hwy 80 and turn right onto Hwy 90/183.
- OR - go south on 80 to I-10, head East on I-10 one exit to 183.
- Go to Park Road 11, turn right (Stone wall/entrance to State Park) or keep going to 261 (both end up on the same spot).
- Look for "Palmetto State Park 1 mile ahead" signs along Hwy 90/183.
- Park Headquarters will be on Right - cross 3 bridges, to second PR 11 sign.
- Turn left take PR 11 for (.5 mi) .
- Note: Follow signs or park personnel - bridge may be accessed from both sides of the river. If parking is full on one side you may be directed to the other parking area.



11) GONZALES - HWY 90A BRIDGE MILE 77

- Return to Hwy 183 and turn right
- Go (6.3 mi) to traffic light intersection of Hwy 183 and Hwy 90A. (Holiday Inn Express and Sleep Inn will be on your left before the turn.)
- Turn right on Hwy 90A.
- Bridge is (1.9 mi). Cross Bridge.



12) GONZALES DAM - CHECKPOINT 4 MILE 84 - DEADLINE 2:00 PM SATURDAY

- Back to light at the intersection of Hwy 90A and Hwy 183.
- Turn right on Hwy 183.
- Continue about 1.3 miles. Dam will be on your right. Parking is located at the first right after the dam (parking for soccer/baseball fields).
- Be prepared to carry supplies for team from parking to the dam.



Hwy 183 Bridge (1.3 miles after the dam/checkpoint)

- Continue over the Guadalupe River Bridge.
- Take first right after bridge on CR 197 to parking under bridge.

Gonzales Resources:

- Gas/Food/Ice: HEB, Walmart
- Restaurants: Mr Taco, McDonalds, Pizza Hut, Whataburger

13) HOCHHEIM - CHECKPOINT 5 MILE 123 - DEADLINE 4:00 AM SUNDAY

- From Gonzales 183 Checkpoint turn right on Hwy 183
- Go (16 mi) to the bridge, turn off on your left just before the Guadalupe River Bridge (small drive next to bridge). Proceed beside bridge and approximately 20 yards before reaching the river, there is a metal gate on the left. Turn left through the gate and drive, parallel to the river, for approx. 200 yards to the checkpoint on the right.



