

Choctaw

National Wildlife Refuge Public Use Regulations and map 2024-2025

“The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans”

(National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997)

All other uses are prohibited unless specifically listed within this brochure or by posted regulatory sign.

Hours of Operation

General refuge hours are sunrise to sunset. During hunting seasons, hunters may enter the refuge at 4 am and must exit one hour after sunset. Common activities allowed are listed on the enclosed map. In addition to federal regulations, all applicable State regulations apply unless otherwise stated.

Public Entry

Motor vehicles and bicycles are allowed only on improved and unimproved roads. Unless indicated, bicycles are not allowed on walking trails. No vehicles or bicycles are allowed to travel off-road. Parked vehicles may not block access to closed gates. Unless otherwise posted, refuge speed limits are 25 MPH. Use of personal UTVs and ATVs is not allowed on the refuge.

Collection, damage or harassment of any natural or historical items or wildlife and the release of plants or wildlife is prohibited.

Dogs are allowed for hunting migratory birds, squirrels, and rabbits during designated seasons only. When not actively hunting, dogs must be on a leash and under control of owner. All other domestic animals are prohibited.

All personal property must be removed from the refuge each day.

Firearms and Safety Items

Possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on the refuge must comply with all provisions of federal, state and local laws. Persons may only use (discharge) firearms in accordance with refuge regulations. (50 CFR 27.42 and specific refuge regulations in 50 CFR Part 32).

All firearms authorized under State law are allowed for Refuge hunts.

Hunter orange requirements for hunting per State regulations.

Tree Stands and Ground Blinds

It is illegal to construct or to hunt from any permanent stands or blinds. Valid permit holders are allowed to possess and hunt from one portable stand or blind on the Refuge. All stands on the Refuge must be identified with hunter's State hunting license number permanently and legibly written on or attached to the stand. Stands left on the refuge do not reserve the hunting locations. Stands may be placed seven days prior to hunt and must be removed seven days after the season closes.

Stands not in compliance with these regulations may be confiscated and disposed of by the Refuge staff.

Users of tree stands must use a full body safety harness at all times. It is unlawful to drive a nail, spike, or other metal object into a tree or to set a stand on any tree in which such an object has been driven. Cutting or trimming branches or brush is prohibited.

Ground blinds, when occupied, must display a minimum of 400 square inches of solid unbroken fluorescent orange visible from all sides during deer firearm and primitive weapon hunts.

Hunting

Baiting on the refuge is prohibited.

Waterfowl Sanctuary Closed December 1 - March 1

Harvest Reporting

All hunters harvesting Refuge wildlife MUST record harvest data at one of the checkout stations upon conclusion of each day's hunting.

Small Game

All persons hunting small game are required to use nontoxic shot.

State bag and harvest restrictions apply.

Deer

Deer hunters may use those firearms defined by state regulation. State limits apply. Driving deer is prohibited.

Deer can be field-dressed where harvested.

Special Opportunity Areas: Special Opportunity Areas (SOAs) offer a limited number of slots for a successful permit holder and guest(s) to hunt a dedicated 300-400 acre unit for a 2-4 day hunt. This special hunt will be managed by the Alabama Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries on the refuge. Hunters can apply for this hunt at this website: www.outdooralabama.com/hunting/special-opportunity-areas.

All other hunts will be closed during the SOA hunt.

Incidental Species

Hunters may take incidental species (coyote, beaver, nutria, opossum, raccoon and feral hog) during any hunt with those weapons legal during those hunts.

Youth Hunters

All youth hunters under age 16 must be supervised by a licensed or exempt hunter 21 years of age or older. Adults must comply with State Regulations on supervision and one adult may supervise no more than two youth hunters.

Waterfowl Hunting: Special Youth, Veteran and Active Military Hunters Only

Special 2-Day Season

Same shooting hours, bag limits, and legal arms and ammunition apply as in regular waterfowl season, in accordance with Rule 220-2-.119.

Waterfowl hunters are allowed no more than 25 shotshells per person. All hunters must return to the check station by 1 pm. CFR Title 50 Chapter 1 Part 20 applies along with state limits and regulations.

Decoys, duck blinds and spent shells must be removed from the hunting area following each day's hunt.

Fishing

Fishing is permitted year-around on Refuge waters except in the waterfowl sanctuary, which is closed from December 1 through March 1. Only fish, according to state regulations, may be taken, possessed, or transported.

Commercial Fishing – A Refuge Special Use Permit is required for commercial fishing. State limits and regulations apply. No commercial or tournament fishing activities are allowed on the refuge.

Snagging and cast netting are prohibited.

Sport fishing gear (rod/reel and cane poles) is allowed in all water bodies when open. No cast netting.

The taking of amphibians and reptiles including frogs and turtles is prohibited (see §27.21)

Activities Allowed

- Wildlife Observation and Photography
- Wildlife Education and Interpretation
- Hunting in designated seasons and areas
- Fishing in designated seasons and areas
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Pets allowed on leash

Activities Allowed by Special Use Permit

All commercial activities

Activities Not Allowed

- Harassing, feeding, driving, and/or baiting wildlife
- Swimming
- Night time activities
- Camping
- Open fires
- Collection, consumption, and/or removal of any and all objects, plants, or animals
- Release of plants or animals on the refuge
- Target shooting
- Littering including the use of flagging or markers
- Leaving personal property overnight or establishing permanent structures
- Metal detecting or searching for items of antiquity
- Off-road motorized vehicles and off-road biking
- Possession/use of alcoholic beverages
- Fishing tournaments
- Blocking of gates with vehicles
- Horseback riding, domestic livestock
- Personal watercrafts, airboats, and hovercraft



This sign delineates the boundary of the refuge.



