

**United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
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BLACKWATER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge Announces 2009-10 Waterfowl Hunt

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge has initiated the application process for waterfowl hunting on the refuge during the 2009-2010 waterfowl season. This year, hunt sites will be assigned to hunters by a lottery drawing. Application packages for waterfowl permits, regulations, and maps will be mailed to interested parties or may be obtained at the Refuge Visitor Center on Key Wallace Drive during business hours. All completed applications must be postmarked no later than October 31, 2009 to be considered for the drawing.

A total of thirteen (13) blind sites will be available for hunting this year: five (5) sites on the upper Blackwater River, two (2) sites at Beaverdam Creek, and two (2) sites each at Barren Island, Spring Island, and Bishopshead in the Chesapeake Bay. The blind sites are accessible only by boat. Only the original applicant possessing a permit and up to three additional individuals will be allowed at each site. Hunters must remain within 50 yards of the GPS coordinate of the site. They can hunt from a temporary blind or from a boat directly adjacent to shore. Selected hunters are encouraged to make an unarmed scouting trip to their blind site prior to hunting.

A non-refundable administrative fee of \$20.00 will be assessed for each submitted application. Application fees for hunters who possess the Federal Golden Age/Senior passes or Golden Access/Access passes will be reduced by one-half. All applicants may choose up to three dates and five areas to hunt. Results of the drawing will be available after November 23, 2009, and applicants will be notified by mail of the results.

All hunting will follow Maryland State regulations and bag limits. In addition to a refuge waterfowl hunting permit, a hunter must be in possession of a valid Maryland State waterfowl hunting license, Federal Duck Stamp, Maryland State Duck Stamp, and photo identification. The hunt season will be Wednesdays and Saturdays beginning December 16, 2009 through January 30, 2010 and includes New Years Day January 1, 2010 and Dr. Martin Luther King Day, January 18, 2010. If you have any further questions, please call 410-228-5018.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.