

## General Introduction

Big Lake National Wildlife Refuge, established in 1915, is one of over 548 national wildlife refuges administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The primary objective of the Refuge is to provide habitat for waterfowl and other migratory birds. The Refuge is located in Mississippi County, Arkansas.

Public use, hunting, and fishing are allowed under carefully controlled conditions in order to maintain wildlife populations at levels compatible with the ecosystem. This permits the wise use of a valuable natural resource and provides wholesome recreational opportunities for the public. Users of the Refuge must obey all signs pertaining to visitation, access, and public use regulations. All public uses, including hunting and fishing, are conducted in accordance with state and federal regulations as supplemented by the following special refuge regulations.

### Access and Vehicle Use

Hunters may enter the Refuge no earlier than 4 am.

The eagle sanctuary is closed to all public entry (see map).

The entire lake, Baker's Field Island, and the Sand-Slough Moist Soil Unit are waterfowl sanctuaries and are closed to all entry and public use from November 1 - February 28.

Most refuge roads are open to the general public. However, roads may be closed at any time hazardous or poor road conditions exist or other administrative needs warrant. A locked gate or other barrier, road closed sign, or no vehicle sign means the road is closed to **all** vehicle travel but not to foot travel unless signed otherwise.

All vehicles must stay on maintained roads or established parking areas and meet all applicable federal and state requirements regulating the use of a licensed motor vehicle. Modified vehicles equipped with oversize tractor lug tires are prohibited

ATVs are prohibited, except for mobility-impaired hunters under Special Use Permit. Horses/mules are prohibited. Personal watercraft (e.g., jet-skis, etc.), hover craft, and airboats are prohibited.

Boats may be launched only in designated areas. Boat access by hunters from October 31 through February 28 is limited to launching at Seven Mile boat ramp and boat use in Ditch 28 only.

### General Refuge Regulations

Public use of the Refuge is permitted throughout the year. Permitted activities are hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, environmental education, and interpretation.

**Refuge permits are required for all hunting activities. Permits are nontransferable and must be signed by the hunter and carried at all times by anyone on refuge land in possession of hunting gear. A permit can be found on the front of this brochure.**

Nighttime use is limited to fishing, frogging, and/or raccoon/opossum hunting and the appropriate tackle or gear must be possessed.

**FmHA Tracts:** (Lawrence & Craighead Counties) The FmHA tracts are open to hunting of state species in accordance with state seasons and bag limits, except **closed to all Migratory Bird hunting.** A Big Lake NWR general permit is required for all hunts and all refuge public use regulations apply.

### Commercial activities

Refuge regulations require anyone engaged in a commercial activity to first obtain a refuge Special Use Permit.

### Prohibited Activities

- Camping
- Building fires
- Cutting or defacing trees, shrubs, or other plants
- Littering (including, but not limited to shotgun shell hulls and cigarette butts).
- Searching for or removal of artifacts
- Horseback riding
- Possession or use of fireworks
- Target practice
- Training and pleasure running of dogs
- Taking or possessing turtles or mollusks
- Possession, use, or manufacturing of illegal drugs
- Artificial light may not be used to locate wildlife, except as authorized for frogging and raccoon/opossum hunting.
- Firearms, archery equipment, and crossbows are permitted only during refuge hunts.
- Firearms are prohibited south of Highway 18 and at Bright's Landing boat access.

Only biodegradable materials may be possessed or used to mark trails. All marking material should be removed from the Refuge after the hunt.

### Sport fishing and frogging regulations

Sport fishing is permitted on all refuge waters from March 1 - October 31.

- The area around Floodway Dam south of Highway 18 Bridge is open to bank fishing year-round, 24 hours a day.
- Climbing onto and/or fishing from all electrically operated water control structures and associated wingwalls or top of the Floodway Dam south of Highway 18, or entering associated signed closed areas is prohibited.
- Frogging is permitted in accordance with the state season and regulations but ends on October 31.
- Crawfish may be collected for personal use only. All crawfish traps must have the owner's name and address permanently affixed.
- Collecting or possessing turtles and mollusks is prohibited.
- Possessing largemouth bass less than 15 inches in length is prohibited.
- Boats are prohibited November 1 - February 28, except in Ditch 28, Ditch 81 and south of Sand Slough Dam.
- Commercial fishing requires a Special Use Permit.
- Sport fishing with the use of non-motorized boats and boats with electric trolling motors is permitted in the Sand Slough-Mud Slough area (designated on map and on the area by signs) from November 1 - February 28 during daylight hours only.

