

Port Louisa

National Wildlife Refuge Hunting and Fishing Regulations



Welcome

Port Louisa National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1958 for the protection of migratory birds and covers 8,375 acres along the Mississippi and Iowa Rivers. The refuge includes four divisions: Louisa, Big Timber, Horseshoe Bend, and Keithsburg (Keithsburg in Mercer County, IL). The refuge headquarters is located on the Louisa Division.

The Iowa River Corridor is also part of Port Louisa NWR, and is located in Benton, Iowa, and Tama Counties. It is managed by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. Please be aware of which property you are on as regulations may be different between state and federal lands.

Safety

We recommend 200 yard spacing between hunt parties when engaging in hunting activities. Be aware of your surroundings and follow State regulations for hunting attire.

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 and trails as shown on the map. ATVs and UTVs are prohibited.

Boats

Canoeing and kayaking are allowed and there is a designated water trail on the Louisa Division. On Horseshoe Bend, motor boats are allowed for fishing only during the periods when flood water enables access from the river over the levee.

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 Iowa regulations subject to the conditions stated below. Brochures may be obtained by mail, at the refuge headquarters, or from the refuge website.

10728 County Road X61
Wapello, Iowa 52653

319-523 6982
TTY Federal Relay System: 1-800-877-8339

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

August 2026



Access

Hunters may only access the Refuge during daylight hours. Hunters must park in designated parking areas, as identified on the map below, to access the Refuge for hunting. Gates opened to enter the hunting area from designated access points must be closed immediately after passing through. Access to the Refuge from private property is prohibited.

Tree Stands

Portable stands may be used where hunting is allowed, but they must be removed at the end of each day's hunt. No nails, screws, or other hardware may be used to climb or secure blinds to trees.

Prohibited Activities

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

- Possession of alcoholic beverages
- Camping and Fires
- ATVs and UTVs
- Searching for or removal of any natural items such as antlers, bison skulls, plants, historic, and archaeological features. They are protected by Federal law.
- Taking of turtles or frogs
- Use of electronic or photographic trail monitoring devices
- Marking or flagging any tree or other Refuge feature with reflectors, paint, or other substance.
- Game Retrieval/ Transportation carts or any other mechanized device used for retrieving game or transportation.
- Permanent tree stands, nails, screw-in steps, or other items that penetrate the outer bark of a tree.
- Firearms capable of firing cartridge ammunition
- The discharge of weapons on the refuge when not engaged in authorized hunting is not allowed.
- Access to the Refuge from private property
- Hunting is prohibited within 200 yards of any public use facility

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



Activity	Season	Division	Regulation
Big Game Hunting (White-tailed deer and turkey)	White-tailed deer and spring turkey hunting is allowed in accordance with state seasons and regulations.	Big Timber Division and Iowa River Corridor Horseshoe Bend Division and Keithsburg Unit closed to all public access from Sept. 15 to Nov. 30. Horseshoe Bend opens to all hunting, except migratory birds on Dec. 1	Hunters must possess and use only nontoxic shot while hunting turkey. Feral hog may be harvested during white-tailed deer hunts (IL only)
Migratory Bird Hunting	Allowed in accordance with state seasons and regulations.	Big Timber Division and Iowa River Corridor Horseshoe Bend Division (open to crow and closed to migratory birds), closed to all public access from Sept. 15 to Nov. 30. Keithsburg Unit (closed to waterfowl), closed to all public access from Sept. 15 to Dec. 31.	Portable blinds are allowed on a daily basis. Hunters must possess and use only nontoxic shot.
Upland Game Hunting: (small game, furbearers, game birds)	Allowed in accordance with state seasons and regulations.	Big Timber Division and Iowa River Corridor Horseshoe Bend Division and Keithsburg Unit (closed to furbearers) closed to all public access from Sept. 15 to Nov. 30 for Horseshoe Bend and Sept. 15 to Dec. 31 for Keithsburg.	Nighttime hunting of furbearers is not allowed. Hunters must possess and use only nontoxic shot while hunting upland game.
Sport Fishing	Allowed all year (sunrise to sunset) in accordance with state seasons and regulations except where otherwise posted.	Big Timber Division and Iowa River Corridor Louisa Division closed Sept. 15 to Jan.1 (exception of the boat ramp and fishing pier access at the inlet structure.) Horseshoe Bend Division Dec. 1 until Sept. 14 Motor boats are allowed for fishing only during the periods when flood water enables access from the river over the levee. Keithsburg Division Jan. 1 until Sept. 14. Spring Slough parking area is open to fishing all year. A sign is present to designate the closed area boundary beyond the gate.	Boats and all other fishing devices must be removed at the end of each day's fishing.

Port Louisa

National Wildlife Refuge

 Refuge Boundary

 Closed to Hunting

 Open State Seasons

 Open State Seasons (1/1-9/14)
(see table for exceptions)

 Refuge Headquarters

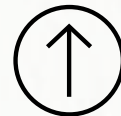
 Parking

 Look out Tower

 Boat Launch

The USFWS makes no warrant for the use of this map and cannot be held liable for actions or decisions based on map content. Boundaries posted in the field supersede all boundaries shown on map.

North



2 Kilometers

2 Miles

17

New Boston

ILLINOIS

IOWA

Keithsburg
Division

Keithsburg

Horseshoe
Bend
Division

Big Timber
Division

X61

G56

Louisa
Division

G62

99

X61

55th St.

86h St.

F Ave.

For Iowa River Corridor maps search
online Port Louisa NWR hunting.

