



PRIME HOOK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE 2008-2009 WATERFOWL HUNTING



GENERAL PROVISIONS: Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge is one of over 500 National Wildlife Refuges. The primary objective of a refuge is to provide habitat for the conservation and protection of all species of wildlife. Hunting is one tool used to manage wildlife populations, provide recreational opportunities, and permit the use of a valuable renewable resource. Hunting at Prime Hook NWR is through the issuance of a permit. This permit can be revoked at any time at the discretion of the refuge manager or their representative.

NEW in 2008-2009

- Permit fees are waived for hunters aged 15 years and under.
- The maximum permitted boat motor has increased to 30 horsepower.

PERMITS REQUIRED: Permits are available to disabled and able-bodied hunters on designated dates at the check station through a morning standby lottery drawing followed by self-service until 12:00 noon. Permits are non-transferable. Hunters may not be on refuge any earlier than 3 hours before shooting time to begin signing up for the lottery drawing. All lottery drawings will be held 2 hours before legal shooting time on the morning of the hunt. Refuge staff will administer the morning lottery drawings on the first two opening days of all three seasonal splits and, if necessary, on occasion when larger than normal crowds are expected. On all other refuge hunting days, including the Youth Hunt, the drawings will be conducted by standby hunters.

Procedures for Hunter Facilitated Lottery Drawing: Each hunting party will completely fill out a waterfowl hunting permit, fold it in half, and place it in the provided bucket. Permits are located in the box labeled "Permits" on the counter at the check station. All members of the hunting party must be present at the drawing or at the time of self-service. Hunters may not reserve blinds or obtain permits for other hunting parties. No more than three persons may occupy a blind. The names of all occupants of the blind and their hunting license numbers must be written on the permit prior to hunting. Only adults 18 years and older are permitted to participate in the standby drawing or receive a permit by self-service. The permit must include any youth's name (and hunting license number if applicable), indicating him/her as "hunting" or "non-hunting". At two hours before shooting time, permits are picked one at a time out of the bucket by a willing hunter from the crowd (official time is indicated on the clock in the check station). Hunters may select blinds from the tag board in the order that the party was selected from the bucket. Hunters must sign out a blind by turning over the appropriate tag from green (available) to red (in use) and write the number on your permit. Place white copy of permit and fee in provided envelope, seal, and place in "permit" slot. Keep tan copy of permit on your person and return the permit to the check station after hunting. Flip your tag back to green when your hunt is over.

Hunters not selected by the morning lottery drawing can obtain permits for vacant blinds on a first-come, self-serve basis until 12:00 noon. Hunters who sign up on the standby list for vacant blinds must remain at the check station until a blind becomes available to remain in good standing. Permits must be turned in at the check station by 4:00 PM. The questionnaire portion on the permit must be filled out after the hunt. The information that you provide from your hunt is essential in evaluating the migratory waterfowl population. When leaving the blind unoccupied for any reason, the permit must be turned in and a new permit must be paid for and completely filled out at the check station before hunting again. The permit must be retained with the party at all times while hunting.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- Waterfowl hunting at Prime Hook NWR is subject to applicable State and Federal regulations and only waterfowl and coot may be taken. A valid State of Delaware hunting license is required unless exempt from Delaware hunting license requirements. Hunters, when requested by Federal or State enforcement officers, must display for inspection, all game, hunting equipment and ammunition. Failure to follow regulations may result in loss of hunting privileges and/or a fine.
- **HUNTING AREAS:** Hunting is permitted only from government blinds within the designated hunting area. See Island Farm Area map for the disabled hunting area. Hunt areas may be closed completely or in part, without notice when wind, ice, road conditions, etc. make entry onto hunt areas hazardous.
- **SEASON:** Prime Hook NWR is open to hunting on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays throughout the state waterfowl (duck) hunting season. The refuge is closed for waterfowl hunting for the early teal season, Saturday, November 1, and Saturday, January 17.
 - On January 17, only the state blinds (#1-8) will be open to hunting. Access for duck hunters will be from the boat ramp at the State Area only. Refuge blinds will be closed. Procedures for a self-service hunter facilitated lottery drawing apply.
- **SHOOTING TIME:** Hunting is permitted ½ hour before sunrise until 3:00 PM.
- **BOATS:** A boat is necessary to reach all blinds. Permit holders must use designated launching sites to launch their boats (maximum permitted motor -30 horsepower). Push poles are recommended. Federal and State boating regulations apply.
- **FEES: \$5.00 per hunter.** Fees are waived for hunters aged 15 years and under. Senior citizens (age 62 and older) receive a 50% discount with an Interagency Senior Pass. Citizens who have been medically determined to be permanently disabled are also entitled to a 50% discount with an Interagency Access Pass (see [Disabled Hunting](#) for more info). The Interagency Senior Pass can be purchased in person for \$10 and the Interagency Access Pass is free of charge at the Refuge Headquarters during office hours.
- **YOUTH HUNTING:** For the Youth Waterfowl Hunt on October 4, 2008, the refuge will follow the criteria established by the State of Delaware for hunter/guardian ages, safety qualifications, etc (Adults can not hunt). Blinds will not be grassed in time for this hunt. For all refuge waterfowl hunts, a permitted juvenile aged 17 and under must be accompanied by a hunting or non-hunting adult who is 18 years or older. It is strongly recommended that the accompanying adult be licensed to hunt in the State of Delaware.
- **DISABLED HUNTING:** A wheelchair accessible blind in the Island Farm Area is available for disabled hunters with a record of a certified permanent disability. Disabled hunters may have an assistant accompany them; however only one weapon belonging to the disabled hunter is permitted in the blind. The assistant is only permitted to use the disabled hunter's weapon when attempting to track down a wounded bird. Hunters must obtain an Interagency Access Pass in advance to be eligible to receive a permit for this blind.
- Blinds #25 & #27 are designated as blind sites, where the hunting party has the option to hunt from the fixed blind or anywhere within the pond. Jump shooting is prohibited.
- Use or possession of alcoholic beverages during any scheduled hunt is prohibited.
- The use or possession of handguns is prohibited.
- The possession of an uncased gun or shooting outside of an assigned blind is prohibited except in active pursuit of crippled waterfowl. In such cases a hunter must only fire at crippled birds. The exception to this regulation is when hunting from a temporary blind in ponds #25 or #27.
- The possession of firearm/archery equipment on refuge lands is prohibited unless in possession of a valid refuge hunting permit.
- **DO NOT LITTER.** Prime Hook NWR is a carry-in, carry-out refuge. This includes shotgun shells, cigarette butts, and all trash.
- No vegetation may be cut on Federal lands. The use of natural vegetation for camouflaging your blind is prohibited. Only synthetic camouflage material is permitted. Damaging blinds including grass cutting is prohibited. All hunters must a reasonable effort to recover wounded game.

For further information contact the Refuge Manager, Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge, 11978 Turtle Pond Road, Milton, Delaware 19968. (302)684-8419.
<http://primehook.fws.gov> Office hours are Mon.-Fri., 7:30am to 4:00pm.

Revised July 2008