

Specific Hunting Regulations

All hunters must possess and carry a signed paper or digital refuge permit (Public Use Regulations brochure).

Tennessee Hunters

Big game harvested on the refuge must be checked in according to TWRA regulations. Reelfoot NWR must be specified as the location of harvest. Download TWRA on the Go App to check in your deer by phone.

Kentucky Hunters

Big game harvested on the refuge must be telechecked through the toll free, automated phone-in system or online by midnight on the day the animal is recovered. Successful archery hunters must complete the harvest log as soon as the animal is recovered and before it is moved. Telecheck by phone – call 800-245-4263 (800-CHK-GAME).

Nontoxic Shot

All hunters using shotguns for hunting on Reelfoot and Lake Isom NWR’s must only use and possess ammunition containing approved nontoxic shot. The possession of lead shot is prohibited.

Deer gun hunters may possess lead rifled slugs while hunting on the refuge.

Waterfowl hunting is prohibited on Reelfoot NWR and Lake Isom NWR.

Only species listed in this regulations leaflet as open to hunting may be hunted/harvested on the Refuge.

Reelfoot NWR & Lake Isom NWR Hunting Seasons

Squirrel

**Reelfoot:** Aug 23 - Nov 14, 2025, and during the Tennessee Spring Squirrel Season, except closed during all Quota hunts.

**Lake Isom:** Aug 23 - Nov 14, 2025, and during Spring Squirrel Season

Bag Limit: Same as State

Raccoon and Opossum

**Reelfoot:** Same as statewide, except closed after Nov 14, and the day before and during deer youth and deer quota hunts. No bag limit. Hunting hours – 7 pm until 12 midnight only. Non-toxic shot only.

**Lake Isom:** Same as statewide, except closed after Nov 14. No bag limit. Hunting hours – 7 pm until 12 midnight only. Non-toxic shot only.

Archery Deer

**Reelfoot:** September 27 – October 24; October 27- October 30; November 3 – 6; and November 10-14, 2025

**Lake Isom:** September 27 – October 24; and October 27 – November 14, 2025

Bag Limit: Same as State

Harvested deer count in Statewide Bag Limit.

Reelfoot NWR - Quota Gun Hunt

Quota Deer Gun-Youth Hunt

Season: October 25 - 26, 2025

Bag Limit: Same as State. Harvested deer count in Statewide Bag Limit.

Quota Permits: 50 permits (Long Point Unit: 25 permits, and Grassy Island Unit: 25 Permits)

Quota Deer Gun

Season: October 31-Nov. 2; and Nov. 7-9, 2025

Bag Limit: Two Deer (only 1 may be antlered). Harvested deer count as bonus deer.

Quota Permits: 125 permits (Long Point Unit: 75 Permits and Grassy Island Unit: 50 Permits).

Reelfoot NWR - Quota Turkey Hunt

Season: Apr 17 - 19, 2026 and April 24-26, 2026

Bag Limit: 1 male bearded turkey.. Counts towards State limit. Quota Permits: 30 permits (Long Point Unit: 15 permits, and Grassy Island Unit: 15 permits).

Coyotes and beaver may be taken incidentally during scheduled refuge hunts.

Quota Hunt Application Procedures

To apply for a quota hunt permit, type or plainly print the name, address, and phone number w/ area code of each applicant on a U.S. Postal Service Postcard. A total of up to four hunters may apply on the same postcard: one hunter’s information on the front of the postcard and up to three additional hunter’s information on the back. Indicate hunt date and location (Long Point or Grassy Island). Only persons drawn for the hunt are allowed to participate in the hunt (No hunt guests, except the adult supervisor for the youth hunt, are permitted).

Submission of more than one postcard, except for the adult supervisor for the youth hunt, will result in disqualification of the applicant(s). Send postcard in an envelope addressed to the Refuge Manager at Reelfoot NWR, 4343 Highway 157, Union City, TN 38261.

**Postcards for the quota deer hunt are accepted during the month of July and postcards for the quota turkey hunt are accepted during the month of January.**

To view an example of a completed application card, please visit fws.gov/refuge/reelfoot and look for the green announcement box.

Youth Hunters

Both the youth hunter and the supervising adult must apply together on the same postcard to be selected for a quota hunt. Youth hunter may only apply to youth hunt or draw hunt. See Youth Supervision section regarding supervision requirements.

Fees

Applicants selected by drawing will be notified by mail to submit \$15.00 per person (cashiers check or money order only, payable to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) to receive a quota permit. Multiple drawn hunters’ fees can be added to one money order. Fees are not refundable and permits are not transferrable. Of funds collected, 80% are applied to defraying the administrative cost of the hunt while the remainder is deposited into the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund.

Specific Fishing Regulations

Fishing is seasonally permitted from legal sunrise to legal sunset (Central Time) on the waters of Reelfoot and Lake Isom NWR’s (see map for specific locations and dates of closures).

Frogging and commercial turtling are prohibited.

