

# Savannah National Wildlife Refuge

## Hunting Regulations

### Welcome

Savannah National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1927 as a preserve and breeding ground for native birds. The refuge is comprised of over 31,000 acres of freshwater marshes, tidal rivers and creeks, and bottomland hardwoods. The refuge lies in both Georgia and South Carolina, straddling the Savannah River, and is one of seven national wildlife refuges that make up the Savannah Coastal Refuges Complex.

Savannah National Wildlife Refuge  
c/o Savannah Coastal Refuges Complex  
694 Beech Hill Lane, Hardeeville, SC 29927  
843-784-9911, ext. 111 (Office)  
843-226-5738 (Mobile)  
Email: [savannahcoastal@fws.gov](mailto:savannahcoastal@fws.gov)  
Website: [www.fws.gov/refuge/savannah](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/savannah)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/SavannahCoastalRefugesComplex](http://www.facebook.com/SavannahCoastalRefugesComplex)

The refuge is part of the National Wildlife Refuge System, a national network of lands and waters managed for the benefit of wildlife and people.

<http://www.fws.gov>

1-800-344-WILD

### Accessibility

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, [www.doi.gov/pmb/eo/public-civil-rights](http://www.doi.gov/pmb/eo/public-civil-rights).

## Hunting Opportunities

### General Hunt Units

General hunt units are open to all hunters (adult and youth) and include all hunt units except the North Impoundments, South Impoundments, and Solomon Tract (see map on last page). Youth hunters (age 15 and under) must be directly supervised by an adult 21 years of age or older.

### Youth Only Hunt Unit

Only youth hunters (age 15 and under) are allowed to hunt the Solomon Tract under the direct supervision of an adult 21 years of age or older. Adults are not allowed to hunt this unit. Youth hunting is allowed at Solomon Tract during the same periods when general hunting is being conducted on other refuge hunt units, and for the same species. A separate information sheet dedicated to youth-only hunting is available on the "Hunting" page at [www.fws.gov/refuge/savannah](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/savannah) and by email request to [savannahcoastal@fws.gov](mailto:savannahcoastal@fws.gov).

### Youth Lottery Hunts

The refuge offers two youth-only, lottery hunts annually; the youth waterfowl hunt, and the youth turkey "Hunt & Learn" weekend. These special managed hunts are open to youth only (17 and younger) and require an application and \$5.00 fee. Separate information packets and applications for these hunts will be available on the "Hunting" page at [www.fws.gov/refuge/savannah](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/savannah) and by email request to [savannahcoastal@fws.gov](mailto:savannahcoastal@fws.gov).

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## General Information

### Permit Procedures

General Hunt Units: All hunters, 16 years of age or older, are required to purchase, and carry while hunting, the Savannah Coastal Refuges Complex Annual Hunt Permit. This permit will allow hunters access to all “non-quota” hunts on any of the following National Wildlife Refuges: Blackbeard Island, Harris Neck, Pinckney Island, Savannah, and Wassaw NWRs. Annual Hunt Permits are \$25, non-transferable, and valid for the current hunt season only (August 2023 – May 2024). To purchase a permit, please visit <https://www.recreation.gov/activitypass/savannah-complex-hunt-permit>. If it is your first time purchasing a permit through **Recreation.gov**, you will need to complete the one-time registration process. Once your account is set-up, you can purchase the permit. Please retain your user ID and password for **Recreation.gov** for future permit purchases. If you are unable to access the internet, please call the refuge hunt coordinator at (843) 226-5738.

Youth-only Hunt Unit (Solomon Tract): Youth hunters 15 years of age or younger are not required to purchase the Savannah Coastal Refuges Complex Annual Hunt Permit. Instead, youth hunters or their guardians must request a free youth hunting permit from the refuge hunt coordinator by emailing [savannahcoastal@fws.gov](mailto:savannahcoastal@fws.gov) or calling (843) 226-5738. Youth hunters drawn for one of the refuge’s youth lottery hunts (see below) are neither required to purchase the Complex hunt permit nor request the free youth hunt permit.

