

News Release

**Department of the Interior / U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Southwest Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge Complex
1428 Highway 27
Bell City, LA 70665
337-598-2216**

For Immediate Release:
September 6, 2007

Contact:
Diane Borden-Billiot, Outreach Coordinator
337-558-5574 or 912-0622

Lacassine and Sabine National Wildlife Refuges Open to Teal Hunting

The Louisiana Teal season is scheduled for September 15th through September 30th, 2007. Both Sabine and Lacassine National Wildlife Refuges will be open to Teal hunting throughout the season on designated days.

Sabine NWR is open for hunting Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday. Hunters can enter the refuge and launch at 3:00 am. Shooting hours end at 12:00 pm (noon) each day. Boats may enter the refuge hunt areas from West Cove Recreation Area or through Burton Canal via Black Bayou. Walk-in hunters and hunters launching small boats may access Hunt Unit E by driving on Vastar Road.

Lacassine NWR is open for hunting Wednesday through Sunday. Hunters may enter the refuge at 4:00 am. Shooting hours end at 12:00 pm (noon) each day. Hunters may hunt the portion of the refuge south of the Gulf Intercoastal Waterway and between the Mermentau River and the east bank of the Lacassine Bayou (excluding the Duck Pond area and Unit B). There is a federal order prohibiting waterfowl hunting on that portion of Lacassine Bayou that flows through the refuge.

Youths, 15 and under, must have proof of successful completion of a Hunter Safety Course. All youths attending the hunt must be under the supervision of an adult age 21 or over. Each adult may supervise no more than two youths.

Hunters are encouraged to familiarize themselves with hunting areas prior to hunting and before the refuge closure on October 15th. Hunt unit conditions and access may change each year depending upon weather, growth and expansion of vegetation, and tidal flow. Only portable blinds are allowed on the refuge. All boats, blinds, and decoys must be removed immediately following each days hunt.

All refuge hunters are required to possess a refuge-hunting permit. The *Southwest Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge Complex Hunting Regulations 2007-2008* brochure will serve as the required permit when it has been signed and dated. Due to circumstances beyond our control, the hunt brochures are late being delivered and may not be available in refuge offices and kiosks until the hunt begins. The brochure is available electronically and hunters are encouraged to download the brochure from the Refuge Complex website at <http://www.fws.gov/swlarefugecomplex> under the Hunting Regulations link. Sabine hunters will have to print the Sabine NWR hunting map and specific regulations separately in addition to the Complex brochure. This one page addition to the brochure is found on the same web site under the Sabine NWR link, under Hunting Map.

Each hunting party is required to fill out a Waterfowl Harvest Data Form after each hunt and drop it in one of the designated drop boxes. Every party, whether successful or not, needs to complete the Data Form. This information provides us with a means to evaluate hunter effort on the refuge.

For additional information about teal hunting on Lacassine call 337-774-5923, for further information about hunting on Sabine call 337-558-5574.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System that encompasses more than 540 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands, and other special management areas. It also operates 70 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices and 78 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. The agency also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.
