

Neal Smith

National Wildlife Refuge Hunting Regulations 2025–2026



Welcome

Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1990 with the purpose to protect, restore and reconstruct and manage native ecosystems of tallgrass prairie, oak savanna and sedge meadow. Today, the refuge protects 6,000 acres of wildlife habitat and provides visitors, students, researchers and local landowners with educational, recreational and volunteer opportunities to learn about and enjoy their native tallgrass prairie heritage.

Safety

Please respect our neighbors. State law prohibits shooting within 200 yards of buildings inhabited by people or livestock. Contact the refuge before hunting for information about upcoming prescribed burns. For emergencies, dial 911.

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). Except for authorized hunting activities, discharge of firearms on refuge land is prohibited.

Vehicles

Parking is allowed at designated areas which are marked with a "P" for parking. Do not park in any field entrance. (Access must be maintained for emergency, fire and patrol vehicles.) Do not drive into fields or grassland areas. Overnight parking is prohibited.

Hunting Dogs

The use of hunting dogs is allowed for waterfowl, pheasant and quail hunting during the state approved season, provided the dog is under the immediate control of the hunter at all times.

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 regulations are designed to provide safe recreational opportunities through wise use of renewable wildlife resources. Hunting is 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 will be in accordance with applicable State of Iowa regulations subject to the conditions stated in this publication. Brochures may be obtained by mail, at the refuge visitor center, or from the refuge website.

Refuge lands are not open to fishing.

Access

All hunting access hours follow Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) state regulations.

Tree Stands

Construction or use of permanent stands or ladders is prohibited. Portable stands may be used but must be removed at the end of each day. Steps, ladders, and stands will be erected in such a way that the trees are not damaged. Spikes, nails and all other items that penetrate the bark of a tree are prohibited.

To Report Violations

- Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. - Refuge Staff: 515-994-3400
After Hours and Weekends: IA DNR Conservation Officer: 641/521-2003 or Federal Wildlife Officer: 618-889-5901
- 1-844-FWS-TIPS (397-8477)

Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge Hunting Permit 2025—2026

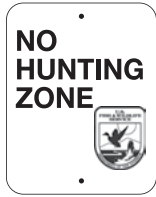
When signed and carried, this serves as your permit for all refuge hunts and acknowledges your understanding of the regulations contained herein.

Expires August 31, 2026

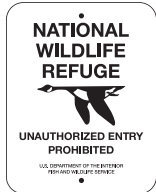
Signature (permits are not transferable)

Signs and Boundaries

Please respect the following signs:



- No hunting zone: Hunting prohibited



- Unauthorized entry prohibited: Refuge boundary



- Area beyond this sign closed: No entry

- End of public use area: Private property boundary
- No vehicles: All traffic prohibited
- Parking area: Designated areas to park while hunting

Prohibited Activities

By law, recreational activities on national wildlife refuges are prohibited unless expressly permitted

- Trapping of fur-bearing animals anywhere on the refuge, including road ditches
- Possession of alcoholic beverages
- Camping and fires
- Searching for or removal of any natural items such as antlers, bison skulls, plants, and historic/archaeological features
- Boats, canoes, kayaks, etc.
- Falconry
- Use of electronic or photographic trail monitoring devices
- Marking or flagging any tree or other refuge feature with reflectors, paint, or other substance
- ATVs or any other mechanized device used for retrieving game or transportation
- Access to the refuge from private property
- Shooting on, from, or over any refuge road within 50 feet of the center line
- The training of dogs on the refuge
- Use of spotlights or other artificial lights to spot, locate, or take any wildlife within the boundaries of any Refuge or along the right-of-way on public or private roads
- Drones (UAVs) taking off, landing and/or flying on or over refuge lands.
- Fishing

9981 Pacific Street
Prairie City, IA 50228

515-994-3400
TTY Federal Relay System: 1-800-877-8339

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

August 2025



Activity	Hunting Hours
Upland Game: *Rooster Pheasant, *Rooster Pheasant (Youth), *Bobwhite Quail, Rabbit (Cottontail), Squirrel (Gray and Fox), Crow and Pigeon	Sunrise to Sunset *8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Non-toxic shot required
**Spring Turkey: (Youth Season, Residents Only), (Season 1, 2, 3, 4), (Archery-only, Resident)	**1/2 before sunrise to sunset
Fall Turkey: **Gun/**Bow, **Archery Only	Gun and Archery: **1/2 before sunrise to sunset, Bow: ***1/2 before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset
Migratory Game Birds: **Doves (Mourning and Eurasian Collared), September Teal, **Ducks, Coots and Mergansers, **Youth Waterfowl, **Dark and Light Geese (Canada, Brant, White-fronted, white and blue-phase Snow and Ross'), **Light Geese (Conservation Order)	Sunrise to Sunset **1/2 hour before sunrise to sunset
***Whitetail Deer: Youth Season, Disabled Hunter Season, Archery Season Early Split, Archery Season Late Split, Early Muzzleloader, Late Muzzleloader, Shotgun Season 1, Shotgun Season 2, Non-resident Holiday	***1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 after sunset
State regulations, season dates and bag limits apply to ALL hunt activities on the refuge. *8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. **1/2 before sunrise to sunset ***1/2 before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset	