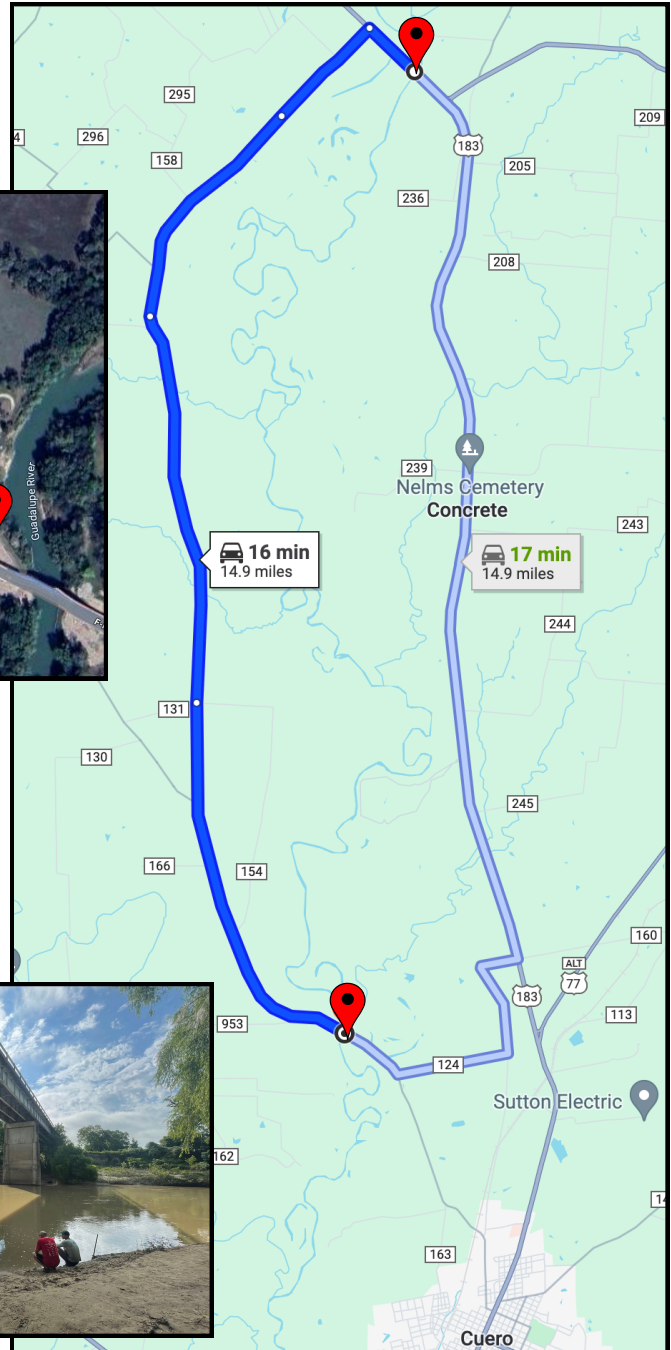
14) CHEAPSIDE - CHECKPOINT 6

MILE 148 - DEADLINE 11:00 AM SUNDAY

- From Hochheim bridge turn left on Hwy 183
- Go towards Cuero and turn right on Old Gonzales Road.
- Left on 108, Right on 124 and then Right on 77.
- Go to gravel road past bridge, turn right under bridge.

Alt path:

Go north on 183 and turn left on 77.



15) CUERO FM 72 MILE 154

- From Hochheim bridge go south on Hwy 183
- Go into Cuero to W Heaton St. Turn west on W Heaton/FM 72
- Go past the bridge and turn right to the road leading to the ramp.



Cuero Resources:

- Gas/Food/Ice: HEB, Walmart
- Restaurants: Whataburger, Sonic, Domino's

16) CUERO HWY 236 - CHECKPOINT 7 MILE 160 - DEADLINE 3:00 PM SUNDAY

- From Cheapside or FM 72 - travel back into Cuero.
- Go through town to light at (Morgan St./Arneckville), turn east on E. Morgan Ave.
- Follow E. Morgan Ave. for (.5 mi) to FM 236/Arneckville Road.
- Turn right and go (2.5 mi.) to bridge.
- Exit right on gravel road before bridge.



Cuero Resources:

- Gas/Food/Ice: HEB, Walmart
- Restaurants: Whataburger, Sonic, Domino's

17) THOMASTON BRIDGE MILE 178

- Follow FM236 to CR 418 - use caution at night, narrow roads and limited street sign's.

Alt Route:

- Go back to Hwy 183, turn right
- Proceed (.3 mi.) to Hwy 87, turn right on Hwy 87.
- Go (11.8 mi) to Thomaston River Road, turn right (2.3 mi.) to bridge. Cross bridge
- and park on either side.

Note: Steep river access. A rope may be necessary to access the river.



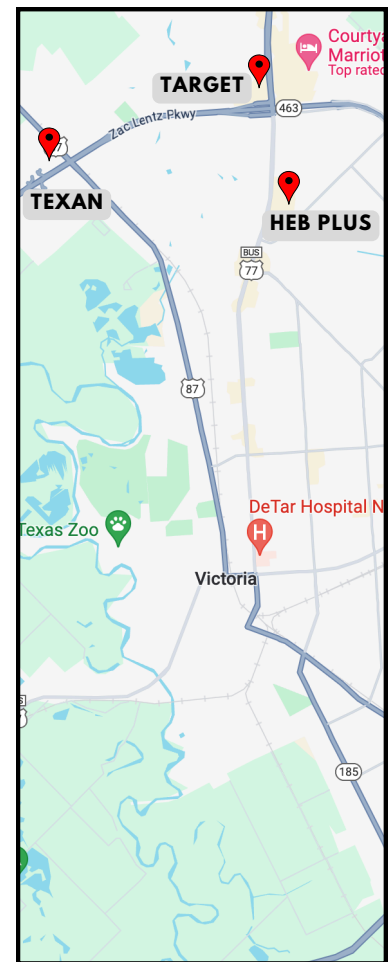
18) NURSERY BRIDGE MILE 187

- Go back to Hwy 87, turn right.
- Go (5.3 mi.) to Hwy 447/Nursery (Shell Station) Mission Valley Rd, turn right
- Proceed (2.9 mi.) to bridge, just past radio tower.
- Cross bridge and turn off on gravel road on right immediately after bridge.