### State Licenses

All state license and tag requirements apply on the refuge, and hunters are responsible for acquiring all required state hunting licenses and tags. A state WMA permit is not required to hunt the refuge. The refuge has hunting areas in both Georgia and South Carolina, and there is no reciprocity between the two states with regards to hunting licenses and tags. Hunters should familiarize themselves with the area they wish to hunt and obtain the appropriate state license(s)/tags.

General Hunt Units: Hunters 16 years of age or older must possess all required state hunting licenses and any required tags. Hunters 15 years of age and under do not have to have a state license but may still be required to have certain state tags (refer to GA or SC hunting regulations).

Youth-Only Hunt Unit (Solomon Tract): Youth hunters are not required to possess a state hunting license but must be supervised by an adult 21 years of age or older. Since adult supervisors are not allowed to hunt this area, they are not required to have a hunting license.

### Access

Boats are needed to access all Georgia portions of the refuge that are open to hunting (with the exception of the youth-only hunting area at the Solomon Tract), as well as some areas on the South Carolina side. Some areas in South Carolina are accessible by foot. Licensed motor vehicles are only permitted on public roads. ATVs and other motorized land vehicles may not be used. Commonly used boat ramps are Houlihan Landing and Abercorn Landing in Georgia, and Millstone Landing and Beck’s Ferry in South Carolina.

Much of the land surrounding the Savannah NWR is privately owned. Please respect our neighbors by not trespassing to reach the refuge and making sure you are within refuge boundaries while hunting.

Coastal waters are subject to extreme tidal fluctuations of six to ten feet. Hunters are urged to be familiar with tide tables, carry adequate safety equipment, and exercise caution when participating in any refuge hunt.

### 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).

## **General Hunting 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 states of Georgia and South Carolina regulations subject to the conditions stated below.

Public hunting on Savannah NWR is permitted on approximately 29,000 acres on species listed in the table below, in accordance with state seasons and regulations (unless otherwise indicated). Not all types of hunting are allowed in all hunt units, and some areas are closed to all hunting (see refuge hunt map on last page).

No check-in or check-out is required (except during the youth lottery hunts). Transportation is not provided to, from, or on the refuge. Any movement within the refuge must be by foot, bicycle, or boat.

Youth hunters (age 15 and under) must be supervised by an adult, 21 years of age or older, and must remain within sight and normal voice contact with the adult at all times. During the youth waterfowl, mourning dove, and small game hunts, the adult may supervise two youths; during all other refuge hunts, the adult may supervise only one youth.

All hunters must wear at least 500 square inches of solid, unbroken fluorescent orange material visible above the waistline during any firearm deer hunt or special opportunity hog/coyote hunt. Hunter orange is also required on small game hunts that are concurrent with these hunts. Archery hunters are encouraged to wear a fluorescent orange outer garment while hunting on the ground or walking to and from stands.

For additional regulations, see "Prohibited Activities" section.

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**Georgia or South Carolina hunting regulations, seasons (private lands), methods of take, bag limits, and license/tag requirements apply to all hunting on the refuge, unless stated otherwise in the table below:**

Hunt Type	Season Dates	Method of Take	Bag Limit	Hunt Unit (see hunt map)	Other Regulations
Deer	State season for private lands	All state authorized weapons (buckshot prohibited)	5 deer (no more than 2 antlered)	North Tract – GA North of I-95 North Tract – GA South of I-95 South Tract - GA North Tract – SC North of I-95 North Tract – SC South of I-95 South Tract – SC Solomon Tract (Youth Only)	Refuge hunt permit required for all hunters ages 16 and older.  Youth hunt permit required to hunt Solomon Tract.  State regulations apply.
Alligator	State season with state issued alligator harvest permit	All state authorized weapons	State bag limit	North Tract – GA North of I-95 North Tract – SC North of I-95	Refuge hunt permit required for all hunters ages 16 and older if hunting on refuge land, including freshwater ponds (not required if hunting from a boat in navigable water).  Hunters must obtain an alligator harvest permit through the selection processes of the states of Georgia and/or South Carolina.  State regulations apply.
Turkey	State season for private lands	All state authorized weapons  Non-toxic ammunition required	State bag limit	North Tract – GA North of I-95 North Tract – GA South of I-95 South Tract - GA North Tract – SC North of I-95 North Tract – SC South of I-95 South Tract – SC Solomon Tract (Youth Only)	Refuge hunt permit required for all hunters ages 16 and older.  Youth hunt permit required to hunt Solomon Tract.  State regulations apply.
Squirrel & Rabbit	State season for private lands	All state authorized weapons  Non-toxic ammunition required	State bag limits	North Tract – GA North of I-95 North Tract – GA South of I-95 South Tract - GA North Tract – SC North of I-95 North Tract – SC South of I-95 South Tract – SC Solomon Tract (Youth Only)	Refuge hunt permit required for all hunters ages 16 and older.  Youth hunt permit required to hunt Solomon Tract.  State regulations apply.

