U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Occoquan Bay National Wildlife Refuge

2026 Big Game Hunting

We allow hunting on the refuge in accordance with State regulations subject to certain conditions:
Please refer to the Commonwealth of Virginia Hunting Regulations for clothing requirements, license requirements, and other information. Visit the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources web page: dwr.virginia.gov/hunting/

Scout Day: November 7th, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Hunt Dates: November 18th and December 3rd
Bonus and Youth Hunt Dates: December 10th

Lottery
Visit The RecAccess webpage to enter the deer hunt lottery at https://potomacriverrefugehunts.recaccess.com. Application fees are nonrefundable and $10 for the general public and $5 for Federal Senior and Access Pass holders, plus a $5 processing fee. The application deadline is Sunday, September 6th. Lottery results will be emailed Monday, September 14th. Remember to check your spam folders! Hunter status may be viewed at the RecAccess webpage. Sign in, click "draw results" and use your RAID number to view lottery results.

Orientation
Selected hunters must complete the orientation requirements to unlock, purchase, and print assigned hunt permits. View the 2026 Occoquan Bay NWR Hunt Orientation video and test at https://potomacriverrefugehunts.recaccess.com. As the video and test are completed, permits unlock for purchase and print. *Hunters are responsible for understanding the site-specific information and content presented in the orientation video.*

Permits
Permits are assigned by lottery and valid for one hunt day and designated parking lot. Purchase and print permits at https://potomacriverrefugehunts.recaccess.com. Selected hunters may purchase permits from Monday, September 14th through Thursday, October 1st, after which unclaimed permits are available to other hunt applicants. The non-refundable permit fees are $20.00 for the general public and $10.00 for Federal Senior and Access Pass holders, plus a $5 processing fee. Senior and Access Passes checked upon entry.

Unclaimed Permit Purchase
Not all selected hunters claim permits. Unclaimed permits are available for purchase on a first come first served basis to all lottery applicants, selected and unselected, starting Friday, October 2nd. Purchase unclaimed permits at https://potomacriverrefugehunts.recaccess.com.

Alternates
Stand-by hunters may form a separate line at 5:30 a.m. and will be admitted if space is available at 6:00 a.m. Standby permits will be $20.00 upon entry. The front gate will close to **ALL** hunters at 6:15 a.m. No admittance to hunt after 6:15 a.m.

Bonus and Youth Hunt
Adult hunters who have harvested two or more antlerless deer during the November and December hunts are eligible to participate. Youth hunters may return to participate in the bonus hunt regardless of harvest.

Mobility Impaired (MI) Hunt Areas
One automated lift stand is available for MI hunters. MI hunters are required to have an aide 16 years or older as staff members are unable to track, dress, or drag deer. Please call 703-490-4979 to register your hunting aide or to request assistance to find an aide by November 2nd.

Firearm Qualification
Hunters are required to qualify firearms and ammunition on a range PRIOR to their scheduled hunt dates. Qualification cards and standards are available at https://potomacriverrefugehunts.recaccess.com. Print and bring a copy of the card to the range.

Reminders
- Hunters must possess a valid Virginia hunting license, big game tags, refuge permit, and qualification card. Refuge permits must be visible in the windshield on hunt and scout days. Carry licenses and qualification cards in the field.
- All persons on refuge or park lands during hunts must possess a valid hunt permit or be a pre-authorized aide.
- Hunters may only use or possess firearms and ammunition listed on their qualification card.
- Firearms must be unloaded and cased or broken down, except when in assigned hunt area.
- Shotgun and slugs only; buckshot prohibited.
- We prohibit the use of dogs to hunt or pursue game.
- Hunters must remove all hunting equipment from the refuge at the end of each day's hunt.
- We prohibit organized deer drives.
- Permitted Hunter Check In: 5:30 a.m. – 6:00 a.m.
- Standby Hunters admitted from 6:00 – 6:15 a.m.
- Hunting ends at 5:00 p.m.
- Hunters check out by 6:00 p.m.
- Antlered and antlerless white-tailed deer, fox, and coyote may be harvested.
- Limit of one antlered deer per permit purchased.
- Non-toxic ammo must be used to hunt fox and coyote.
- DMAP tags provided on site for antlerless deer harvest.
- All harvest deer must be reported to the check station.

