Eastern Massachusetts
National Wildlife Refuge Complex
73 Weir Hill Road
Sudbury, MA 01776
978/443 4661
978/443 2898 Fax
http://www.fws.gov/northeast/easternmanwrcomplex/

Federal Relay Service
for the deaf and hard-of-hearing
800/877 8339

US Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD
http://www.fws.gov

June 2010

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Eastern Massachusetts

National Wildlife Refuge Complex

Hunt Regulations and Information

Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge

Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge

Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge

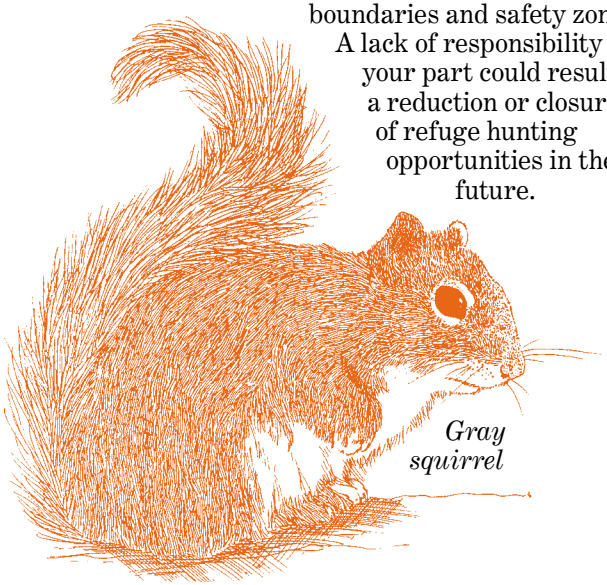
Welcome

This goose, designed by J.N. "Ding" Darling, has become the symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Welcome to the Assabet River, Great Meadows and Oxbow national wildlife refuges. These refuges are part of the Eastern Massachusetts National Wildlife Refuge Complex and are three of the eight refuges in the Complex and more than 550 national wildlife refuges in the country. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service administers these refuges and is responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing the nation's fish and wildlife populations and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the people.

In response to hunter feedback and to streamline the hunt program, some refuge regulations and procedures have changed. Hunters are encouraged to read this information carefully.

It is imperative that you conduct yourself with the highest level of consideration for the safety and enjoyment of others. Please respect and observe refuge regulations, boundaries and safety zones. A lack of responsibility on your part could result in a reduction or closure of refuge hunting opportunities in the future.



Gray squirrel

Hunt Seasons

Assabet River NWR is open for the hunting of white-tailed deer (archery, muzzleloader, shotgun), spring turkey, American woodcock, ruffed grouse, Eastern cottontail rabbit, and gray squirrel. Great Meadows NWR is open for white-tailed deer (archery only) and waterfowl (ducks and geese). Oxbow NWR is open for white-tailed deer (archery, muzzleloader, shotgun), spring and fall turkey, waterfowl (ducks and geese), snipe, American woodcock, ruffed grouse, Eastern cottontail rabbit, and gray squirrel. NOT ALL PARTS OF EACH REFUGE ARE OPEN FOR EACH HUNT SEASON. Be familiar with the hunt maps and regulations to ensure you are hunting in an open area.

Archery permits are valid during shotgun and muzzleloader seasons.

Applicable refuge hunting dates and times correspond to state regulations. See state abstracts for details.

Refuge Permits

All hunters are required to have a refuge-issued permit along with state licenses in their possession to scout or hunt on each refuge. Information about the application process is provided in a separate handout.

Refuge Regulations and Information

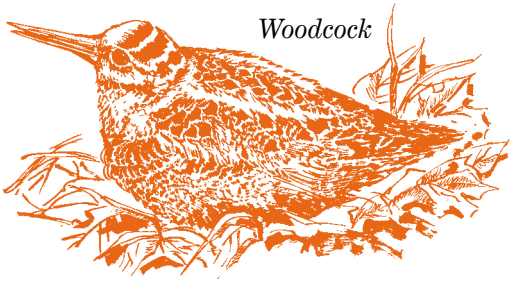
The information provided below outlines refuge-specific hunt regulations. Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on national wildlife refuges must comply with all provisions of state and local law. Persons may only use (discharge) firearms in accordance with refuge regulations (50 CFR 27.42 and specific refuge regulations in 50 CFR Part 32). Please contact us if you are confused about any of our special regulations.

