

Kankakee

National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area Hunting and Fishing Regulations



Welcome

Established in 2016 for the protection of fish and wildlife resources, the refuge is located in Iroquois County, IL. The refuge provides a wide variety of wildlife-dependent recreational activities to the public, including hunting, wildlife observation, interpretation, environmental education, and photography. For more information about Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area, visit www.fws.gov/refuge/kankakee-and-conservation-area.

Safety

To ensure both your safety, the safety of others, and the safety and protection of wildlife and habitat, please be aware of the following regulations. At any time, hunters may encounter other recreational users. Hunters must wear an article of blaze orange/pink consistent with state regulations.

To Report Violations

- To report a wildlife violation call 1-844-397-8477 (FWS-TIPS)
- Illinois Tip Line 1-877-236-7529 (2DNRLAW)

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

Motor vehicles are not permitted unless within the designated parking areas. "Motorized vehicles are not allowed within the refuge unless authorized through a Special Use Permit (SUP) issued by refuge management for specific cases, such as disabled individuals who may need assistance. Contact the refuge manager for additional information. Foot travel is allowed on all portions of the refuge.

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 Civil Rights, <https://www.doi.gov/pmb/eeo/public-civil-rights>.

Hunting and Fishing Regulations

Hunting and 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 fishing will be in accordance with applicable State of Illinois regulations subject to the conditions stated below. Brochures may be obtained by mail, at the refuge headquarters, or from the refuge website.

Physical Location of Visitor Parking Area
(Parking area located 0.10 miles south of)
7923 S 17000E Rd
Pembroke Township, IL 60958
kankakee@fws.gov

Office is located at Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge
6316 Harts Road
Ringwood, IL 60072

TTY Federal Relay System: 1-800-877-8339

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1-800-344-WILD (9453)

August 2026



State Seasons, shooting hours and regulations apply to the following hunt activities:

- Deer (archery, muzzleloader, shotgun)
- Migratory Birds
- Turkey (archery (fall) and shotgun (spring and fall))
- Upland Game

Access

Hunters may only access the refuge one hour before legal sunrise until one hour after legal sunset. Night hunting is prohibited.

Species

All refuge wildlife are protected, except those species for which hunting is specifically authorized. The refuge is open to hunting for the following species: Waterfowl (ducks, geese and teal); Migratory birds other than waterfowl (mourning dove, coot, rail, crow, snipe and woodcock); Big game (white-tailed deer and wild turkey); Upland game (coyote, red fox, opossum, partridge, pheasant, quail, rabbit, hare, raccoon, skunk, squirrel, pigeons, unprotected doves, groundhog/woodchuck, feral hogs-only as incidental during the white-tailed deer season)

Additional furbearer species may be allowed if legally open according to state regulation for hunting. No trapping is permitted on the refuge. Species not listed are closed to hunting.

Dogs

The use of dogs while hunting migratory game birds and upland game (with exceptions, Turkey) is allowed, provided the dog is under the immediate control of the hunter at all times. Hunting with dogs for deer, black bear, raccoon, red fox, gray fox, opossum, bobcat, coyote, and striped skunk is prohibited.

Fishing

Refuge lands are open to fishing. Collection of frogs, minnows, salamanders, turtles and other non-fish species is prohibited. Night fishing is prohibited.

Ammunition

Hunters may only possess and use approved non-toxic shot while on the refuge. All other state specific regulations for Firearm and Archery Equipment Regulations apply.

Artificial Lights

You may not use a spotlight, headlight or other artificial light to spot, locate or take any wild animal in the refuge.

Blinds/Tree Stands

We prohibit the building or use of permanent stands or blinds on the refuge. No nails, screw-in steps, wire, screws, bolts, or other items that penetrate the outer bark may be used. Portable tree stands and ground blinds must be set up and removed each day and used in accordance with state regulations.

Prohibited Activities

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

- Trapping
- Camping, overnight parking, and open fires.
- Use of motorized vehicles, horses or other domestic livestock for big game retrieval or recreational trail riding or any other purpose.
- Leaving property overnight. All property brought onto the refuge must be removed at the end of each day. This includes items like decoys, blinds, trail cameras, portable stands, climbing sticks and trash.
- Marking or flagging any tree or other refuge feature with reflectors, paint, or other substance.
- Organized deer drives. We define a "deer drive" as an organized or planned effort to pursue, drive, chase, or otherwise frighten or cause deer to move in the direction of any person(s) who is part of the organized or planned hunt and known to be waiting for the deer.
- The use or possession of alcoholic beverages and controlled substances, including marijuana, is prohibited.
- Distribution of feed or bait, or hunting over bait; including, but not limited to salts and minerals.
- Target shooting
- Training of dogs and/or allowing dogs off leash while on refuge.
- Abandoning, discarding or otherwise leaving of personal property, animal carcasses, trash, refuse, rocks, wood or other debris.
- Destructing, defacing, disturbing or unauthorized removal of any natural object, artifact, cultural resource or government property.
- Cutting, mowing, sawing, digging, collecting, injuring or removing vegetation. (Collection of fruits of the earth (seeds, fruits, nuts and berries) for personal food or medical use in modest quantities is permitted.
- Introducing, liberating, or placing plants or animals or their parts on refuge lands or waters.
- Launching, landing or disturbing of wildlife by aircraft (drones) on the refuge, includes for recreational or commercial purposes.
- Commercial enterprise without a special use permit.
- Use or possession of any illegal drug or drug paraphernalia.

Portions of the land within or surrounding the boundaries of the refuge are private.
Persons wishing to hunt on private land must gain permission from the landowner.