19) VICTORIA CITY PARK - CHECKPOINT 8 MILE 200 - DEADLINE 6:00 AM MONDAY

- From Nursery FM 447, go back to Hwy 87, turn right.
- Go (8.9 mi) to Magnolia Street (Easy to miss, 3rd right after Crestwood stop light, no stoplight at Magnolia).
- Turn right on Magnolia and go straight (.4 mi) into Victoria City Park past Little League Complex.
- Go past the playground complex. When you reach the Victoria Memorial Rose Garden on your left, turn right (down the hill) into parking area at boat ramp and checkpoint. Parking can be tight.



Victoria Resources:

- Gas/Food/Ice: HEB Plus, Target, Texan
- Restaurants: Whataburger, Subway, Domino's (lots of options along 77 through town)
- Medical: Walgreens, Urgent care, ER

20) VICTORIA HWY 59 MILE 209

- Return to Hwy 87 (N. Main St.), turn right.
- Go to light at Rio Grande, turn left. (Stay on 87)
- Proceed to North Lauren/Hwy 185, turn right.
- Go to Hwy 59 South (toward Refugio), turn right.
- Go to Guadalupe River Bridge, cross bridge and go to Fox Road.
- Turn left

Note: along the same side road is access provided by Glen Dry. Concrete stairs down to the water.



21) SWINGING BRIDGE AT INVISTA - CP 9 MILE 228 - DEADLINE 4:00 PM MONDAY

- Take Hwy 59 back to Hwy 185 (Victoria/Bloomington Exit), turn right.
- Go to 1432 and turn right (Conoco Gas station).
- When road ends at gates, turn right.
- When paved road turns right, stay straight on gravel road (will loop left around plant)
- Follow gravel road for aprox 3 miles.
- Be sure to close any gates you open.
- Checkpoint will be located at the boat ramp on INVISTA property
-

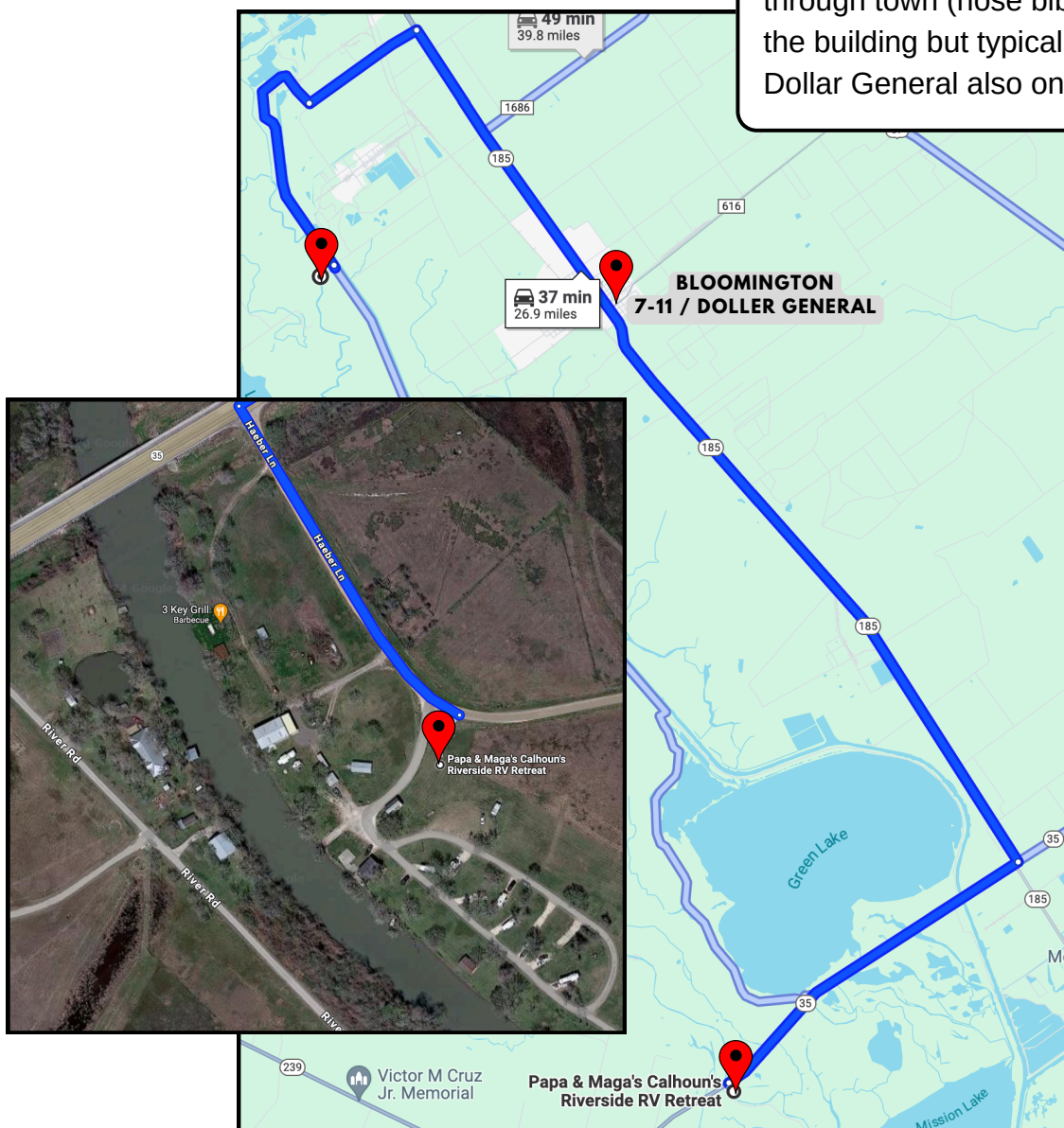
NOTE: Swinging Bridge is owned by Invista who controls access to the river. It is open for the race only and is not accessible for training runs.