Closed Areas
Not all areas of the three refuges are open for hunting. Please ensure that you are hunting on land or along rivers where hunting is allowed. The maps in this brochure show where hunting is allowed. Hunters must also comply with the 500-foot safety zone around occupied buildings and 150-foot safety zone from public roads.

Duck taking flight

Waterfowl hunting at Great Meadows NWR is authorized between the buoys on the Concord and Sudbury Rivers. These buoys have been installed to indicate where hunting is allowed. Waterfowl hunting on the rivers is allowed only between buoys 1 and 2, 3 and 4, 5 and 6, and 7 and 8. There are no buoys on the Nashua River as waterfowl hunting there is only allowed south of Route 2 to the Still River Depot Road boat launch.

Nature Trails
Nature trails are located on all refuges in areas where hunting is allowed. Other outdoor enthusiasts may be using the Nashua River, Sudbury River or Concord River during the hunting season. Please exercise caution when hunting on or near the rivers or near nature trails. It is your responsibility to know where trails are located. Also realize that some people may wander



Woodcock

off trails (even though they are not supposed to!). Please be aware that non-hunters may not know that hunting is allowed on some parts of the refuges. Be respectful at all times.

Refuge Management Activities
Refuge staff, volunteers and contractors may be working at any time on any of the refuges during hunting season. Our management activities for wildlife and habitat management are important and will continue to be conducted during the hunt season. We apologize if our activities disturb your hunt, but some disturbance will be unavoidable.

Parking
You will receive a parking pass with your refuge permit. The number on this pass will correspond with your permit number. The pass must be visible on your dashboard at all times when parked in a designated parking lot.

We ask hunters to park in designated refuge hunt parking areas shown on the hunt maps. You may be fined or towed if your vehicle blocks gates, roads or buildings. We realize that

Turkey

some hunt areas have limited or no parking access—we encourage carpooling or being dropped off and picked up.

Some parking areas are on non-refuge lands (Rt. 225 boat launch in Bedford and Lake George Street in Devens) or are commonly used by the general public to access the Sudbury River. Please be courteous of others if parking in these areas. Also, ensure you are on refuge property before you begin hunting.

At Great Meadows NWR, hunters MUST NOT access the refuge from Town of Carlisle conservation lands. Parking is available off the driveway at 342 Maple Street, Carlisle. Please be courteous as this is a private residence.

Scouting
Scouting may only be done on the four Sundays prior to opening day of the permitted season. Hunters engaged in scouting must carry state and refuge licenses and permits.

Hours
Hunters may enter the refuge no earlier than one and one-half hours before legal hunting hours and leave no later than one and one-half hours after legal sunset.

Tree stands
Refuge hunters will be allowed to keep **one** tree stand on each refuge during the white-tailed deer archery, shotgun and muzzleloader seasons. Tree stands must be marked with the hunter's permit number in such a fashion that it can be visible from the ground. Tree stands may be put up as soon as the first eligible scouting day of the permitted season and **must** be removed by January 15 of the permitted season. Any tree stand remaining on the refuge after January 15 may be confiscated. Climbers or ladder type tree stands are recommended. Nails, spikes, screws or other objects may not be driven into any tree to access or secure the stand.

Having a tree stand in place does not claim your right to a specific area of the refuge. Hunters must rely on good judgment and hunter ethics to avoid conflict. Tree stands left up are done so at the sole risk of the hunter. Stands left on the refuge may be secured with a lock. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged property.