For more information, contact:
Potomac River National Wildlife Refuge Complex
14050 Dawson Beach Rd, Woodbridge, VA 22191
703/490-4979
www.fws.gov/refuge/Occoquan_Bay/Visit/DeerHunt.html

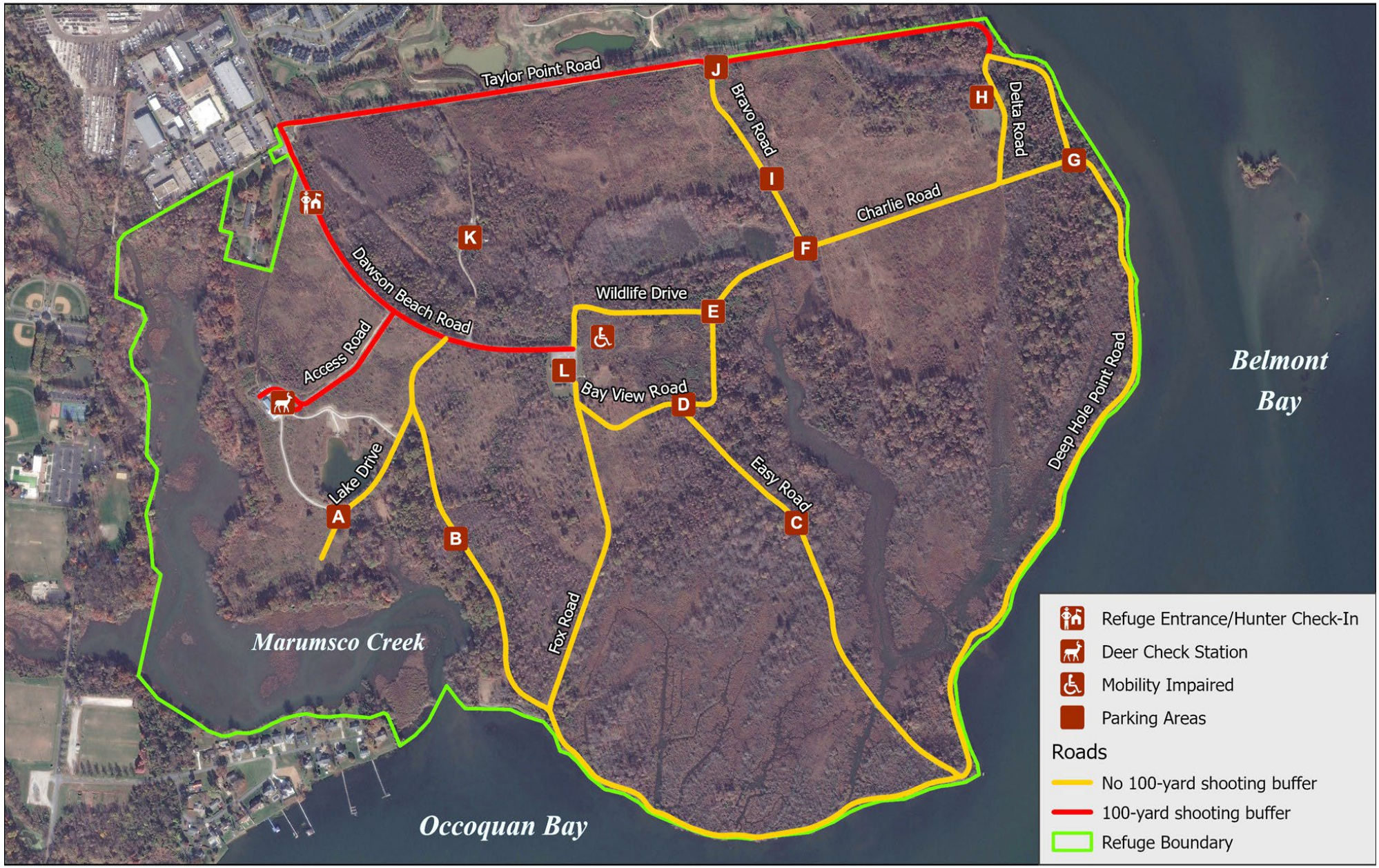
Federal Relay Service for the deaf and hard-of-hearing
1 800/877 8339

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD
http://www.fws.gov

July 2026

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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Big Game Hunting



Data Sources:
USFWS, USGS
Not to be used for legal purposes.

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles

0 200 400 Yards

1: 28,000

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