22) PAPA AND MAGA'S CALHOUN'S RIVERSIDE RETREAT MILE 251

- Return to Hwy 185 the way you came in.
- Go (13.5 mi) to intersection with Hwy 35, turn right.
- Take Hwy 35 towards Tivoli.
- Take a left on the last road right before the bridge.
- MUST PAY ENTRY FEE TO ACCESS

Bloomington: 7/11 on the main road through town (hose bib on the side of the building but typically no hose). Dollar General also on main road.



23) COLVILLE PARK / WOODEN BRIDGE CHECKPOINT 10

MILE 256 DEADLINE 5:00 AM TUESDAY

- From Hwy 35 turn south onto River Road (on river right).
- Follow road for aprox 5 miles to small pavillion on river.

DO NOT DRIVE THROUGH GATE. Only park in designated areas.

This stop has been nicknamed 'wooden bridge' for years, despite the bridge having been replaced and the checkpoint isn't actually at the bridge. Location is popular with ants and gators so keep an eye out.



24) - SEADRIFT - RACE FINISH

MILE 260 - DEADLINE 1:00 PM TUESDAY

SWAN POINT

- Return to Hwy 35 and back to HWY 183
- After passing through Seadrift, turn right on Gates road and left on Old Settlement Road
- Turn right on Swan Point Road and follow it all the way to Swan Point Park



FINISH LINE

Notes for novice teams for the finish line:

- Once the team crosses the bouy they are done. Meaning anyone can now hug them, help with their boat (in fact please help, they have paddled 260 miles and are tired), help them walk up the ramp, etc.
- There are oyster's in the water at the finish line - please wear shoes!

Reminders for everyone:

- Please do not set up chairs in front of or around the finish sign. Finishers have worked hard to get to that sign and we want to give them the space for their pictures.
- Please try not to park or block the road between the ramp and the finish sign (even when loading boats.)

