

Prime Hook

National Wildlife Refuge Island Farms Disabled Hunt Area Regulations 2023–2024



Welcome

Established in 1963, Prime Hook is an important stopover site for migratory birds as they travel the Atlantic Flyway and provides protected breeding habitat for federally and State- listed threatened and endangered species, as well as many neo-tropical migrating bird species. Prime Hook’s habitat features include salt marsh, freshwater marsh, ponds, wooded swamps, upland grasslands and forest. This mosaic of these diverse cover types provide habitat for 308 species of birds, 51 species of fish, 45 species of reptiles and amphibians, 37 species of mammals, and an array of rare insect and plant species.

Firearms

Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on National Wildlife Refuge System lands must comply with all provisions of State and local law. Persons may only use (discharge) firearms in accordance with refuge regulations (50 CFR 27.42 and specific refuge regulations in 50 CFR Part 32.) We prohibit the use of rimfire or centerfire rifles and all handguns including muzzleloading pistols. The use or possession of buckshot while hunting is prohibited.

Vehicles

Licensed motor vehicles are permitted only on public use roads and trails as shown on the map. ATVs and UTVs are prohibited. Parking is permitted in designated parking area. All State regulations and laws are applicable.

Boats

Boats, canoes, kayaks, etc. are prohibited in Island Farms.

Accessibility Information

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs and activities of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is available to all individuals regardless of physical or mental ability. For more information please contact the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Equal Opportunity, <https://www.doi.gov/pmb/eeo/public-civil-rights>.

Hunters with a disability must obtain a certification card from Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC). For information on obtaining this card, call the DNREC Division of Fish and Wildlife at 302-739-9912.

Assistants

Disabled Waterfowl hunters may have two assistants (3 people per/blind). Waterfowl assistants may participate in the hunt. The permitted disabled hunter must be present and all hunters in the group must hunt from the same blind. Disabled Deer hunters may have one non-hunting assistant in the blind with them.

Hunting Regulations

Hunting regulations are designed to provide safe recreational opportunities through wise use of renewable wildlife resources. Hunting is permitted in accordance with Federal regulations governing public use on National Wildlife Refuges as set forth in Title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

Permits

Permits for the Island Farms Unit are only open to disabled hunters and their assistants. The disabled hunter must be present and must possess a DNREC disabled hunter certification card or a Federal Lands Access pass. Blinds are issued via a hunter facilitated drawing at the hunt check station 2 hours before legal shooting time. There is no permit fee.

Hunts offered

Deer: Permits will be available for the October muzzleloader hunt, November Shotgun hunt, and the state designated non-ambulatory hunt.

Waterfowl: Permits will be available for the September Teal and Resident Canada Goose season, November regular season, and December/January regular duck and goose seasons.

Open to Hunting – Deer, ducks, geese, coots. Mute swans may be taken during any open waterfowl hunt. Fox may be taken incidentally while deer hunting.

Closed to Hunting – All other species of wildlife not listed above are protected. Protected species include, but are not limited to, snakes, crow, beaver, otter, and muskrat.

Access

Days

Monday - Saturday during designated deer seasons.
Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday during designated waterfowl seasons.

Hours

The refuge is open for hunting access from 2 hours before legal hunting time to 1 hour after legal hunting time. Waterfowl hunts conclude at 3 pm. Being on the refuge (including parking lots) between 9:00 pm & 4:00 am is prohibited.

Seasonal Closures

Island Farms unit is closed to all access from February 1st - August 30th

Guided Hunts

Hunt permit holders may not engage in guiding, outfitting, advertising, or audio or visual productions for commercial purposes.

Harvest Reporting

In addition to the required reporting to the Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program (HIP), hunters must complete a Migratory Bird Hunt Report (FWS Form 3-2361) or Big Game Harvest Report (FWS Form 3-2359) and return it to the refuge by email (fw5rw_phnwr@fws.gov), or by mail (11978 Turtle Pond Rd, Milton, DE 19968) regardless of whether you were successful. Both forms are available at the refuge headquarters and hunter check station.

Prime Hook NWR
11978 Turtle Pond Road,
Milton, DE 19968
302-684-8419

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1-800-344-WILD



| Activity | Season Dates | Harvest | Hunt Areas | Regulation |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Deer Hunting | Oct 6-15, 2023 -Muzzleloader Nov 4-5, 2023 -Youth/Non-Ambulatory Disabled Nov 10-19, 2023 -Shotgun | State limits apply | Island Farms Disabled hunt area specific blinds | Refuge-issued permit is required in addition to the proper state permit. |
| Waterfowl | Sep 1-25, 2023 -Resident Canada Goose Sep 13 - Sep 30, 2023 -Sept Teal Nov 20 - Nov 25, 2023 -Regular Duck Dec 9 - Jan 31, 2023 -Regular Duck Dec 16 - Jan 30, 2024 - Canada Goose | State and Federal limits apply | Island Farms Disabled hunt area specific blinds | State and Federal Waterfowl Stamps required in addition to above. |

State hunting regulations and licensing requirements apply to all hunting on the refuge. Shooting hours and methods of take may differ from the state. Signed refuge hunt brochure must be in possession of hunter. Upon request, hunters and their assistants must display for inspection all licenses, permits, game, equipment, weapons, and ammunition, to Federal and State law enforcement officers.