Persons must comply with all applicable State fishing and boating regulations while on the refuge. A valid Tennessee Fishing License is required.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Reelfoot and Lake Isom

National Wildlife Refuges  
Public Use Regulations 2025-2026

To:

Reelfoot National Wildlife Refuge  
4343 Highway 157  
Union City, TN 38261  
731/538 2481

http://www.fws.gov  
https://www.fws.gov/refuge/reelfoot/  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
1 800/244 WILD  
https://www.facebook.com/WestTennNWR/

July 2025



Reelfoot NWR and Lake Isom NWR  
General Hunting Permit 2025 - 2026

Hunters must have a signed permit in their possession while participating in authorized refuge hunts. Quota hunt permits are issued separately. Applicable licenses and stamps are required.

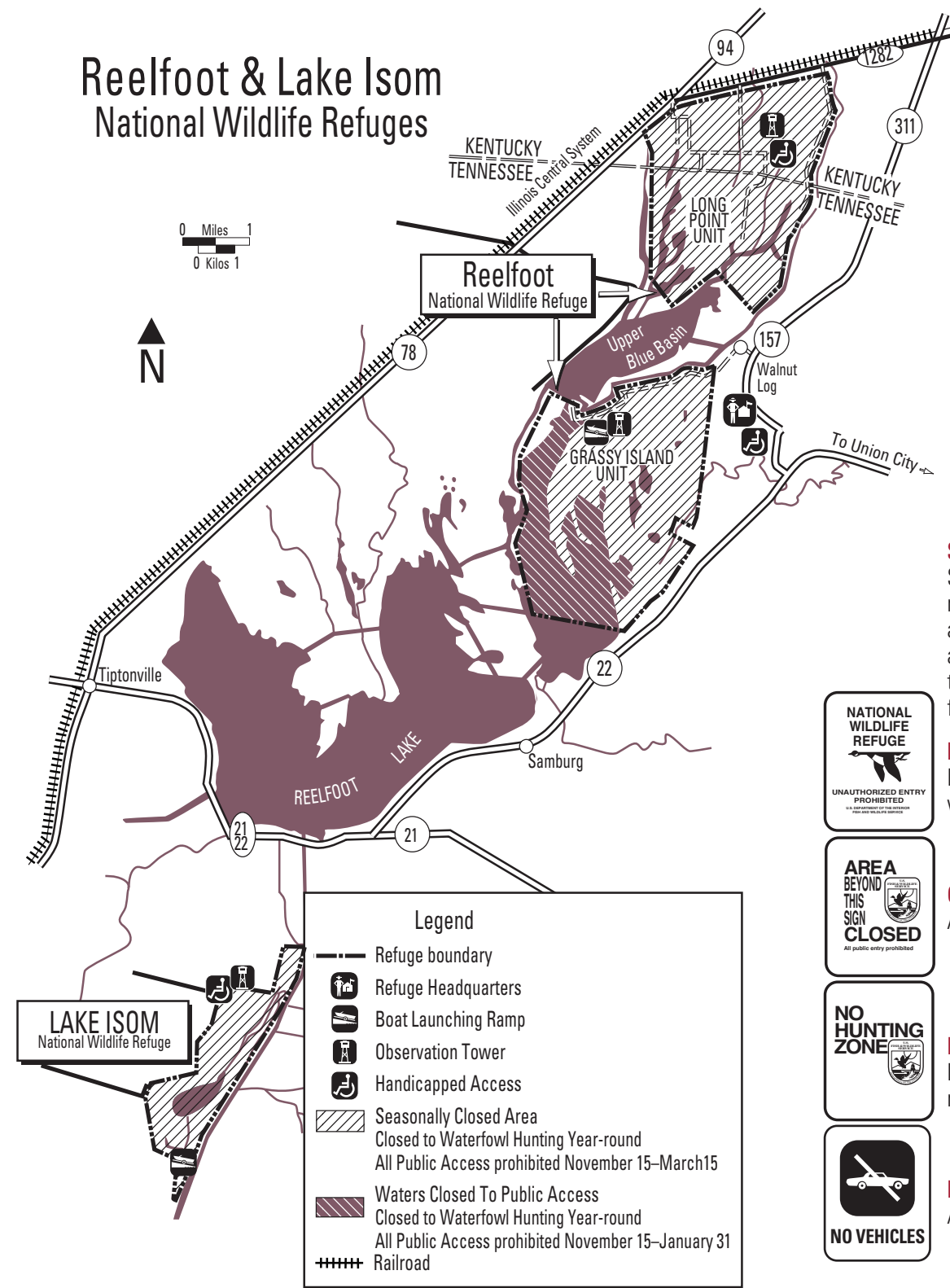
I have read and understand these refuge regulations.

Hunter signature (valid only when signed)

It is the hunter’s responsibility to comply with all Regulations contained in this brochure, the 50 CFR Regulations, and State Regulations.



# Reelfoot & Lake Isom National Wildlife Refuges



## Signs and Boundaries

Signs are useful tools in regulating the use of a public area. The wording of the sign applies to the area behind the sign. Please respect the following signs:

### Refuge Boundary

Entry permitted in accordance with refuge regulations.

### Closed Area

All entry prohibited.

### No Hunting Zone

Hunting, weapons, or game retrieval prohibited.