Seadrift restaurants:

- La Terraza (mexican) (6:30 - 9:00 / 7:00 - 3:00 Sunday)
- Bubba's Seafood (11:00 -10:00 / Close 4:00 Sunday, closed Monday)
- The Shack (11:00 - 8:00 - Closed Sun & Tue)
- T's Kitchen (11:00 - 8:00 - Closed Sunday)



TIME CHART

LOCATION	MILE	Actual	38 hours 6.8 MPH	40 hours 6.5 MPH	42 hours 6.2 MPH	44 hours 5.9 MPH	46 hours 5.7 MPH	50 hours 5.2 MPH	55 hours 4.7 MPH	60 hours 4.3 MPH	70 hours 3.7 MPH	80 hours 3.3 MPH
START	0		9:00 AM	9:00 AM	9:00 AM	9:00 AM	9:00 AM	9:00 AM	9:00 AM	9:00 AM	9:00 AM	9:00 AM
RIO VISTA	1		9:11 AM	9:11 AM	9:12 AM	9:12 AM	9:13 AM	9:14 AM	9:15 AM	9:17 AM	9:20 AM	9:23 AM
SAN MARCOS RIVER RETREAT	7		10:01 AM	10:04 AM	10:07 AM	10:11 AM	10:14 AM	10:20 AM	10:28 AM	10:37 AM	10:53 AM	11:09 AM
COTTON SEED	9		10:20 AM	10:24 AM	10:28 AM	10:32 AM	10:36 AM	10:45 AM	10:55 AM	11:06 AM	11:27 AM	11:48 AM
CR 249 (SKULLS CROSSING)	10		10:24 AM	10:28 AM	10:32 AM	10:37 AM	10:41 AM	10:50 AM	11:01 AM	11:12 AM	11:34 AM	11:56 AM
MARTINDALE	11		10:34 AM	10:38 AM	10:43 AM	10:48 AM	10:53 AM	11:03 AM	11:15 AM	11:27 AM	11:52 AM	12:16 PM
FM 1979 (SHADY GROVE)	11		10:40 AM	10:44 AM	10:49 AM	10:55 AM	11:00 AM	11:10 AM	11:24 AM	11:37 AM	12:03 PM	12:29 PM
STAPLES DAM (#1) - 2:00 PM FRI	17		11:26 AM	11:33 AM	11:40 AM	11:49 AM	11:56 AM	12:11 PM	12:31 PM	12:50 PM	1:28 PM	2:06 PM
FENTRESS - BRIDGE	26		12:49 PM	1:00 PM	1:12 PM	1:24 PM	1:36 PM	2:00 PM	2:31 PM	3:00 PM	4:01 PM	5:00 PM
CR 247 (PRAIRIE LEA 1)	29		1:17 PM	1:29 PM	1:42 PM	1:56 PM	2:09 PM	2:36 PM	3:10 PM	3:43 PM	4:51 PM	5:58 PM
CR 116 (PRAIRIE LEA 2)	32		1:39 PM	1:52 PM	2:06 PM	2:21 PM	2:36 PM	3:05 PM	3:42 PM	4:18 PM	5:31 PM	6:44 PM
CR 119 (STAIRTOWN)	33		1:52 PM	2:06 PM	2:21 PM	2:37 PM	2:52 PM	3:22 PM	4:01 PM	4:39 PM	5:56 PM	7:12 PM
LULING HWY 90 (#2) 8:00 PM FRI	40		2:49 PM	3:05 PM	3:23 PM	3:42 PM	4:00 PM	4:37 PM	5:23 PM	6:09 PM	7:40 PM	9:11 PM
LULING DAM/ZEDDLER	46		3:42 PM	4:00 PM	4:20 PM	4:43 PM	5:03 PM	5:45 PM	6:39 PM	7:31 PM	9:16 PM	11:01 PM
PALMETTO PARK (#3) 6:00 AM SAT	60		5:51 PM	6:15 PM	6:42 PM	7:12 PM	7:39 PM	8:34 PM	9:45 PM	10:54 PM	1:13 AM	3:31 AM
SLADEN	68		6:59 PM	7:27 PM	7:57 PM	8:31 PM	9:01 PM	10:04 PM	11:23 PM	12:41 AM	3:18 AM	5:54 AM
HWY 90 - GONZALES	77		8:16 PM	8:47 PM	9:21 PM	9:59 PM	10:34 PM	11:44 PM	1:14 AM	2:42 AM	5:39 AM	8:35 AM