### General Hunt Regulations

Bag limits for all species, except deer, are the same as state limits unless specified otherwise.

### Mobility-impaired hunters

Mobility-impaired hunters may apply for a Special Use Permit allowing the use of ATVs on Oak Island Trail. Issuance of the permit is restricted to persons who are permanently confined to a wheelchair, require the use of mechanical aids (braces, crutches, or walkers) to walk, or have complete single leg amputations. For more information, please call the Refuge at 870/564 2429.

### Hunter sign out requirements

Hunters **must** sign out after completion of the hunt and provide harvest information at the Hunter Information Station located outside the office building main entrance.

### Firearms

Firearms are prohibited on the Refuge, except during refuge squirrel, rabbit, raccoon, and opossum seasons. Firearms must be completely unloaded, including chamber and magazine and caps on muzzleloaders, and cased while

in a vehicle and on any refuge road, parking area, or boat ramp.

Only non-toxic shot or rimfire rifles may be possessed and used for all small game hunting. The possession or use of buckshot is prohibited.

### Prohibited hunting activities

- Trapping.
- Driving or screwing any metal object into a tree or hunting from a tree in which a metal object has been driven or screwed to support a hunter.
- Building or hunting from permanent blinds.
- Possession or distribution of bait or hunting over bait, salt, grain, or other feed that could serve as a lure or attraction for wildlife.
- Hunting from mowed or gravel roads.
- Hunting in Sand Slough Moist Soils Unit, Baker's Island Field, and refuge headquarters area (see map).
- Possession or use of alcoholic beverages while hunting.

### Hunters under the age of 16

Hunters under the age of 16 must be supervised by an adult not less than 21 years old and must remain in sight and normal voice contact with the adult. For small game, the adult may supervise no more than two youths. For big game hunts, the adult may supervise only one youth.

A hunter born after 1968 must carry a valid Hunter Education Card. Hunters under the age of 16 do not need a card if they are under the direct supervision (within arm's reach) of a holder of a valid hunting license at least 21 years of age. Home state Hunter Education Cards will be honored.

### Specific Hunt Regulations

A refuge permit is required for all hunts. When signed, the permit on the front cover of this brochure will serve as a permit for all hunts and must be carried on your person while hunting. Regulations differ from surrounding deer zones and state seasons as follows:

### Migratory Birds

Big Lake National Wildlife Refuge is **closed** to all waterfowl hunting.

### Small Game

**Squirrel:** September 5 - October 31, 2009. Dogs allowed North of Timm's Point. Spring season closed.

**Rabbit:** September 5 - October 31, 2009. Dogs allowed North of Timm's Point.

### Furbearer

Beaver, nutria, feral hogs, muskrat, armadillo, and coyote may be taken incidental to any refuge hunt by the use of the device appropriate for that hunt and according to any applicable state regulations.

**Raccoon and Opossum:** October 5 - 20, 2009. No limit. Dogs are required for night hunting.

### Big Game

**For all deer harvested on the Refuge, the zone to be immediately recorded on your hunting license is 030. All harvested deer must be recorded at the Refuge Hunter Information Station located at the refuge headquarters. All deer must also be telechecked by calling 1-800-507-GAME(4263).**

Hunters may possess long, recurve, compound, and crossbows for the archery deer hunt. Firearms, muzzleloaders, and dogs are prohibited.

Only portable stands capable of being carried by one person may be used and the owner's name and address must be permanently affixed to the stand. Stands may be erected 7 days prior to the refuge deer season and must be removed by the last day of archery season.

The Refuge may be closed and archery hunting suspended during periods of severe flooding.

### Deer Limits and Refuge Legal Buck Definition

Statewide bag limit of three deer applies. The total number of bucks that can be harvested is two. A legal buck on the Refuge is defined as any male deer (no antler restriction). Deer harvested on the Refuge are NOT bonus deer.

Deer (Archery/Crossbow): November 1 – December 31, 2009.