### No Vehicles

All vehicle traffic prohibited.

Reelfoot and Lake Isom National Wildlife Refuges are two of over 560 National Wildlife Refuges. These areas were established to provide essential habitat for migratory birds in the Lower Mississippi Valley. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service administers the Refuge System and is responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing the Nation's fish and wildlife populations and their habitats for the continuing benefit of people.

The provisions listed below supplement the general regulations which govern public use on National Wildlife Refuges as set forth in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations. When permitted, hunting, fishing and other public uses will be in accordance with applicable State laws unless otherwise listed.

## General Provisions and Access Regulations

### Access

By law, National Wildlife Refuges are closed to all recreational activities unless expressly permitted. Hunting, fishing, and certain other recreational uses are permitted on most areas of Reelfoot and Lake Isom National Wildlife Refuges. Reelfoot NWR and Lake Isom NWR are Day Use Only Areas. The refuges are closed from legal sunset to legal sunrise with the exception of legal hunting activities. We allow access to raccoon and opossum hunters from 7 pm C.S.T. to 12 midnight C.S.T. Contact the Refuge Manager for current regulations and authorized activities.

### Drones

Drones are prohibited.

### Vehicles

Only legally licensed vehicles are allowed on maintained refuge roads and parking areas. ATV's, UTV's, and off-road motorized vehicles are prohibited. Airboats, Jet Skies, and Hovercraft are prohibited. Parking as to block travel through refuge access roads, gates, and trails is prohibited.

### Mobility Impaired Access

Most refuges are universally accessible to the disabled. Persons with disabilities are encouraged to participate in refuge hunts and other activities. Contact the Refuge Manager for guidelines and regulations.

### Boats

Boats used for any activity must be removed from the refuge daily. Only boats with 10 h.p. or less are permitted at Lake Isom NWR. All State boating regulations apply.

## Camping and Fires

Camping and fires are prohibited on Reelfoot and Lake Isom National Wildlife Refuges. Littering is prohibited.

## Roads

The Grassy Island Auto Tour Route is open to the public year-round. However, roads may be closed at any time due to adverse weather conditions or management needs.

Vehicles must remain on established roads as indicated on the maps on this leaflet. Vehicles may be parked alongside open roads in a manner that will not interfere with the normal flow of traffic. Avoid driving on refuge roads during wet conditions as damage to the roads will result.

## Closed Areas

Designated areas are closed to hunting, fishing, and all public access during fall and winter months to provide resource protection (see map for specific locations and dates of closures). Other areas may be closed for special management or safety reasons. All refuge access is prohibited from legal sunset to sunrise unless specifically authorized by the Refuge Manager.

## Firearms

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).

Carrying, possessing, or discharging of fireworks, or explosives on National Wildlife Refuges is prohibited.

The use or possession of air guns, spears, gigs, or similar weapons on National Wildlife Refuges is prohibited. Weapons legally possessed for hunting are the same as those prescribed by the States of Tennessee and Kentucky.

## Dogs

Dogs are permitted for raccoon and squirrel hunting. All dogs are required to wear a collar displaying the owners name, address, and telephone number.

## Horses

Horses, mules, and burros are permitted only on refuge roads open to motorized traffic. We prohibit the use of horses and other animal conveyances from all other areas including fields, woods, waters, foot trails, and service roads/trails.

## Bait

The use or possession of bait, or hunting over bait is strictly prohibited. Baiting means the direct or indirect placing,

exposing, depositing, or scattering of any salt, grain, powder, liquid, or other feed substance to attract game.

## Refuge/Cultural Resources

All government property including natural, historic, and archaeological features are protected by Federal Law. Searching for or removal of objects of antiquity or other value is strictly prohibited.

## Tree Stands and Tree Steps

All tree stands must be removed from the refuge daily. The use of screw in tree steps, nails, wire, screws, or bolts to climb a tree or to attach a tree stand to a tree, or hunting from a tree into which a metal object has been driven is prohibited.

## Tree Marking

It is prohibited to mark any tree or other refuge feature with paint or similar substance. All flagging tape and other marking materials must be removed at the end of the hunt day.

## Vegetation Removal/Clearing

The cutting of holes, lanes, or any other manipulation of the vegetation (e.g. cutting of bushes and trees, mowing, herbicide use, and other actions) is strictly prohibited. The possession of saws, machetes, axes or other tools for cutting vegetation is prohibited.

## Monitoring Devices

The use of electronic or photographic trail monitoring devices on Reelfoot NWR and Lake Isom NWR is prohibited.

## Hunter Education

Hunters must comply with the hunter education requirements for the State in which license is issued.

## Youth Supervision

Youth hunters 6-16 years of age may participate. Youth hunters must be accompanied by an adult, 21 years of age or older, who must remain in a position to take immediate control of the hunting device and must also comply with fluorescent orange regulations, as specified for legal hunters. No more than two youth hunters per adult. No more than one youth hunter per adult during big game hunting activities.

## Alcohol

The use or possession of alcoholic beverages is prohibited while on refuge lands and waters.

## Trapping

Trapping on Reelfoot and Lake Isom National Wildlife Refuges is prohibited.