Eastern cottontail rabbit

White-tailed deer

Youth hunting
Any child between the ages of 12 and 17 can receive a refuge hunting permit (not subject to lottery process) and must be accompanied by a licensed hunter 18 years of age or older when hunting.

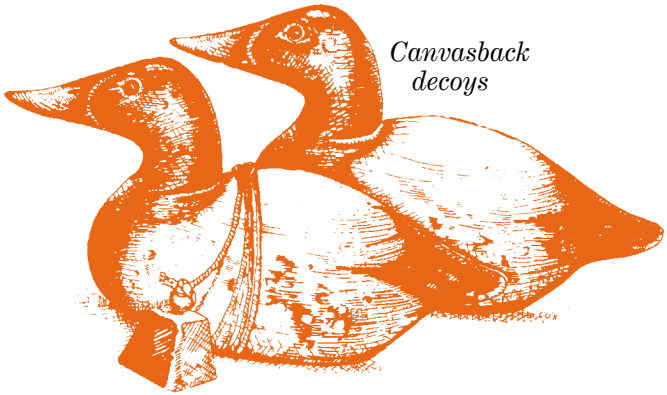
Non-hunting companion
We no longer issue companion hunt permits. However, we will allow each permitted hunter to be accompanied by one non-hunting companion. Non-hunting companions cannot engage in the act of hunting but they can help retrieve and carry downed game. All companions must carry personal identification with them and be willing to show it to any law enforcement official. Non-hunting companions must be close enough to the hunter to speak to them without raising their voice.

Hunter orange
During any season in which it is legal to hunt deer with a shotgun or muzzleloader, we require all hunters to wear a minimum of **500** square inches of **solid-orange** clothing or material on their **chest, back and head (except if hunting waterfowl from a blind or boat)**. During all other times, hunters engaged in woodcock, ruffed grouse, squirrel, or cottontail rabbit hunting at Assabet River or Oxbow NWRs, as well as snipe hunting at Oxbow NWR, are required to wear at the minimum a solid-orange hat. Camouflage orange alone is NOT permitted. This is not only a safety consideration, but it is also respectful of refuge visitors, staff or contractors who may be in the area. During turkey season, hunters must wear an orange cap when moving to and between their hunt location.

Refuge boundaries
We have tried to clearly mark refuge boundaries. However, not all refuge areas are completely signed. Please refer to the refuge maps and call the refuge office if you need clarification on a refuge boundary.

Approved shot
Hunters may possess only approved non-toxic shot when hunting ruffed grouse, rabbit, squirrel and migratory birds.

Dogs
Dogs are not allowed on any of the refuges during scouting. For seasons where State regulations allow the use of dogs, we allow no more than two dogs per hunting party.



Canvasback decoys

Decoys
Decoys can only be used while hunting waterfowl or turkey.

Trail markers
We do not permit the marking of any tree, trail, or other refuge feature

with flagging or paint. Hunters may use reflective tacks and other small reflective markers, which need to be removed at the end of the season. We encourage the use of a GPS to avoid putting up markers.

Law enforcement
Individuals utilizing the refuge are subject to inspections of permits, licenses, hunting equipment, bag limits, boats, vehicles, and their contents by federal or state law enforcement officers. Any member of the refuge staff may ask to see your refuge permit.

Prohibited Activities

- Driving of deer by any means
- Littering
- Use of a spotlight or other artificial light to locate wildlife
- Baiting or hunting over bait or salt
- Use of electronic calls
- Driving or screwing a nail, spike or other metal object into a tree or hunting from any tree in which such an object has been driven
- Trimming or cutting vegetation greater than the diameter of a quarter
- Use or possession of alcoholic beverages while hunting
- Use of ATVs, dirt bikes and/or other motorized vehicles
- Target practice
- Camping and campfires
- Overnight parking
- Searching for, or removing, any object of antiquity including arrowheads, pottery or other artifacts
- Blocking gates or roadways with vehicles
- Dog training

An Important Message

Our wildlife is a valuable resource. Laws and regulations are intended to protect them, while allowing for some consumptive use. Hunters are encouraged to report any violations they may encounter to a State or federal employee.

