



Welcome

Felsenthal National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), established in 1975, is located in southeast Arkansas approximately eight miles west of the town of Crossett. Named for a small community located at its southwest corner, this 76,000 acre Refuge contains an abundance of wildlife resources associated with bottomland and upland habitats dominated by the Ouachita and Saline Rivers.

Contact Information

Felsenthal National Wildlife Refuge
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
5531 Highway 82 West
Crossett AR 71635
870-364-3167

Office Hours:

Monday – Friday
7 am – 3:30 pm with the exception of all federal holidays

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

June 2023

This is an annual permit. To save tax dollars, please use this permit for the entire season.

Felsenthal National Wildlife Refuge 2023-2024 Refuge Access Permit Expires July 2024

When signed and in your possession, this portion of the brochure will serve as your permit for all permissible Refuge activities and acknowledges your understanding of the regulations contained herein.



Signature _____

Permits are not transferable and are valid only when signed.

Take pride in your Refuge. Don't litter.
Report violations.

1-844-FWS-TIPS (397-8477)

Felsenthal

National Wildlife Refuge Hunting and Fishing Regulations 2023–2024

General Regulations

Public use regulations are designed to protect the sportsman and wildlife populations. The regulations below supplement the general regulations which govern all public uses on National Wildlife Refuges as set forth in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations. All users are permitted on the Refuge in accordance with State and Federal regulations as supplemented by the following special Refuge regulations contained herein. Individuals with fish and wildlife related violations may be denied permits for any Refuge activity.

Permits

Refuge Access permits are required for all Refuge users. When signed and in your possession, (paper copy or on your phone), the cover section of this brochure serves as your permit for all permissible Refuge activities, and acknowledges your understanding of the regulations contained herein.

How to Apply for Quota Hunts

Quota Hunt permits are required in addition to the Refuge Access Permits. Permits are non-transferable and nonrefundable. Applications for the Quota Deer Hunt permits will be accepted during the month of August. Applications for the Quota Turkey Hunt permits will be accepted during the month of January. All applicants are subject to a \$5.00 non-refundable application fee for quota hunts. Successful applicants will be charged an additional \$15.00 per permit fee.

Online Application Process:

You can apply for Quota Hunts online at <http://https://felsenthal.recaccess.com/>

Unclaimed Quota Hunt Permits:

If available, unclaimed permits may be purchased on a first come first serve basis during the two weeks prior to the scheduled Hunts. See website for more details.

Please note, submissions of any person's name more than once for the same Hunt Type will result in disqualification.

Commercial/Special Use Activities

No person including but not limited to a guide, guide service, outfitter, club or other organization shall provide assistance, services or equipment on the Refuge to any other person for compensation. For the purpose of this regulation, any fee paid or services rendered to a person for lodging, meals, club membership or similar services will be considered compensation. Violations of this regulation subjects each hunter in the party to a fine if convicted of this violation.

A Refuge Special Use Permit is required for all commercial activities on the Refuge. Permits may be obtained by contacting our Refuge Headquarters with a formal request. All Special Use Permit applications will be subject to a two week turn-around time and applicable fees.

Motor Vehicles

All motor vehicles are restricted to normal passenger vehicle roads. Roads and trails may be closed to vehicle use due to periods of high water, during wildfire occurrences or other natural events that may pose a hazard to public safety. All Terrain Vehicles (ATV) and Utility Terrain Vehicles (UTV) are only allowed on trails designated by ATV signs and marked with yellow or blue paint. The use of ATV/UTVs is restricted to wildlife-dependent recreation only.

The following activities are prohibited on Felsenthal NWR:

- Littering.
- The use of Airboats is prohibited during the months of October through March.
- Spotlighting - artificial light may not be used to locate wildlife.
- Use or possession of alcoholic beverages while hunting; consumption of alcohol in parking lots and on roadways; consumption of alcohol in plain view in campgrounds.
- Fishing or swimming from any boat ramp.
- Excessively loud music.
- Blocking gates, boat ramps or roadways with any vehicles.
- Taking of wildlife or plants (including cutting trees or brush) other than specified in this brochure. Exception: berry picking.
- Possession or use of herbicides.
- Marking trails with tape, ribbons, paint or any other substance or material.
- Use or possession of any electronic call or other electronic device used for producing or projecting vocal sounds of wildlife.
- Drive or screw a nail, spike or other metal object into a tree or to hunt from any tree in which such an object has been driven.
- Searching for or removing any object of antiquity including arrowheads, pottery or other artifacts.
- Disposing of unused portions of game or fish within 300 yards of any boat ramp, parking lot or campground.
- Leaving any personal property on the Refuge unattended. Exception: Gear associated with camping in designated camping sites, deer stands and/or deer blinds, and game cameras.
- The use of drones and/or unmanned aircraft.
- Target practice with any firearms, archery tackle and crossbows or any non-hunting discharge of firearms.
- Firearms including state permitted concealed carry handguns are prohibited in all Refuge offices and buildings.

