

Little Pend Oreille

National Wildlife Refuge Hunting and Fishing Regulations



Welcome

The Refuge was established on May 2, 1939, to protect and provide a breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife. The 42,657 acre refuge is within the Columbia River Basin Ecosystem and the Okanogan Highlands Province. The Refuge is on the western edge of the Selkirk Mountains. Elevations range from 1,800 feet to 5,600 feet.

Safety

Hunter orange is required for anyone hunting bear, bobcat, cougar, coyote, deer, elk, fox, grouse, hare, rabbit, raccoon, or turkey in an area that is open to hunting for deer or elk during a modern firearms season. This includes archers and muzzleloaders when they hunt in areas that overlap modern firearm seasons. Hunter orange is also required for anyone using a modern firearm to hunt for pheasant, quail and partridge during an upland game bird season. Hunters should avoid active timber harvest operations.

Firearms

Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on National Wildlife Refuge System lands 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).

Vehicles

Licensed motor vehicles are permitted only on public use roads and trails as shown on the map, unless otherwise authorized. ATVs, UTVs, ORVs are prohibited. Bicycles (including electric) are allowed on designated trails and maintained roads including those closed to motorized vehicle access.

Boats

Non-motorized boats may be used on McDowell Lake, Bayley Lake, and Potter's Pond only. Electric-powered motors are allowed on Potter's Pond only.

Accessibility Information

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs and activities of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is available to all individuals regardless of physical or mental ability. For more information please contact the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Equal Opportunity, <https://www.doi.gov/pmb/eeo/public-civil-rights>.

Hunting and Fishing Regulations

Hunting and fishing regulations are designed to provide safe recreational opportunities through wise use of renewable wildlife resources. Hunting and fishing are permitted in accordance with Federal regulations governing public use on National Wildlife Refuges as set forth in Title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

Hunting and fishing will be in accordance with applicable State of Washington regulations subject to the conditions stated below. Brochures may be obtained by mail, at the refuge headquarters, or from the refuge website.

Fishing Access

WHEN: Fishing is allowed following State seasons.

WHERE: Bayley Lake, McDowell Lake, Potter's Pond, and the Little Pend Oreille River and tributaries.

Hunting Access

WHEN: The Refuge is open for hunting in accordance with State seasons from September 1 through December 31. The Refuge is closed to all pursuit and hunting of game or discharge of firearms from January 1 through August 31 except during spring turkey season.

WHERE: Discharging a firearm is prohibited in safety zones within ¼ mile of buildings, the area within ¼ mile around McDowell Marsh Trail, and within ¼ mile of all campgrounds. All other areas of the refuge are open.

Horses

Horseback riding is only allowed on maintained roads and horse trails. Horses are not allowed on Mill Butte, Big Pine, or Beaver Pond trails; the McDowell Marsh Environmental Educational Trail; or where otherwise posted. Visitors must provide food for their horses. Remove all garbage, horse manure, excess straw and hay.

Camping with horses is only permitted in Bear Creek and Horse Camp Campgrounds. Confined horses must be at least 100 feet from streams or other water bodies. Horses cannot be tied directly to trees. Horses must be confined in camp by hitch rails, tied to a high picket line, or confined in portable corrals.

Tree Stands and Blinds

Portable or temporary blinds and tree stands must be removed after 3 days. Permanent blinds or pits are not allowed. Use of spikes, nails, screws, bolts or wire to secure blinds or stands to trees is prohibited.

Camping

Do not leave campfires unattended. Cutting, defacing, or damaging live trees is prohibited. Use only dead and down trees for firewood – do not cut down snags. All visitors must follow Industrial Fire Precaution Levels posted at the Headquarters kiosk. Campfire restrictions will be posted in all campgrounds and at the kiosk. Camping is permitted in campgrounds April 15 through December 31 and in designated dispersed sites from October 1 through December 31.

Seasonal Road Closures

Open Year-round: Bear Creek Road from the Refuge boundary to Refuge Headquarters, Buffalo-Wilson Road and Narcisse Creek Road. The speed limit on Refuge roads is 25 mph.