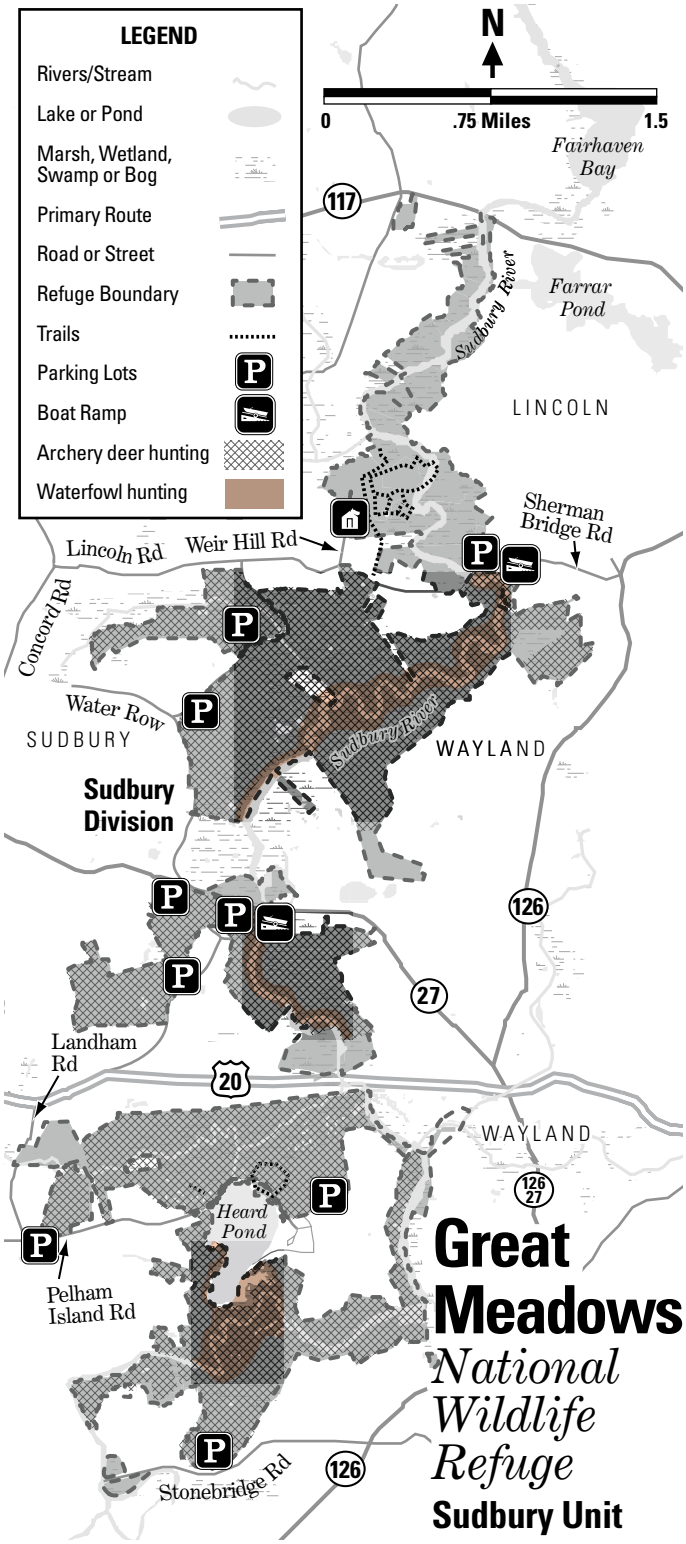
The future of hunting on the refuges requires responsible hunter behavior and compliance with regulations. You can help us by complying with these regulations, reporting unethical hunter behavior and providing us with feedback.

