

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Minnesota Valley

National Wildlife Refuge Hunting and Fishing Regulations



Welcome

Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1976 by motivated residents to preserve wildlife resources threatened by commercial and industrial development. Today, the refuge works to connect the vibrant cultures of the Twin Cities metro with the diversity of wildlife and habitat along the Minnesota River, and is part of a corridor of land and water stretching nearly 70 miles along the Minnesota River, from Bloomington to Henderson, MN. Comprised of more than 14,000 acres, the refuge has multiple units.

Safety

At any time, hunters may encounter other users of the refuge, and should use caution when in proximity to these users.

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 (50 CFR Part 32).

Hunters must use or possess only approved non-toxic shot shells while in the field, including shot shells used for hunting wild turkey.

Single projectile ammunition is prohibited on all refuge units except Jessenland and Blakeley units. .22 caliber and smaller rim-fire rifles and handguns are allowed for upland game and furbearers and shotgun and muzzleloading rifles are permitted where firearms deer hunting is allowed.

Firearms and weapons must be cased and unloaded while accessing hunting areas through No Hunting Zones.

The use of air guns is prohibited including for target shooting of any kind.

Hunting within or discharge of a weapon on, from, across, or within 100 feet (30 meters) of any service road, parking area, or designated hiking trail is prohibited.

Vehicles

Licensed motor vehicles are permitted only on public use roads and parking lots. ATVs and UTVs are prohibited.

Boats

Non-motorized boats are only allowed in areas open to waterfowl hunting during the waterfowl hunting season. Motorized (gas or electric) boats are prohibited.

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 sport 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 sport fishing will be in accordance with applicable State of Minnesota regulations subject to the refuge-specific regulations stated below. Refuge-specific regulations supersede state regulations. Hunting is allowed only on refuge units described in this brochure. Brochures may be obtained by mail, at the refuge headquarters, or from the refuge website.

Hunting Regulations

The refuge is open to hunting the following species in designated areas;

- Migratory game birds: goose, duck, merganser, moorhen, coot, rail, woodcock, common snipe, and mourning dove on designated areas of the refuge.
- Upland game: ruffed grouse, gray partridge, ring-necked pheasant, American crow, squirrel (gray, fox, and red), snowshoe hare, cottontail rabbit, jackrabbit, raccoon, fox (red and gray),

striped skunk, coyote, opossum, and wild turkey on designated areas of the refuge.

- Big game hunting: white-tailed deer on designated areas of the refuge.
- Small game hunters must wear an article of blaze orange consistent with state regulations.

The possession of alcohol while hunting is prohibited.

Searching for or removal of any natural items such as antlers, plants, historic, and archaeological features, are protected by Federal law.

Distribution of feed or bait, or hunting over bait, including salts and minerals is prohibited.

Some areas are posted as No Hunting Zones to protect buildings, private property or critical habitat areas. Firearms and weapons must be cased and unloaded while accessing hunting areas through No Hunting Zones.

Hunters may only hunt fox, opossum, and raccoon from 1/2 hour before legal sunrise until legal sunset, from the beginning of the state season through the last day of February, on designated areas of the refuge.

Hunters may only hunt coyotes and skunks from 1/2 hour before legal sunrise until legal sunset, from September 1 through the last day of February, on designated areas of the refuge.

Hunters may only hunt crows during the state-designated crow seasons, which occur between September 1 and the last day of February, on designated areas of the refuge.

3815 American Blvd E
Bloomington, MN 55425
www.fws.gov/refuge/minnesota-valley

952-854-5900
TTY Federal Relay System: 1-800-877-8339

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

August 2025



We prohibit hunting during the state spring goose hunt.

Trapping is prohibited on the refuge, except by permit issued by the refuge manager

Sport Fishing Regulations

Sport fishing is allowed on refuge waters consistent with state regulations subject to the following conditions:

- Non-motorized and motorized watercraft use is prohibited for fishing.
- Motorized vehicles are prohibited on frozen water bodies
- The taking of any turtle, frog, leech, minnow, crayfish, and mussel (clam) species by any method is prohibited.
- Bowfishing is prohibited in Long Meadow Lake and Bloomington Ferry Units.

Minnesota fish consumption guidelines advise all persons do not eat any fish from Bass Ponds and Long Meadow Lake on the refuge.

Access

Hunters may only access the Refuge two hours before legal hunting/shooting times until one hour after legal shooting time.

Motorized vehicles are prohibited except on designated parking areas and public roads. Hunters are encouraged to park in designated parking areas, to access the Refuge for hunting. Hunters may use bicycles and game carts on designated trails and service roads during hunting season.

