



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date: September 10, 2009

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Youth Waterfowl Hunt to be Held September 19 at Farnes Pool Unit of Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge

The Farnes Pool Unit of the Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge will be open for the first time for the Youth Waterfowl Hunt on Saturday, September 19. No registration is required. State regulations apply and additional refuge regulations as follows:

Agassiz NWR-Specific Rules

- No pre-hunt scouting is allowed within the Refuge on Friday, Sept. 18.
- The Farnes Pool unit is the only portion of the Refuge open to this hunt.
- Only non-motorized boats may be used on the Refuge portion of Farnes Pool.
- A post-hunt check-in is not required; however Refuge staff may be in the area to take biological samples from harvested birds.
- Youth hunter registration boxes will be present in the hunting area. Please complete the voluntary information sheet at some point during the day.
- Maps & regulations will be available at registration boxes, Kiosks and the office.

The Farnes Pool Unit on the Refuge is located on the southwest corner of the refuge. The boundaries and access areas are County Road 7 (290th St. NE, Middle River) on the north, 190th Ave. NE on the west, and Ditch 200 road (270th St. NE.) on the south. To the east, state Wildlife Management Area (WMA) lands border 2/3 of the boundary from Ditch 200 north; waterfowl hunting is permitted on the WMA. The remaining 1/3 is bordered by South Pool to the east which is a closed area. Youth Waterfowl Hunting Signs will be posted along the exterior boundary. Maps are available at the Refuge Headquarters.

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Unfortunately, the water conditions and access at Farmes Pool are poor this year due to on-going repairs to the water control structure. Farmes Pool has been in drawdown since mid-August; only the ditches are holding water. Also the Ditch 200 road (270th St. NE, Middle River) is impassable for driving through just east of the water control structure. A by-pass ditch was cut through the road for drainage during construction. The Ditch 200 Road is still accessible from the east off of Township Road 130(230th Ave NE). Water control structure repairs should be completed by the regular waterfowl opener on October 3rd .

Opening of this season has been on hold for the last three years due to a lawsuit filed by the Humane Society of the US. The dispute was settled on August 29, 2008. We are sincerely sorry that this first youth waterfowl hunt on Agassiz NWR will not have the best water conditions. This may be a good year to explore the area in preparation for the 2010 season.

Legal hunting hours for the Youth Waterfowl Hunt on September 19 are one-half hour before sunrise to 4 p.m. Agassiz refuge will be holding Public Banding night on that evening at 5:00 p.m., weather permitting. Help us band the ducks that you may one day harvest.

Refuge headquarters is located 11 miles east of Holt, Minnesota on Marshall County Road 7 (290th St. NE). If you need more information, please call the 218-449-4115, ext. 211 or dial 0 for operator assistance. Office hours are 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

You can also call the local Minnesota DNR office in Thief River Falls (218-681-2091) for questions related to hunting on the state WMA lands.

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 <http://www.fws.gov>

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### **Minnesota DNR Rule Summary**

2009 Youth Waterfowl Hunt: On Sept. 19, waterfowl hunters age 15 and younger, when accompanied by a non-hunting adult (age 18 and older, no license required) may take ducks, Canada geese, mergansers, coots, and moorhens from one-half hour before sunrise to 4 p.m. Motorized decoy restrictions are in effect. Bag limits are the same as the regular duck season (see below). Five Canada geese may be taken statewide. There are no license requirements, except hunters ages 13 to 15 must have a firearms safety certificate in their possession. All other migratory bird hunting regulations apply.

2009 Duck, Coot, and Merganser Bag Limits

- 6 ducks daily; may not include more than any combination of the following: 4 mallards (only 1 hen),

2 redheads, 2 scaup, 2 wood ducks, 1 black duck, 1 canvasback, and 1 pintail. If not listed, up to 6

ducks of a species may be taken (e.g., gadwall).

- 15 coots per day

- 5 mergansers per day, but no more than 2 can be hooded mergansers

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