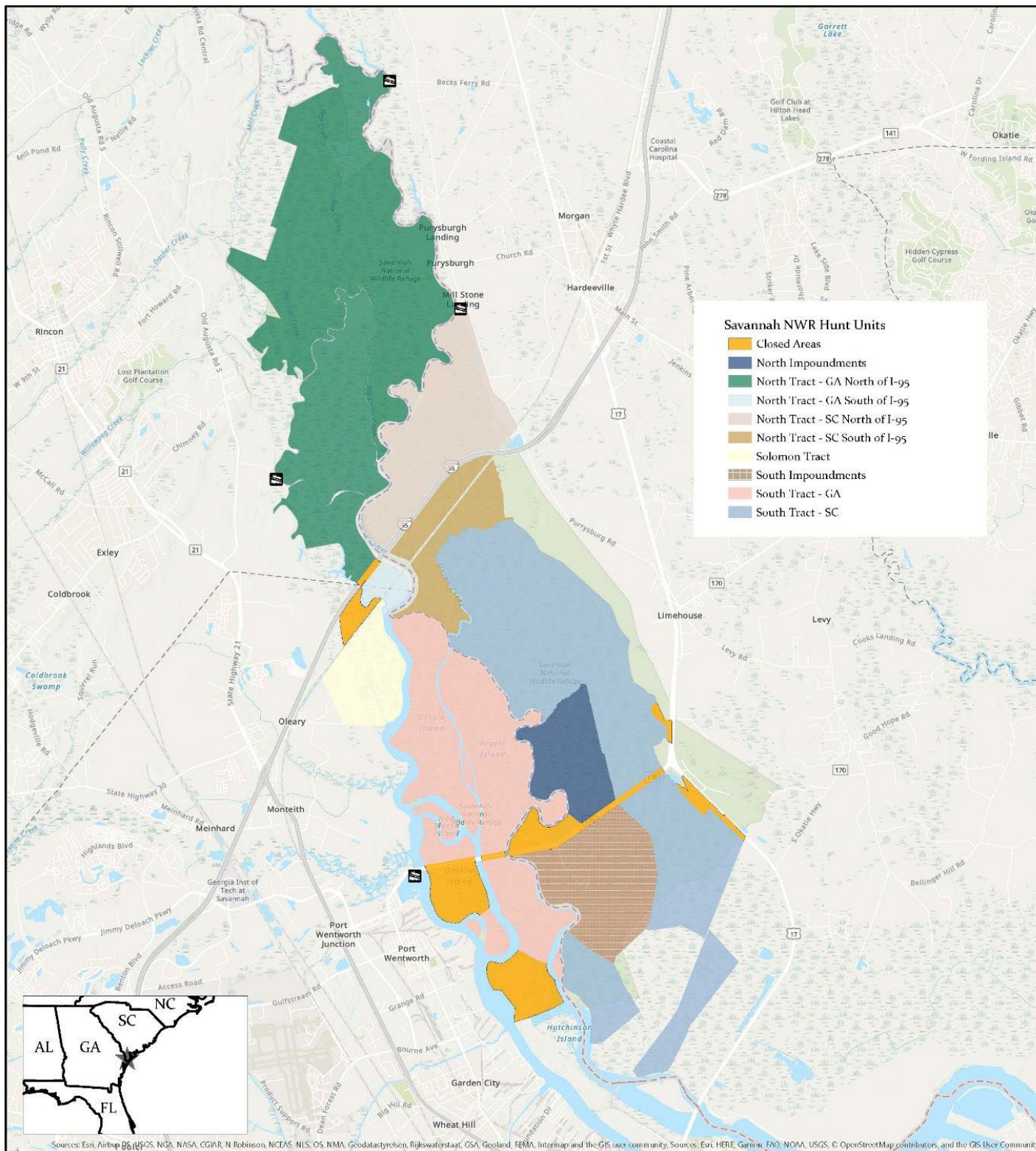
Raccoon & Opossum (Georgia only)	During state WMA season on the Georgia side of the refuge only.	All state authorized weapons  Non-toxic ammunition required	State bag limits	North Tract – GA North of I-95 North Tract – GA South of I-95 South Tract – GA Solomon Tract (Youth Only)	Refuge hunt permit required for all hunters ages 16 and older.  Youth hunt permit required to hunt Solomon Tract.  State regulations apply.
Mourning Dove	State season for private lands	All state authorized weapons  Non-toxic ammunition required	State bag limit	North Tract – GA North of I-95 North Tract – GA South of I-95 North Tract – SC North of I-95 North Tract – SC South of I-95 Solomon Tract (Youth Only)	Refuge hunt permit required for all hunters ages 16 and older.  Youth hunt permit required to hunt Solomon Tract.  State regulations apply.
Waterfowl	State season	All state authorized weapons  Non-toxic ammunition required	State bag limits	North Tract – GA North of I-95 North Tract – GA South of I-95 North Tract – SC North of I-95 North Tract – SC South of I-95 Solomon Tract (Youth Only)	Refuge hunt permit required for all hunters ages 16 and older.  Youth hunt permit required to hunt Solomon Tract.  State regulations apply.
Feral Hog & Coyote	January 1 – March 10, 2024  AND  Incidental take on all scheduled refuge hunts	All state authorized weapons (buckshot prohibited)  During incidental take, only weapons authorized for hunt being conducted	No limit	North Tract – GA North of I-95 North Tract – GA South of I-95 South Tract - GA North Tract – SC North of I-95 North Tract – SC South of I-95 South Tract – SC Solomon Tract (Youth Only)	Refuge hunt permit required for all hunters ages 16 and older.  Youth hunt permit required to hunt Solomon Tract.  State regulations apply.
Beaver & Armadillo (Georgia only)	Incidental take on all scheduled refuge hunts (Georgia only)	Only weapons authorized for hunt being conducted	No limit	North Tract – GA North of I-95 North Tract – GA South of I-95 South Tract – GA Solomon Tract (Youth Only)	Refuge hunt permit required for all hunters ages 16 and older.  Youth hunt permit required to hunt Solomon Tract.  State regulations apply.

