



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Northern Tallgrass Prairie

National Wildlife Refuge Hunting and Fishing Regulations

Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge

Office is located at:

Windom Wetland Management District
49663 County Road 17
Windom, MN 56101

507-831-2220

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

August 2026

Each of the refuge units are managed by staff at the nearest wetland management district or national wildlife refuge. The eight units include:

Minnesota:

[Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge](#) for units located in Kittson County, **218-449-4115**

[Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge](#) for units located in Lincoln and Lyon Counties, **320-273-2191**

[Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District](#) for units located in Becker, Clay, Mahanomen, Norman and Polk Counties, **218-847-4431**

[Fergus Falls Wetland Management District](#) for units located in Grant, Douglas, Grant, Otter Tail, Wadena, and Wilkin Counties, **218-739-2291**

[Litchfield Wetland Management District](#) for units located in Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker, Renville, Stearns, Todd and Wright Counties, **320-693-2849**

[Morris Wetland Management District](#) for units located in Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac Qui Parle, Pope, Stevens, Swift, Traverse, and Yellow Medicine Counties, **320-589-1001**

[Windom Wetland Management District](#) for units located in Brown, Cottonwood, Faribault, Freeborn, Jackson, Martin, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Rock, and Watonwan Counties, **507-831-2220**

Iowa:

[Iowa Wetland Management District](#) for units located in all other Iowa counties, **515-928-2523**

[Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge](#) for units located in Jasper County, **515-994-3400**

This is a unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System, a network of lands and waters managed for the benefit of wildlife and people.



Safety

Please dress appropriately for the season and wear layers. Check the weather forecast before your outing, as daily weather conditions can bring dramatic change. Warm weather also brings out the mosquitoes and ticks, so bring insect repellent. Prairies, by nature, offer little shade, so sunscreen is always a good idea.

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

Licensed motor vehicles are permitted only on public use roads. ATVs and UTVs are prohibited.

Boats

In Minnesota, non-motorized watercrafts are permitted when hunting and fishing.

In Iowa, we allow boats or other floating devices when hunting and fishing. You may not leave boats unattended.

Hunting and Fishing Regulations

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.

- If hunting is an approved use on the refuge, that activity "is administered in accordance with state regulations based on location, timing, species, methods of take, etc..." See refuge specific website or contact the Wetland District Office that manages the unit with questions.
- If small game hunting is an approved use on the refuge then hunters using shotguns, including turkey hunters, are required to use and possess only non-toxic shot.
- During the small game and migratory bird seasons, hunting dogs must be under the immediate control of the hunter.
- We allow limited hunting on the Spieker tract within the Clay County State Game Refuge in Clay County, MN, and Pipestone Creek Unit located within the Hiawatha State Game Refuge in Pipestone County, MN as governed by applicable State regulations.
- In Iowa, big game hunters may leave tree stands in an area for a continuous period of time beginning 7 days prior to the open season for hunting deer and ending 7 days after the final day of that season. Hunters must clearly mark the stand with their Iowa hunting license number.
- Fishing is allowed in accordance with state regulations based on location, timing, species, methods of take, etc.. We prohibit the taking of any turtle, frog, leech, minnow, crayfish, and mussel (clam) species by any method on the refuge.

Access

Access to the refuge is open from 1/2 hour before sunrise until 1/2 hour after sunset unless otherwise posted or stated in hunting regulations.

Hunters must park in designated parking areas and approaches, to access the refuge for hunting.

Trapping

Trapping is prohibited unless authorized in a Special Use Permit.