GONZALES DAM (#4) 2:00 PM SAT	84		9:25 PM	9:59 PM	10:37 PM	11:18 PM	11:56 PM	1:14 AM	2:53 AM	4:30 AM	7:45 AM	10:59 AM
GONZALES - GRAVEL BAR	86		9:36 PM	10:11 PM	10:50 PM	11:32 PM	12:11 AM	1:29 AM	3:10 AM	4:48 AM	8:07 AM	11:23 AM
HOCHEIM (#5) 4:00 AM SUN	123		3:01 AM	3:51 AM	4:46 AM	5:46 AM	6:41 AM	8:34 AM	10:58 AM	1:18 PM	6:02 PM	10:43 PM
CHEAPSIDE (#6) 11:00 AM SUN	147		6:40 AM	7:40 AM	8:46 AM	9:59 AM	11:05 AM	1:20 PM	4:13 PM	7:02 PM	12:43 AM	6:21 AM
72 CUERO	154		7:38 AM	8:41 AM	9:50 AM	11:05 AM	12:15 PM	2:36 PM	5:37 PM	8:33 PM	2:30 AM	8:22 AM
HWY 183 CUERO (HWY 87)	157		8:04 AM	9:08 AM	10:18 AM	11:35 AM	12:46 PM	3:10 PM	6:14 PM	9:14 PM	3:17 AM	9:16 AM
CUERO 236 (#7) 3:00 PM SUN	161		8:42 AM	9:48 AM	11:00 AM	12:19 PM	1:31 PM	4:00 PM	7:09 PM	10:13 PM	4:27 AM	10:36 AM
RIVERHAVEN RV PARK	171		10:05 AM	11:14 AM	12:30 PM	1:54 PM	3:11 PM	5:48 PM	9:08 PM	12:23 AM	6:59 AM	1:29 PM
THOMASTON	178		11:11 AM	12:24 PM	1:43 PM	3:11 PM	4:31 PM	7:15 PM	10:44 PM	2:08 AM	9:00 AM	3:48 PM
NURSERY	187		12:28 PM	1:44 PM	3:08 PM	4:39 PM	6:04 PM	8:55 PM	12:34 AM	4:08 AM	11:21 AM	6:29 PM
HWY 77	196		1:52 PM	3:12 PM	4:39 PM	6:16 PM	7:44 PM	10:45 PM	2:35 AM	6:20 AM	1:54 PM	9:24 PM
VICTORIA CITY PARK (#8) 6:00 AM MON	200		2:23 PM	3:44 PM	5:13 PM	6:52 PM	8:22 PM	11:25 PM	3:20 AM	7:09 AM	2:51 PM	10:29 PM
PUMP HOUSE RESTAURANT	204		3:02 PM	4:25 PM	5:57 PM	7:37 PM	9:09 PM	12:17 AM	4:17 AM	8:10 AM	4:04 PM	11:51 PM
HWY 77 / 59 BUSINESS	205		3:11 PM	4:35 PM	6:06 PM	7:47 PM	9:20 PM	12:28 AM	4:29 AM	8:24 AM	4:20 PM	12:10 AM
HWY 59 - BY PASS	211		4:01 PM	5:27 PM	7:01 PM	8:45 PM	10:20 PM	1:34 AM	5:42 AM	9:43 AM	5:52 PM	1:55 AM
DUPONT (#9) 4:00 PM MON	231		7:00 PM	8:34 PM	10:18 PM	12:11 AM	1:55 AM	5:28 AM	9:59 AM	2:24 PM	11:20 PM	8:09 AM
SALTWATER BARRIER DAM	244		8:52 PM	10:32 PM	12:21 AM	2:21 AM	4:11 AM	7:55 AM	12:41 PM	5:21 PM	2:46 AM	12:04 PM
CALHOUN RV PARK	247		9:19 PM	11:00 PM	12:50 AM	2:51 AM	4:43 AM	8:30 AM	1:19 PM	6:02 PM	3:34 AM	1:00 PM
WOODEN BRIDGE (#10) 5:00 AM TUE	252		10:03 PM	11:46 PM	1:38 AM	3:42 AM	5:36 AM	9:27 AM	2:23 PM	7:11 PM	4:55 AM	2:32 PM
SEADRIFT (1:00 PM TUESDAY)	260		11:14 PM	1:00 AM	2:56 AM	5:04 AM	7:01 AM	11:00 AM	4:05 PM	9:02 PM	7:04 AM	5:00 PM