All other public use roads are closed to vehicle traffic either January 1 through April 14 or January 1 through September 30.

Activity	Season	Harvest	Hunt Areas
Turkey	Spring and Fall Turkey seasons in accordance with state regulations.	State regulations apply. Only turkeys maybe be hunted during spring turkey season.	Refuge lands except safety zones
Bear	Fall Bear season only. No hunting before September 1.	State regulations apply.	Refuge lands except safety zones
Waterfowl	No hunting after December 31	State and Federal regulations apply.	Refuge lakes and ponds. All streams are closed to waterfowl hunting.
Fishing (Fly-fishing only)	State regulations apply	Catch & release game fish. No minimum or limit on eastern brook trout.	Bayley Lake (Bayley Lake inlet closed to all fishing.) McDowell Lake
Fishing (Open to all legal fishing methods)	State regulations apply	State minimum size and limit apply to all game fish. No minimum or limit on eastern brook trout.	Potter's Pond
Fishing (Selective gear rules)	State regulations apply	State-wide minimum size and limits apply.	Little Pend Oreille River and its tributaries
Deer, elk, upland game birds, all other species	Hunting is allowed between September 1 and December 31 in accordance with state regulations.	State regulations apply	Refuge lands except safety zones
State regulations apply for bag limits.			

Chronic Wasting Disease

Effective March 2025, new rules designed to limit the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in Eastern Washington are now in effect. This includes mandatory testing and reporting. For a complete list of rules, please refer to the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife website.

Signs and Boundaries

- Please respect the following signs:
- No Unauthorized Vehicles
- Do Not Block Gates
- Road Open April 15 – December 31
- Camping in Dispersed Sites allowed October 1 – December 31.

Applies to the area located behind the sign

- Refuge Boundary: Entry Permitted in Accordance with Refuge Regulations
- Closed Area: All Entry Prohibited
- No Hunting Zone: Hunting, Weapons, and Game Retrieval Prohibited
- Road Use Restricted - Non-Motorized Use Welcome

Prohibited Activities

- Possession or use of alcoholic beverages while hunting
- Spotlighting
- Searching for and removing objects of antiquity or objects of value are not allowed. The collection of any plant or animal or parts thereof is therefore prohibited EXCEPT collecting shed antlers, skulls, bones, berries and mushrooms for non-commercial use
- Distributing or hunting over bait
- Permanent blinds or stands
- Leaving portable or temporary blinds and tree stands more than 3 consecutive days
- Use of spikes, nails, screws, bolts or wire to secure blinds or stands to trees
- Discharging a firearm within ¼ mile of any maintained building or designated campground is prohibited
- Hunting within ¼ mile around the McDowell Marsh Environmental Education Trail
- Discharging firearms except when legally hunting
- Loaded rifles or shotguns in a vehicle
- Possession or use of other weapons – crossbows, bows, bows and arrows, air guns, spears or gigs, unless legally hunting
- Shooting from or across roadway or road shoulder
- Hunting is prohibited within 200 yards of any public use facility
- ATVs, UTVs, and ORVs are prohibited. Snowmobiles may ONLY be used to travel on Olson Creek Rd

Little Pend Oreille National Wildlife Refuge
1310 Bear Creek Rd Colville, WA 99114