Take pride in your refuge. Don't litter. Report violations. Stop Poaching Hotline 1-800-482-9262

### Signs Protect Visitors and Resources

Millions of people visit national wildlife refuges each year. The impact of human activity, if not regulated, can degrade these wildlands. Signs control recreational activities while protecting natural resources on the refuge. Please respect the following signs:

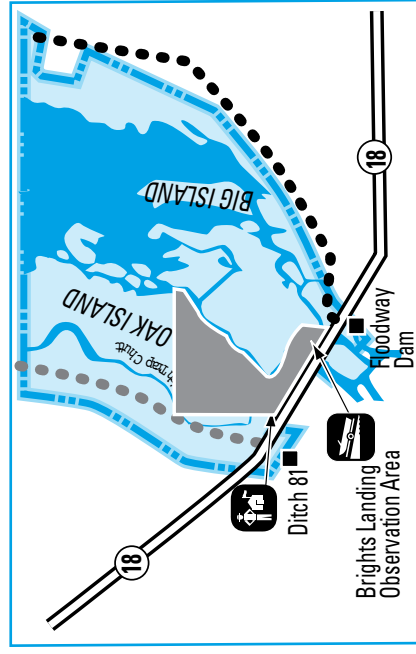
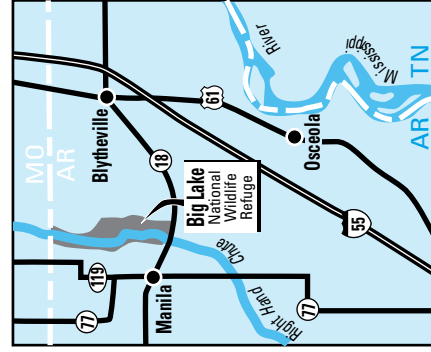


MISSOURI  
DUNKLIN CO.  
MISSISSIPPI CO.  
ARKANSAS

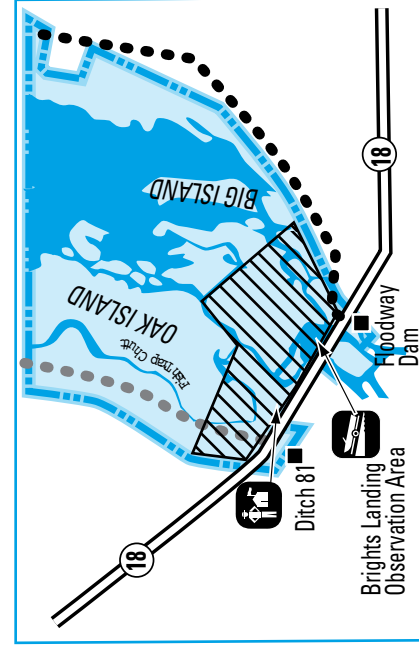
# Big Lake

National Wildlife Refuge

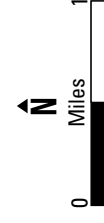
Arkansas Game & Fish Commission  
**BIG LAKE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA**



**Open to fishing November 1-February 28**  
Trotling motors only



**Closed to hunting**



Seven-mile Boat Access

Arkansas Game & Fish Commission  
**MALLARD LAKE**

Timm's Point Observation Area

Mid-Lake Water Control Structure

Wildlife Auto Drive

2 Miles to Manila

18

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**Hunting Seasons**

- Deer - Archery  
November 1 - December 31, 2009
- Squirrel & Rabbit  
September 5 - October 31, 2009
- Raccoon & Opossum  
October 5 - October 20, 2009

**Big Lake National Wildlife Refuge**  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
PO Box 67  
Manila, Arkansas 72442  
870/564 2429  
<http://www.fws.gov/southeast>  
<http://www.fws.gov/biglake>

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

July 2009



# Big Lake

National Wildlife Refuge Public Use, Hunting and Fishing Regulations 2009-2010

**2009-2010 General Hunting Permit - Big Lake NWR**  
This permit must be signed to be valid. It must be carried by the hunter during the hunts. Permit expires 6/30/10.

I have read and understand the refuge hunting regulations and realize that hunting on the refuge is a privilege and willingly agree to allow USFWS officers to inspect or search all equipment used during my hunt.

Signature (Permit not transferable)