Northern Tallgrass Prairie

National Wildlife Refuge

MINNESOTA

Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge

Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District

Fergus Falls Wetland Management District

Morris Wetland Management District

Litchfield Wetland Management District

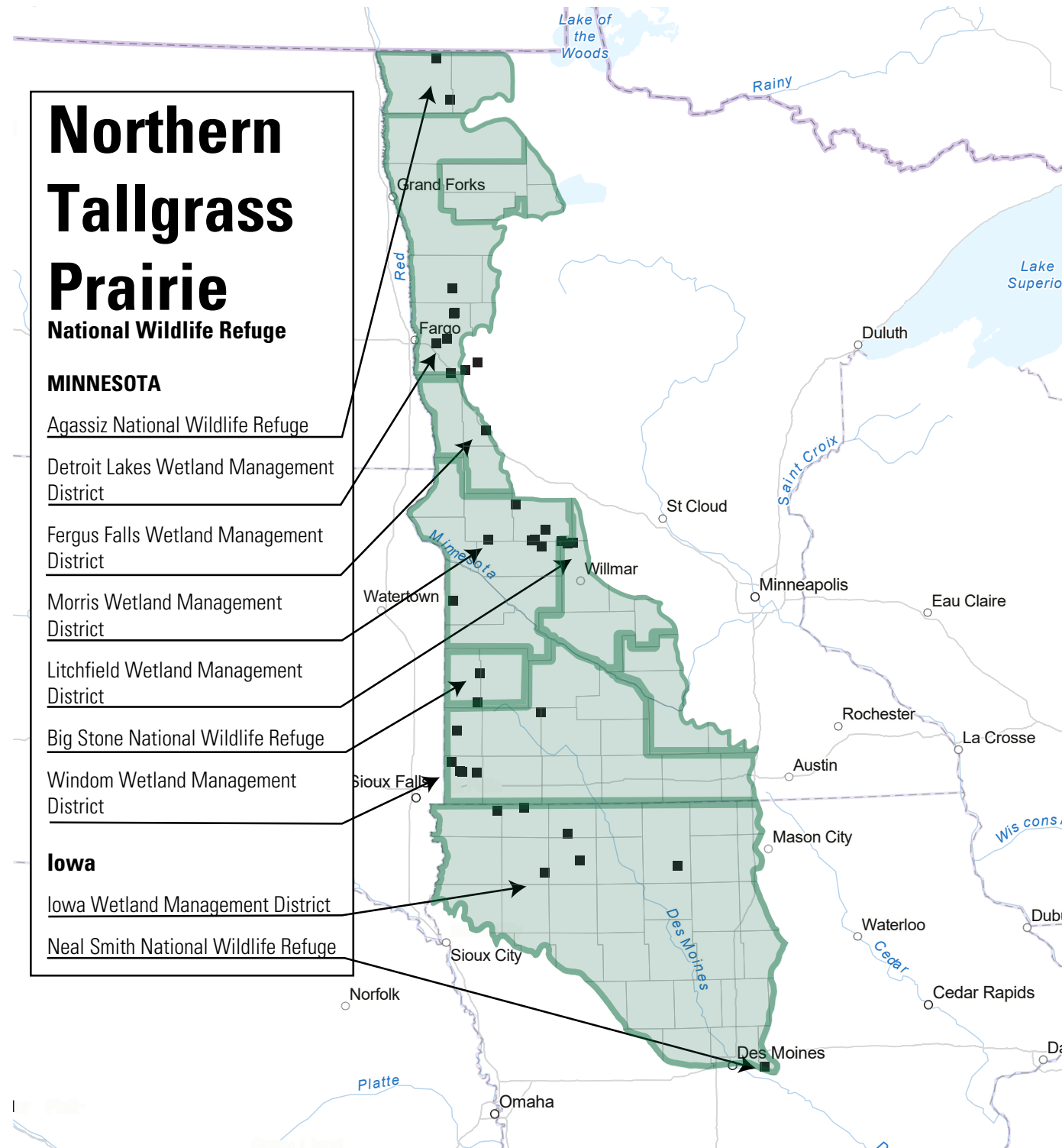
Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge

Windom Wetland Management District

Iowa

Iowa Wetland Management District

Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge



Tree Stands

In Iowa, big game hunters may leave tree stands in an area for a continuous period of time beginning 7 days prior to the open season for hunting deer and ending 7 days after the final day of that season. Hunters must clearly mark the stand with their Iowa hunting license number.

Prohibited Activities

- Target shooting.
- Training pets and allowing pets off leash. (Exception in 'Hunting and Fishing Regulations').
- All types of motorized vehicles on all refuge land (to include on frozen bodies of water) except on designated parking areas, access roads and public roads.
- Camping, open fires and overnight parking is prohibited.
- Abandoning, discarding or otherwise leaving any personal property. All property brought onto a refuge must be removed at the end of each day. This includes all common items like vehicles, boats, decoys, trail cameras, blinds, photography equipment, portable stands, climbing sticks, and trash. (Exception in 'Tree Stands' section)
- Destructing, defacing, disturbing or unauthorized removal of any natural object, artifact, cultural resource or government property.
- Introducing, liberating, or placing plants or animals or their parts taken elsewhere on refuge lands or waters.
- Disposing of animal carcasses, trash, refuse, rocks, wood or other debris.
- Cutting, mowing, sawing, digging, collecting, injuring or removing vegetation.
- Launching, landing or disturbing of wildlife by aircraft (drones) on the refuge. This includes for recreational or commercial purposes.
- Commercial enterprise without a special use permit.
- Use or possession of any illegal drug or drug paraphernalia is prohibited. The use or possession of alcoholic beverages while hunting.
- Baiting or hunting over bait
- Spotlight or headlight use to locate animals on the refuge.