(509) 684-8384

lpo@fws.gov

https://www.fws.gov/refuge/little_pend_oreille/

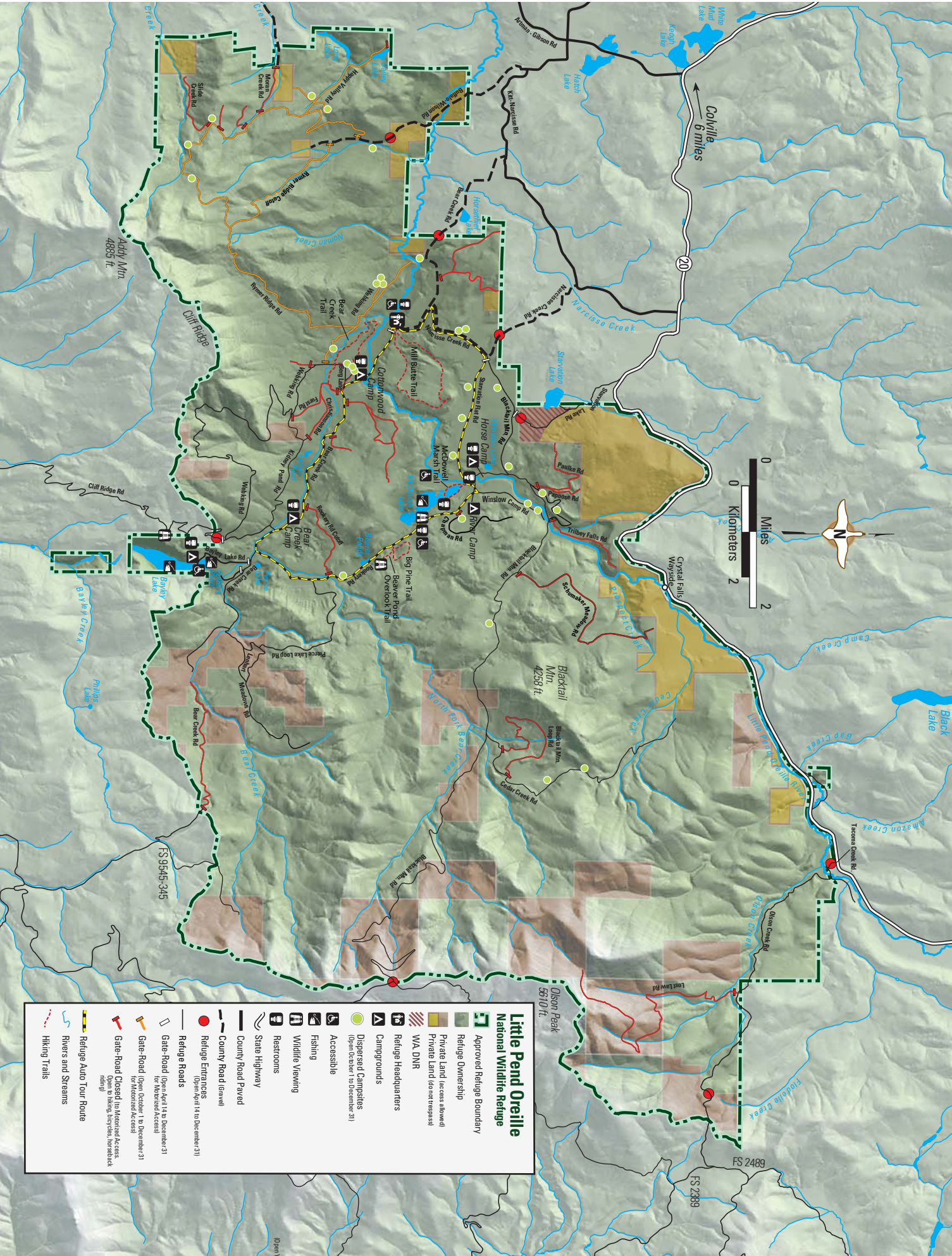
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1-800-344-WILD

August 2025



This is a unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System, a network of lands and waters managed for the benefit of wildlife and people.





Little Pend Oreille National Wildlife Refuge

- Approved Refuge Boundary
- Refuge Ownership
- Private Land (access allowed)
- Private Land (do not trespass)
- WA DNR
- Refuge Headquarters
- Campgrounds
- Dispersed Campsites (Open October 1 to December 31)
- Accessible
- Fishing
- Wildlife Viewing
- Restrooms
- State Highway
- County Road Paved
- County Road (Gravel)
- Refuge Entrances (Open April 14 to December 31)
- Refuge Roads (Open April 14 to December 31)
- Gate Road (Open April 14 to December 31)
- Gate Road (Open October 1 to December 31)
- Gate Road Closed to Motorized Access (Open to Hiking, Bicycles, Horseback Riding)
- Refuge Auto Tour Route
- Rivers and Streams
- Hiking Trails