



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Green River

National Wildlife Refuge

Public Use Regulations 2026–2027

Welcome

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service administers over 570 National Wildlife Refuges. The primary objective of a National Wildlife Refuge is to provide habitat for the conservation and protection of all species of wildlife. Through this work to conserve natural resources, refuges provide communities with healthier environments, clean water, flood control and a stronger economy. Refuges also offer a variety of opportunities for the American people to enjoy the outdoors and natural heritage.

Green River National Wildlife Refuge

P.O. Box 89

Benton, Kentucky 42025

270/527-5770

fws.gov/refuge/green-river

General Information

Accessibility

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of services and provides, upon request, reasonable accommodation including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in all programs and activities of the Green River National Wildlife Refuge. Discrimination complaints should be filed with the U.S. Department of Interior, Office of Equal Opportunity, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20240 or 1-800-344-WILD.

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

The use of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) or any unlicensed vehicle is prohibited on all refuge property.

Licensed vehicles are permitted on open and maintained paved and graveled roadways only. Vehicles blocking refuge gates will be towed.

Hunting Regulations

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.

Green River National Wildlife Refuge Annual Hunting Permits are required for individuals 16-years-old or older who are also required to have a Kentucky State hunting license and are engaged in hunting activities on the refuge. Valid permits must be possessed, physically or digitally while engaged in hunting activities on the refuge.

Annual hunt permits are available at kynwrs.recaccess.com. For help with log-in, creating an account, or obtaining a permit visit help.recaccess.com.

Permits and Fees

Youth under 16	Free, no permit needed
Adults age 16 and Over	\$10
All Deer Lottery Applications	\$6

fws.gov

1-800-344-WILD





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Hunting Regulations - continued

Hunting will be in accordance with applicable State of Kentucky regulations found at fw.ky.gov/Pages/default.aspx, subject to the conditions stated below.

Hunting is prohibited within 100 yards (91 meters) of any residence, refuge graveled roads, or refuge hiking trails.

Hunters under the age of 16 must be supervised by an adult 21 years of age or older, and must remain in sight and normal voice contact with the adult. On upland game hunts the adult may supervise no more than two youths, on big game hunts no more than one youth.

Hunter orange must be worn as required by state regulations. **Caution:** other non-hunting members of the public may be in the area and not wearing hunter orange during hunting seasons.

Ground blinds used for the purpose of hunting any species during the deer modern gun, muzzleloader and youth firearms seasons must display hunter orange in accordance with KDFWR regulations on state WMAs.

Only one ground blind per hunter is permitted. Ground blinds must be removed at the end of each days hunt.

We prohibit the use of trail cameras.

To retrieve or track game from a posted closed area of the refuge the hunter must first receive authorization at 270-532-7435.

We allow dogs for waterfowl hunting. Dog owners/handlers must have a collar on each dog with the owner's name, address and telephone number.

Big Game Hunting Deer

We allow archery and crossbow hunting of deer for youth, seniors, and disabled hunters, as defined by the state, during the months of Septemeber and October in the Horseshoe Bend Hunt Unit and the Tscharner West section of the Bluff Hunt Unit.

Deer Lottery Hunt

Deer archery and crossbow hunting will be allowed during November in designated areas by a lottery hunt only. The lottery will be open for all individuals to apply. Units will be closed to all entry with the exception of the drawn permit holders on drawn hunt days only. Drawn hunt days will be assigned dates on Thursday through Sunday of each week in November.

To participate in the lottery draw, a person must apply at kynwrs.recaccess.com. Applications will be accepted starting September 1 and must be completed no later than September 30. Winners will be notified by email on October 2 and must claim their permit by October 16. Unclaimed permits will be available on October 18 at 12 pm on a first come, first serve basis. Only one permit may be claimed per user per season.

- Only one entry may be submitted per person. A person can enter as an individual or as a hunt party of two. A guest permit will be issued to the second person in the party.
- Preferred dates and units may be requested. If the dates or units are already assigned, the first available will be assigned.
- Permit holders will be allowed to hunt their assigned unit on the designated dates.
- No person may sell, trade or barter their permit.
- To claim a winning lottery permit, individuals must first purchase a refuge hunt permit. Youth under 16 are not required to obtain a refuge hunt permit. All individuals must follow state licensing and hunter education requirements.

Turkey

We allow archery and crossbow hunting of turkey for youth, as defined by the state, during April and May in accordance with state season in the Horseshoe Bend Hunt Unit and the Tscharner West section of the Bluff Hunt Unit.

We allow archery and crossbow hunting of turkey for youth, seniors, and disabled hunters, as defined by the state, during the months of Septemeber and October in the Horseshoe Bend Hunt Unit and the Tscharner West section of the Bluff Hunt Unit.

Waterfowl Hunting

Waterfowl hunting is open to youth, senior, and disabled hunters, as defined by the state, during the months of December and January of the statewide waterfowl season, and in February during the additional statewide veterans and youth hunt dates in the Horseshoe Bend Hunt Unit.

Waterfowl hunting is prohibited prior to December.

Harvest Reporting

Harvested game on the Refuge must be telechecked through the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources at 1-800-245-4263 with public land code for Green River NWR.



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Access

With the exception of hunting, the refuge is open during daylight hours only.

Access for hunting is two hours before sunrise to two hours after sunset.