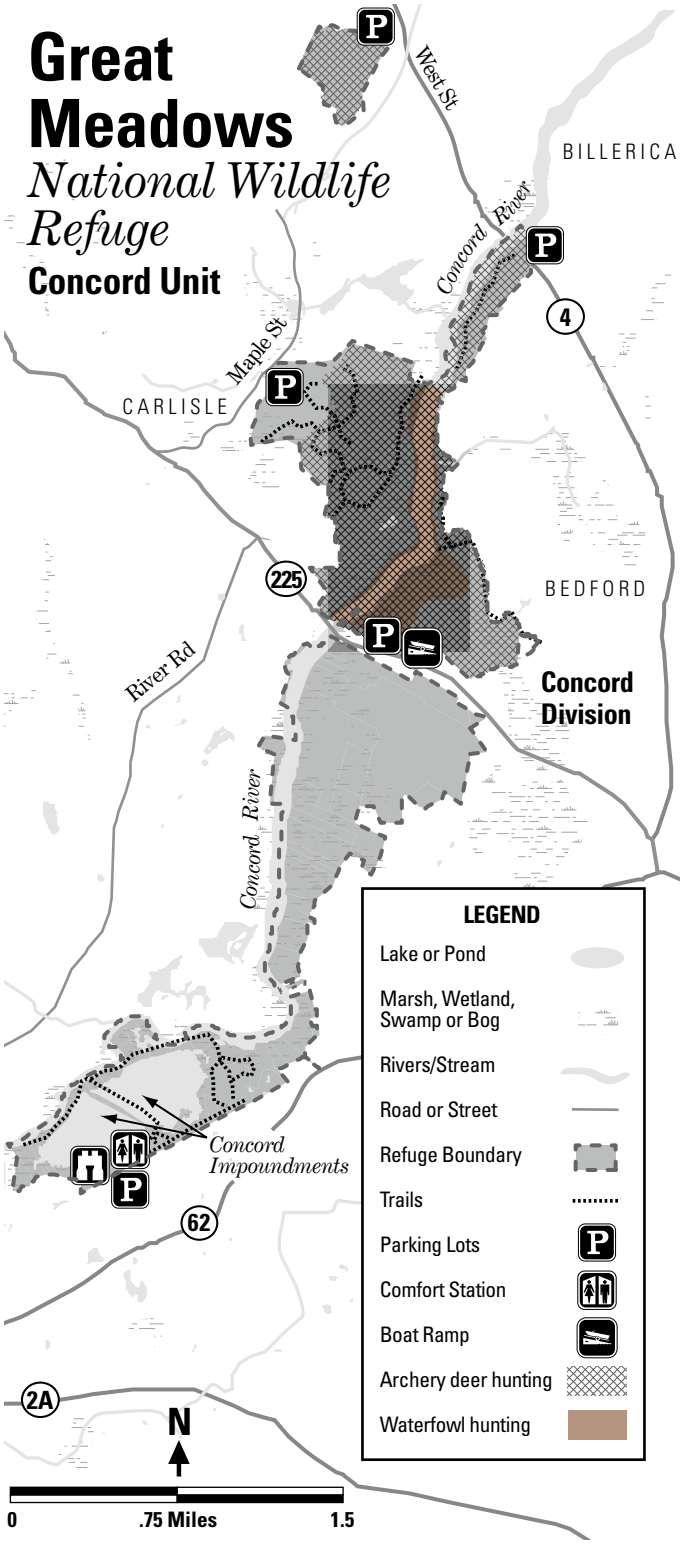
Thank you. Have a safe and enjoyable hunting experience.