We encourage all hunters to refrain from accessing private property without permission.

Dogs

The use of hunting dogs is allowed during the state approved hunting season for waterfowl and upland game birds, provided the dog is under the immediate control of the hunter at all times. Hunter may not use dog for hunting furbearers. Training and allowing pets off leash are prohibited.

Tree Stands, Blinds, and Equipment

No permanent stands are permitted. Hunting from a tree into which a metal object has been driven is prohibited. Do not use nails, wire, screws or bolts to attach a stand or steps to a tree.

Hunters must dismantle hunting blinds, platforms, and ladders made from natural vegetation at the end of each day.

All property brought onto the refuge must be removed after each day. This includes all vehicles, boats, decoys, blinds, stands, trail cameras, other personal property and trash.

Marking or flagging any tree or other Refuge feature with reflectors, paint, or other substance is prohibited.

Harvest Reporting

Harvest reporting for all species must be in accordance with applicable State of Minnesota regulations.

Camping

Camping, campfires, and overnight parking are prohibited on the refuge.

Report Violation

- Refuge Law Enforcement Officer, phone (612) 356-8679
- Turn In a Poacher (TIP) Line: 1-800-POACHER (652-9093)

Activity	Season	Hunting Hours	Special Regulations	Unit
Big Game: White-tailed deer (Archery)	Applicable state seasons	State shooting hours	Applicable state and federal regulations	Blakeley, Jessenland, Louisville Swamp (north and south of Middle Road), St. Lawrence, Rapids Lake, Wilkie -Rice Lake (from Eagle Creek west to Hwy 169), Wilkie - West (west of Hwy 169 including Fisher and Blue Lakes)
Big Game: White-tailed deer (Firearms)	Applicable state seasons	State shooting hours	Applicable state and federal regulations	Blakeley, Jessenland
Migratory Birds: Waterfowl Only Goose, duck, merganser, moorhen, coot, rails	Applicable state seasons	State shooting Hours	Applicable state and federal regulations Closed to spring goose hunting Closed to hunting mourning dove, snipe and woodcock	Wilkie -Rice Lake (from Eagle Creek west to Hwy 169)
Migratory Birds: Goose, duck, merganser, moorhen, coot, rails, mourning dove, snipe, and woodcock	Applicable state seasons	State shooting hours	Applicable state and federal regulations Closed to spring goose hunting	Blakeley, Jessenland, Louisville Swamp South (south of Middle Road), Rapids Lake, St. Lawrence
Upland Game: (Archery) Ruffed grouse, gray partridge, ring-necked pheasant, squirrel, snowshoe hare, cottontail rabbit, jackrabbit, coyote, fox, raccoon, skunk, and wild turkey	Applicable state seasons Fox, opossum, and raccoon: from beginning of the State season through the last day of February Coyote and skunk: from September 1 through the last day of February	Hunters may only hunt coyote, skunk, fox, opossum, and raccoon from 1/2 hour before legal sunrise until legal sunset	Applicable state and federal regulations	Louisville Swamp (north and south of Middle Road), Rapids Lake, Wilkie -Rice Lake (from Eagle Creek west to Hwy 169), Wilkie - West (west of Hwy 169 including Fisher and Blue Lakes), Blakeley, Jessenland, St. Lawrence
Upland Game: (Firearms) Ruffed grouse, gray partridge, ring-necked pheasant, squirrel, snowshoe hare, cottontail rabbit, jackrabbit, coyote, fox, raccoon, skunk, and wild turkey	Applicable state seasons Fox, opossum, and raccoon: from beginning of the State season through the last day of February Coyote and skunk: from September 1 through the last day of February	Hunters may only hunt coyote, skunk, fox, opossum, and raccoon from 1/2 hour before legal sunrise until legal sunset	Applicable state and federal regulations Hunters may use or possess only approved non-toxic shot shells while in the field Single projectile ammunition is prohibited (except Jessenland and Blakeley) *St. Lawrence Unit: Archery only for coyote, fox, raccoon and skunk	Blakeley, Jessenland, Louisville Swamp (south of Middle Road), Rapids Lake, St. Lawrence*
Crow	Applicable state seasons that fall between September 1 to last day of February	State shooting hours	Applicable state and federal regulations Hunters may use or possess only approved non-toxic shot shells while in the field	Blakeley, Jessenland
Sport Fishing	Applicable state seasons	Sunrise to sunset	The taking of any turtle, frog, leech, minnow, crayfish, and mussel (clam) species by any method is prohibited. Bowfishing prohibited in Long Meadow Lake and Bloomington Ferry Units.	All units unless signed as a closed area
State regulations apply for bag limts.				