Area closed and area seasonally closed signs. These signs mean the area behind the sign is closed to all entry either year-round or seasonally. Do not enter the area behind this sign for any reason.



No hunting zone sign. This sign marks areas closed to hunting. Entry for other authorized activities generally is permitted.

Hunts	Dates	Other Regulations
<i>Small Game</i>		
Squirrel, Rabbit	September 14 - November 18, November 23 - 30	Waterfowl Sanctuary Closed December 1 - March 1
<i>Deer</i>		
Archery - Buck Only	October 15 - 24	Waterfowl Sanctuary Closed December 1 - March 1 See deer regulations for explanation
Archery - Either Sex	October 25 - November 18, November 23 - December 30	
Muzzleloader SOA Hunt	November 19 - 22	
<i>Migratory Birds</i>		
Youth Veteran and Active Military Only	November 23, 2024 February 8, 2025	Waterfowl Sanctuary Closed December 1 - March 1
<i>Other Species</i>		
Feral Hogs	Taken as Incidental Species	
Coyote		
Opossum		
Raccoon		

Fishing (Year-Round Unless Specified)	
Sport fishing (rod/reel and pole/line only)	All water bodies unless specified
Reptiles and amphibians	CLOSED

Choctaw National Wildlife Refuge
 13723 Bluff Lake Road
 Brooksville, MS 39739
 662/323 5548
<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/choctaw>

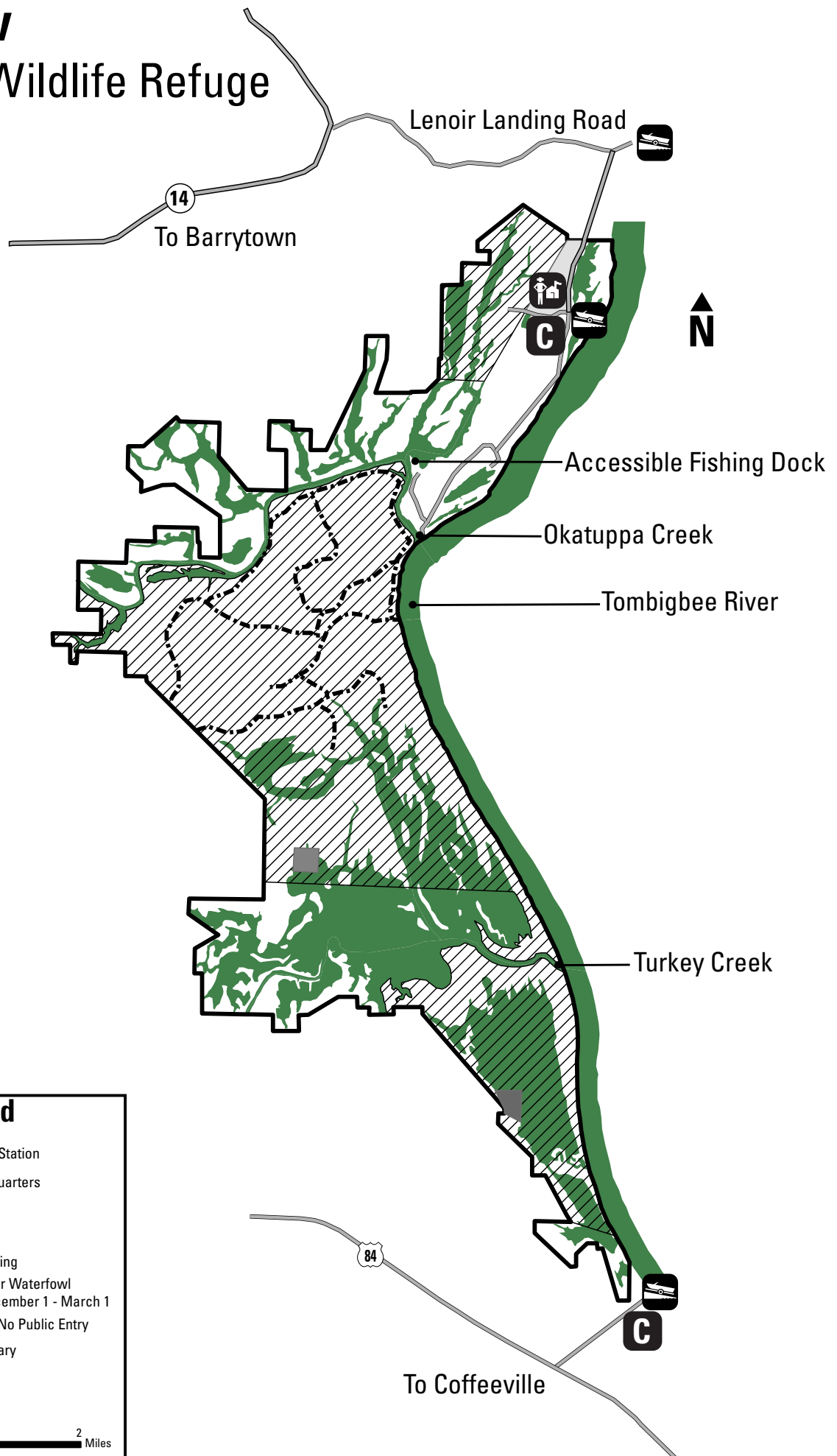
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
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September 2024

This is a unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System, a network of lands and waters managed for the benefit of wildlife and people.



Choctaw National Wildlife Refuge



Legend

- Refuge Check Station
- Refuge Headquarters
- Entrance Road
- Trails
- Closed to Hunting
- Closed Area for Waterfowl Sanctuary December 1 - March 1
- Area Closed - No Public Entry
- Refuge Boundary
- Boat Ramps

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