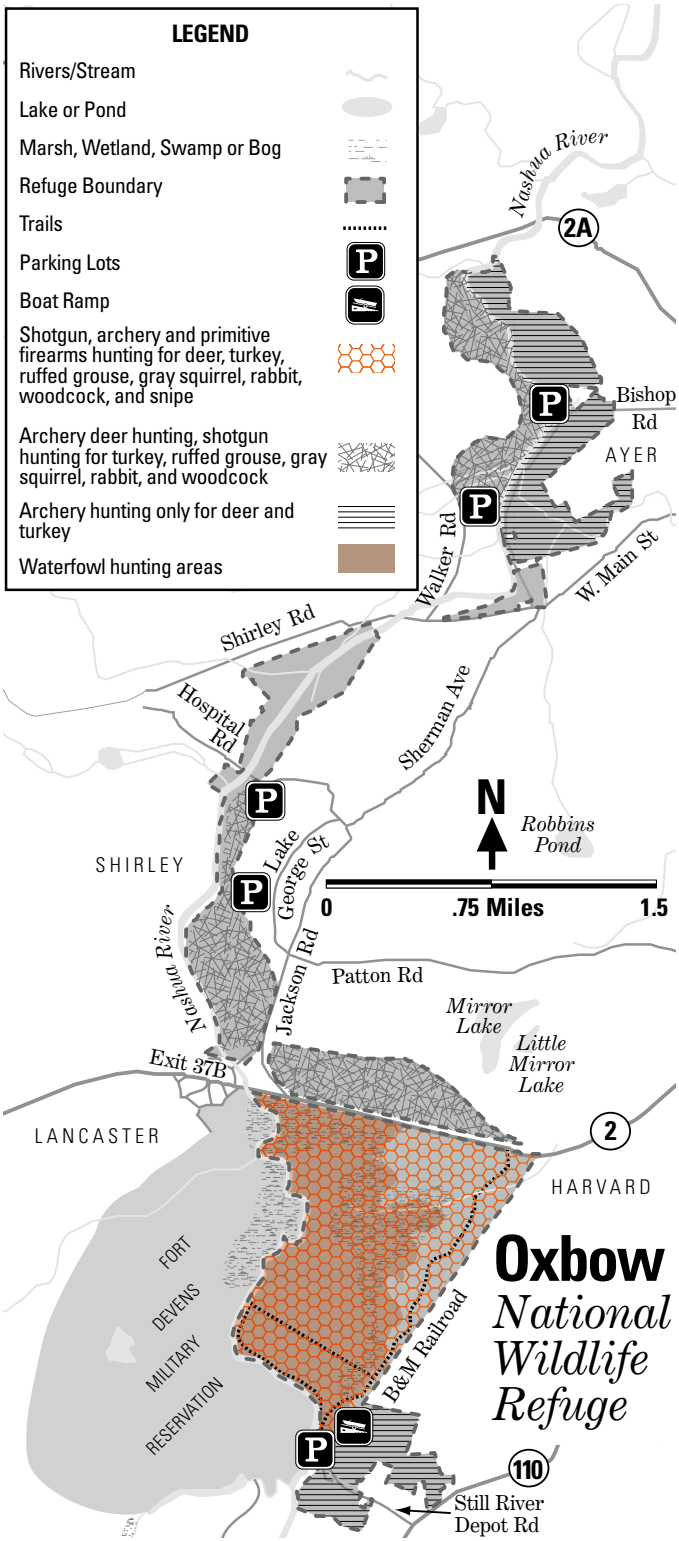
For information on how to apply, please contact us at:

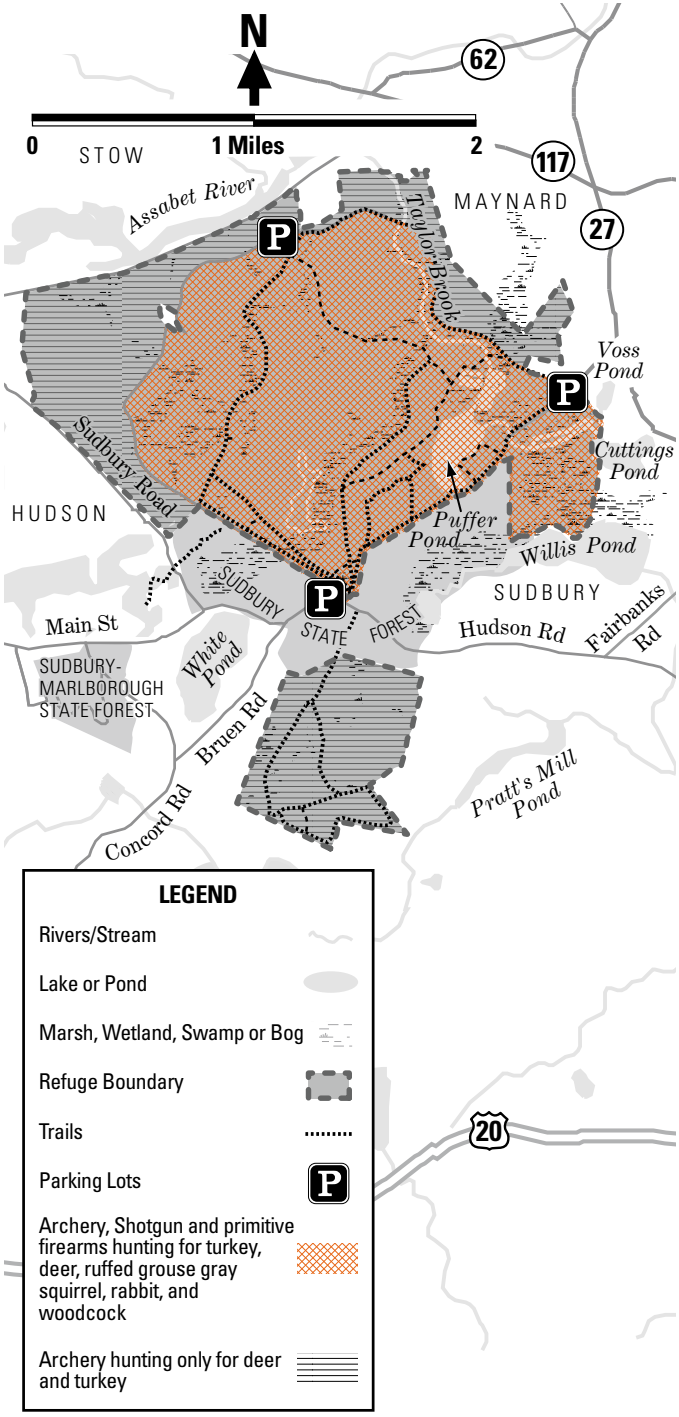
Eastern Massachusetts National
Wildlife Refuge Complex
73 Weir Hill Road
Sudbury, MA 01776
978/443 4661
http: //www.fws.gov/northeast/
easternmanwrcomplex/
To apply online, visit
http//www.easternmapermits.com

Ruffed grouse


LEGEND
Rivers/Stream
Lake or Pond
Marsh, Wetland, Swamp or Bog
Primary Route
Road or Street
Refuge Boundary
Trails
Parking Lots
Boat Ramp
Archery deer hunting
Waterfowl hunting
N
0
.75 Miles
1.5
Fairhaven Bay
117
Sudbury River
Farrar Pond
LINCOLN
Sherman Bridge Rd
Lincoln Rd
Weir Hill Rd
Concord Rd
Water Row
SUDBURY
Sudbury River
WAYLAND
Sudbury Division
126
27
Landham Rd
20
WAYLAND
126 27
Heard Pond
Pelham Island Rd
Great Meadows
National Wildlife Refuge
Sudbury Unit
Stonebridge Rd
126


Great Meadows
National Wildlife Refuge
Concord Unit
West St
BILLERICA
Concord River
4
Maple St
CARLISLE
225
BEDFORD
River Rd
Concord Division
Concord River
Concord Impoundments
62
2A
N
0
.75 Miles
1.5
LEGEND
Lake or Pond
Marsh, Wetland, Swamp or Bog
Rivers/Stream
Road or Street
Refuge Boundary
Trails
Parking Lots
Comfort Station
Boat Ramp
Archery deer hunting
Waterfowl hunting





Assabet River
National Wildlife Refuge