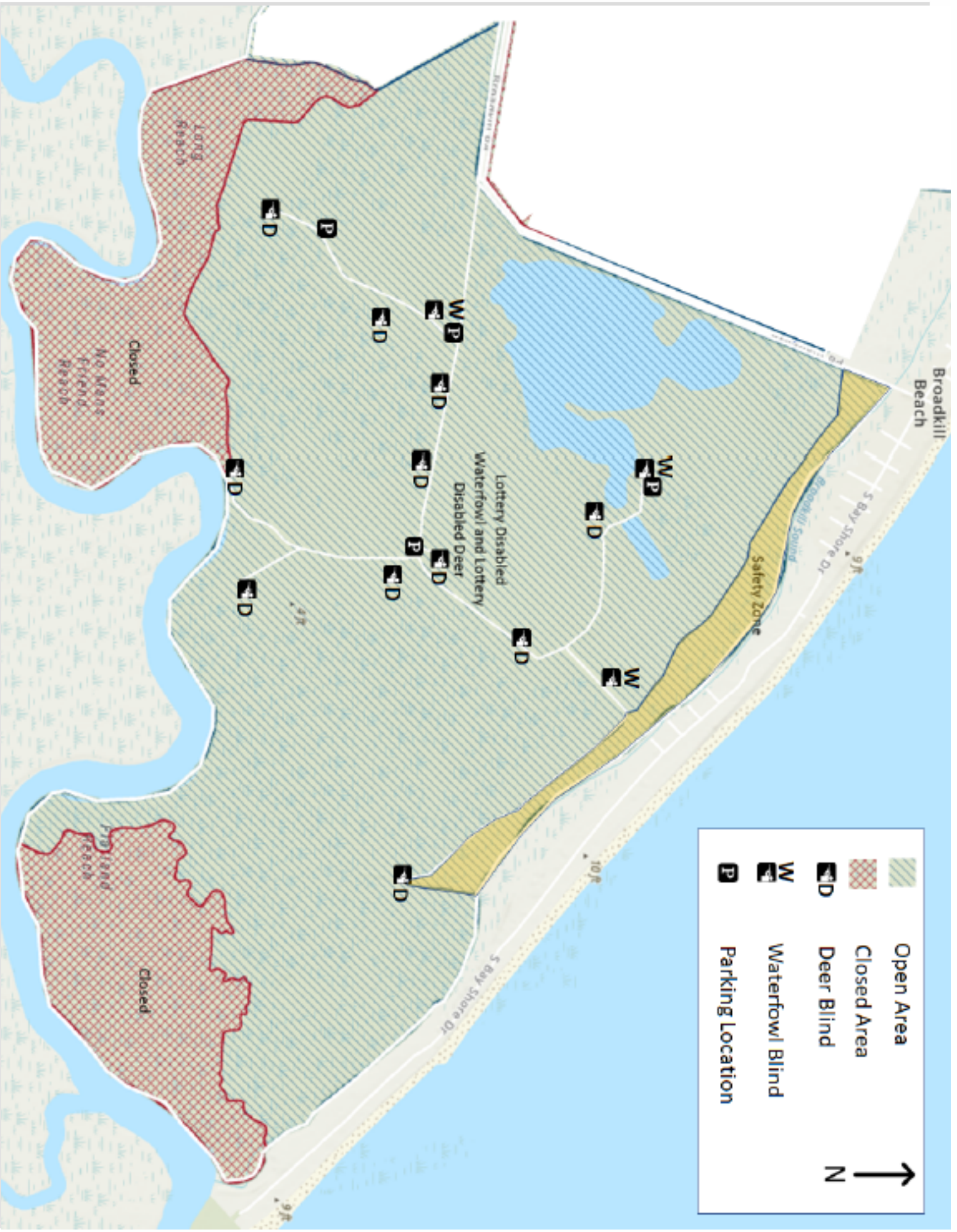
Youth hunt







Any youth from 10 years through 15 years old may participate in the designated Youth Hunt. Youth hunters must be accompanied and assisted by an adult 21 years of age or older. Adult assistants must possess a valid Delaware hunting license or LEN. Adult assistants shall not possess a firearm or other hunting device during the hunt. Hunters 13 -15 years of age must have completed a hunter education course and possess a certification card and must also purchase a Delaware junior hunting license. Adult assistants must remain within 5 feet, maintaining close visual and verbal contact, providing adequate direction to, and can immediately assume control of the firearm from the youth hunter.

Prohibited Activities

- By law, recreational activities on national wildlife refuges are prohibited unless expressly permitted. Please check with the office if you have questions.
- Entering hunt areas without possessing authorized hunt permits.
- Hunting and scouting outside designated days.
- The use of rimfire or centerfire rifles and all handguns including muzzleloading pistols
- The use or possession of buckshot while hunting.
- Use and/or possession of alcoholic beverages or other intoxicating substances while hunting.
- Permanent tree stands, nails, screw-in steps, or other items that penetrate the outer bark of a tree.
- Building or maintaining any structure on the refuge.
- Leaving any property unattended.
- Cutting and damaging vegetation/trees or the use of cut vegetation/trees or organic material as camouflage for any purpose.
- Access to the Refuge from private or state property
- Distribution of bait or hunting with the aid of bait, including any grain, salt, minerals and other substances that are consumed.
- Hunting within 150 yards of any public use facility or hunting in designated safety zones as shown on hunting maps.
- Littering.
- Leaving deer entrails or other waste within 50 feet of any trail, road, or refuge structure.
- Driving or pushing deer.
- Dogs may not be used to hunt or pursue deer.
- Shooting from, across or down any designated refuge road.
- Target shooting or shooting for any purpose other than legal in season hunting.
- Parking in front of or blocking gates.
- Camping and Fires
- Searching for or removal of any natural items such as antlers, skulls, plants, historic, and archaeological features.
- Use of electronic or photographic trail monitoring devices.
- Use of drones.





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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | Open Area |  N |
|  | Closed Area | |
|  | Deer Blind | |
|  | Waterfowl Blind | |
|  | Parking Location | |