Waterfowl hunters will cease hunting and be out of the field by 12 noon each day.

All entry is prohibited in the Tscharnier East section of the Bluff Hunt Unit from November 1 through March 31.

Bicycles are permitted while engaged in wildlife related activities on refuge graveled roads or improved trails owned and maintained by the refuge.

Horses and mules are permitted on refuge graveled roads or improved trails owned and maintained by the refuge while engaged in wildlife related activities only. Horses and mules are not permitted off these secondary access routes for any purpose.

Boating is permitted for access on lands owned and maintained by the refuge and open to the public.

Tree Stands

The use of nails, wire, screws or bolts to attach a stand to a tree, or hunting from a tree into which a metal object has been driven to assist a hunter is prohibited.

Construction or use of any permanent tree stand is prohibited. Only climbing and/or portable stands may be used.

Only one stand per hunter is permitted.

Tree stands must be removed at the end of each day's hunt.

Safety belts are required at all times with use of tree stands.

Prohibited Activities

- Night use. The refuge is open from legal sunrise to legal sunset.
- Discarding wildlife carcasses on the refuge.
- Marking or flagging any tree or other refuge feature with non-biodegradable reflectors, paint, flagging, or other substance.
- Littering
- Camping
- Fires
- Trapping
- Trail cameras
- Dog walking including running or training of dogs and/or other pets.
- Searching for or removal of any object of antiquity including arrowheads, pottery or other artifacts.
- Target practice or non-authorized discharge of firearms.
- Possession or use of alcoholic beverages.
- Taking of wildlife (outside legal hunting season) or plants (including cutting trees and brush).
- No unauthorized person shall use or direct the rays of a spotlight or other artificial light, or automotive headlights for the purpose of spotting, locating or taking any animal within the boundaries of the refuge or along right-of-way for public or private roads within the refuge.
- Feeding of wildlife and the hunting of any wildlife by the aid of or distributing any feed, salt, minerals, or other ingestible attractants.
- Release of plants or animals, including wildlife and domesticated animals.
- Harassment of any individual or group engaged in legal refuge activities.

The hunting of any species not listed on the following page is considered closed. All state bag limits and weapon regulations apply unless otherwise noted.

Type	Season dates/bag limits	Refuge specific regulations
Duck, Goose, Coot	Open during the months of December and January, and for Youth and Veterans/ Active Military in February for the state-wide additional Youth- and Military-only dates. Bag Limits are in accordance to the state.	• Access to the refuge is two hours before sunrise. • Hunting will cease and hunters will be out of the field by 12 noon each day. • Only portable and temporary blinds are permitted. • Decoys and blinds must be removed each day. • Only nontoxic shot permitted. • The use of dogs for retrieving purposes or in the pursuit of migratory birds is permitted.
Dove, Woodcock, Snipe, Crow, Quail	Closed	Closed
Squirrel, Rabbit	Closed	Closed
Raccoon, Opossum	Closed	Closed
Coyote, Bobcat, Fox, Skunk, Otter, Muskrat, Mink, Weasel, Beaver	Closed	Closed
White-tail Deer	Open in accordance to State Bag Limits for Zone 1. Archery and Crossbow Only. See Big Game Hunting section for eligible individuals, open areas, and season dates. Deer taken on Refuge will be telechecked through State 1-800-245-4263 with public land code for Green River NWR.	• Access to the refuge is two hours before sunrise to two hours after sunset. • Ground blinds are permitted, one per hunter, and must be removed daily. • Hunting of deer by the aid of or distributing any feed, salt, minerals or other ingestible attractants is prohibited • Hunters are required to follow all state CWD regulations. • Pursuit of white-tailed deer with dogs is prohibited. • Hunters may not hunt by organized deer drives of two or more hunters.
Turkey	Open in accordance to State bag Limits. See Big Game Hunting section for eligible individuals, open areas, and season dates. Turkey taken on Refuge will be telechecked through State 1-800-245-4263 with public land code for Green River NWR.	• Access to the refuge is two hours before sunrise to two hours after sunset. • Ground blinds are permitted, one per hunter, and must be removed daily. • The use of dogs for retrieval or in pursuit of wild turkey is prohibited.
Bullfrogs	Closed	Closed
Feral Hogs	Closed	Feral hogs are not regarded as a game species on Green River NWR.
Sandhill Crane, Groundhog	Closed	Closed



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Signs

Millions of people visit National Wildlife Refuges each year. Human activity, if not regulated, can negatively impact wildlife and their habitats. Signs help control recreational activities and respect private property while protecting natural resources on the refuge. Below are some common signs posted on the refuge:



These signs and yellow paint clearly mark all refuge property. It is your responsibility to know where the property lines are and remain within the boundaries.



Green River National Wildlife Refuge is located in Henderson County Kentucky. The refuge was established in 2019 as the 568th National Wildlife Refuge in the country, and the second in Kentucky. The refuge currently encompasses approximately 2,100 acres.



Detailed maps of the refuge are available on the refuge website at fws.gov/refuge/green-river.



This area is closed to all entry. No entering, hunting or sightseeing is permitted. No roads or trails beyond this sign are open to the public. Some of these signs may have dates indicating seasonal closure and length of time the area is closed.



This area is closed to all hunting. Firearms and archery equipment are prohibited. Some of these signs may have dates indicating the length of time the area is closed to all hunting.

