United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

*Eastern Virginia Rivers National Wildlife Refuge Complex Rappahannock River Valley NWR*

*336 Wilna Road*

*Warsaw, VA 22572*

*Phone: 804/333-1470 Fax: 804/333-3396*

Dear Hunter:

We are pleased that you are participating in the 2023 hunt at the Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge). Enclosed is your hunt permit (if required) and a map link can be found our website below, along with directions to the units (<https://www.fws.gov/media/2022-directions-hunt-units>). Please review all permits to be sure they are correct. If you believe there is an error, please call the refuge office at (804) 333-1470.

As a reminder, we finalized a new Hunt Plan in 2021. Please find that plan located here: (https://www.fws.gov/refuge/rappahannock-river-valley/visit-us/activities/hunting)

The following changes were implemented during **fall 2021** and remain for 2023:

* Archery hunting on Wright, Franklin, and Mothershead units no longer require permits. Hunters are required to check in with RecAccess.
* A limited Spring gobbler hunt will be available at Franklin, Mothershead, Toby’s Point, Wright, and Thomas (Thomas will be archery only).
* Coyote, turkey, and small game hunting are now available on the Refuge, see **Table 1 and 2** below for details.
* Turkey and small game hunting require non-lead shot.

The following changes were implemented in **2022** and remain for 2023 (Please see **Table 2** for dates and opportunities.):

* Spring gobbler was offered at the Refuge for the first time in April 2022.
* Waterfowl (mid and late season) will be offered in December and January 2022-2023 at the Cat Point Creek Unit.

You can visit the RecAccess site to register/check in for hunts at: https://rappahannock.recaccess.com/

**PARKING:** Hunters must park in designated parking locations as indicated on Refuge hunt map. These designated parking areas include gravel roads on units that do not have designated parking areas and hunters must be parked in a manner to allow passage by other vehicles along roads and through gates. ATVs/UTVs and trailers are prohibited. While hunting on units that require a permit, hunters must carry a hunting permit and display a parking permit.

**REFUGE MAPS:** Refuge maps are available at our website:

https://www.fws.gov/refuge/rappahannock-river-valley/map

**STATE LAWS:** If you need information concerning the state laws regarding deer hunts, please visit the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources web site at: https://dwr.virginia.gov/hunting/ or call (804) 367-1000.

**SCOUTING:** Scouting is permitted from 8:00 AM until 4:30 PM on the dates listed below.

**Table 1. Coyote, Turkey, and Small game dates.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Deer, Turkey, Coyote - Archery | September 30, October 1 |
| Deer, Turkey, Coyote - Muzzleloader | October 29 |
| Deer, Turkey, Coyote - Shotgun | November 5, 12 |
| Rabbit/Squirrel | Dec 12, 19, January 7 |
| Spring Gobbler (2024) | April 6, 7 |

Please notify the Refuge at least one business day in advance of requested scout day(s). You may make your reservation to scout via email ([william\_crouch@fws.gov).](mailto:william_crouch@fws.gov).) Please include your name, the unit(s) and date(s) you would like to scout, how many people will be in your party, a description of the vehicle that will be driven to the unit(s), and your best contact number.

**Table 2. Hunting Opportunities by Season and Method**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Units** | **Hunting opportunities** | |
| Wilna, Hutchinson, Laurel Grove, Fones Cliffs, Tayloe, Toby’s Point | Deer, Fall Turkey, Coyote: Archery –Archery I: Oct 7-20, Archery II: Oct 21-Nov 3 (no Sunday hunts). Muzzleloader –November 4, 10, 11, 17 Shotgun – opening day (single day) 18 Nov, 2-day hunts, Nov 24/25, Dec 1/2/, 8/9, 13/14. | |
| Spring Gobbler (Laurel Grove only): Spring gobbler (shotgun): designated (3) ½ days early season, April 13, 20, 27 | |
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| Mothershead, Franklin | Deer, Fall Turkey, Coyote (no Sunday hunts) Archery –Oct 7-Nov 17 |
| Squirrel and rabbit: Nov 18 – Feb 29 |
| Turkey: Spring gobbler (shotgun): ½ days early April 13, 20, 27 |
| Wright | Deer, Fall Turkey, Coyote (no Sunday hunts) Archery –Oct 17-Nov 3, Muzzleloader –Nov 4- 17, Shotgun – Nov 18-Dec 14 |
| Squirrel and rabbit: Dec 15 – Feb 29 |
| Turkey: Spring gobbler (shotgun): ½ days early season April 13, 20, 27 |
| Port Royal | Deer, Fall Turkey, Coyote Archery – Archery I: Oct 7-20, Archery II: Oct 21-Nov 3 (no Sunday hunts) |
| Thomas | Deer, Fall Turkey, Coyote Archery: Archery I: Oct 7-20, Archery II: Oct 21-Nov 3 (no Sunday hunts) |
| Cat Point Creek | Deer, Fall Turkey, Coyote: Archery I: Oct 7-20, Archery II: Oct 21-Nov 3 (no Sunday hunts) |
| Waterfowl (Menokin Bay on Cat Point Creek) 2022/23: mid-season, Nov 16-18, 23-25: late season, Dec 21-23, 28-30, Jan 4-6, 11-13, 18-20, 24-27. |

**HUNTER ETHICS:** Please respect the land and other hunters by following these simple rules:

* We require stand hunting only. Stand hunting includes the use of portable hunting blinds, portable tree stands or stationary ground hunting. No deer drives, stalking, or roaming are allowed.
* No damage to trees will be allowed. No nails, screws, bolts, or screw-in steps may be used. Stands and blinds must be removed daily.
* No cameras, nor other photographic or electronic recording devices are permitted.
* We prohibit the use of flagging to mark trails or for any other purpose.
* Be considerate of other hunters; do not intrude in their space and minimize vehicle use.
* Take all your trash with you, including food wrappers and spent shells.
* If you witness violations or experience problems, please report them immediately to the Deputy Refuge Manager at 804-313-7574 or Refuge office at (804) 333-1470.

Refuge units will be open no earlier than one hour before legal shooting hours to one hour past legal sunset for permitted hunters or those who have used the online check-in system (depending on the unit) on designated hunt dates.

Sincerely,

Refuge Staff

Rappahannock River Valley NWR