## Prohibited Activities

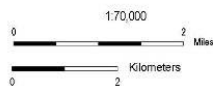
- Possession or use of buckshot
- Possession or use of poison or poison pods
- Distribution of bait and hunting over bait
- Participating in “man drives” for deer
- Trapping
- Harming, harassing, or killing any other wildlife than game species being hunted
- Hunting from a tree in which a metal object has been screwed or driven to support a hunter
- Hunting closer than 100 yards (90 m.) of U.S. Highway 17, GA Highway 25/SC Highway 170, refuge facilities and trails, or railroad rights of way, nor within any area marked as closed
- Traveling through areas adjacent to Savannah NWR Visitor Center and Laurel Hill Wildlife Drive to access hunting areas
- Night hunting, except during alligator hunt
- Camping and fires
- Pruning/limbing of live trees
- Use of trail or game cameras
- **Use of flagging, blazing, painting, or trail marking devices, including toilet paper, for locating stands or for any other purpose**
- Leaving stands, blinds, decoys and other personal property on the refuge overnight
- Use of dogs for hunting, except during migratory bird hunts
- Target practice
- Possession of alcoholic beverages while hunting

**FOR QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL HUNT COORDINATOR AMY OCHOA AT 843-226-5738.**

*Revised July 2023*



Produced by Kimberly Sykes  
Produced: November 22, 2019  
Basemap: ESRI World Topographic  
File: ANSIC-C-Size\_Portrait\_HuntUnit.aprx



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