Trails marked by yellow paint are open September 1 - January 31. Trails marked with blue paint are open year round to access areas for hunting and fishing. We define an ATV and a UTV as off-road vehicles (not legal for highway use) with factory specifications not to exceed the following: engine size 700 cc displacement, a width of 63" or less and tires with maximum 1" lug height and maximum allowable tire pressure of 6 psi. Bicycles are permitted on roads and designated open trails. The maximum legal speed for any land vehicle is 25 mph.

Firearms/Ammunition

Persons may only use (discharge) firearms during authorized hunting seasons while attempting to take game species and/or wildlife species approved for incidental take. All hunting weapons used on the Refuge must comply with state regulations for each game species. Possession of shot larger than that legal for waterfowl hunting is prohibited. Lead shot is prohibited Refuge wide except during Quota Turkey Hunts. Only rimfire rifles no larger than .22 caliber and shotguns are permitted except during the Muzzleloader and Gun Deer Hunts when hunting equipment legal for these hunts is also permitted. The use or possession of buckshot is prohibited Refuge-wide.

Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on National Wildlife Refuges 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).

Camping

Camping (no reservations or fees required) is permitted only in designated primitive camping areas and in conjunction with on-refuge wildlife-dependent activities (see map). Camping area entrances are marked by signs and boundaries are marked with ORANGE paint. Campers may stay no more than fourteen (14) days during any thirty (30) consecutive-day period in any campground. Camps must be occupied daily. All disturbances, including the use of generators, are prohibited after 10 pm. Camping on the Refuge while hunting off the refuge is prohibited. Campfires are permitted only in camping areas and must be attended. Only downed wood may be used for fires Caution: During periods of high fire danger, all open fires will be prohibited.

Fire Management

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages fire to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats, while first ensuring human safety and then protecting our facilities and neighboring communities. Refuge fire activity can be expected year round. Felsenthal visitors are asked to be mindful of any and all fire activity while on the Refuge. Certain areas of the Refuge may be temporarily closed or have restricted access due to fire activity. For current and updated information see our contact information.

Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Felsenthal visitors are encouraged to explore our natural resources by way of birding, canoeing, hiking, photography and observation. While the Refuge continuously strives to better provide these opportunities, please feel free to contact us for the most up-to-date information and accommodations. All ATV/UTV trails are open to foot traffic year round. It is recommended that all Refuge users wear applicable hunter orange while on the Refuge during the gun and muzzleloader deer hunts.

Animals/Pets

Dogs are allowed for hunting migratory birds, and small game during designated seasons. Dogs and other pets not being utilized for wildlife-dependent recreation must be on a leash.

Horses may be used on roads open to vehicles and trails that are open to ATV/UTVs for on-refuge wildlife dependent activities only. Horses are prohibited during the Muzzleloader and Gun Deer Hunts.

Physically Challenged Hunters

Physically challenged users are encouraged to consult with Refuge staff at the Refuge Headquarters for available options and alternatives that may make their visit more enjoyable. Refuge Mobility Impaired Access permits are available and are required to gain special access due to disabilities.

Waterfowl Sanctuary

This area is posted with "Area Closed" signs. The waterfowl sanctuary is closed to all public entry (including fishing and frogging) from November 15 through February 15 except during the deer modern gun quota hunt. For current and updated information see our contact information below.

During waterfowl season, the Hebie Cut, Pine Island Boat Canal, and Tom Grider Slough will be posted with "No Wake" signs. The "No Wake" zone will be strictly enforced from 4am through 6am. **NEW**

A No Wake Zone is defined as the speed at which the vessel does not produce a wake, nor exceeds 5 mph.

Sport Fishing and Frogging

Sport fishing, frogging and taking of crawfish for personal use are permitted in all Refuge waters in accordance with State regulations. Fishing is permitted year round. The main channel of the Ouachita River and the borrow pits along U.S. Highway 82 are open for navigation and fishing year-round (see map). Recreational fishing in the Eagle Lake and Woodland Trail ponds will be open to youth 12 and under, individuals with disabilities and seniors 65 and older.

Caution: Due to elevated levels of mercury in fish, the Arkansas Department of Health advises caution in the consumption of some species of fish from refuge waters. Call 501/661 2000 for more information.

2023-2024 Felsenthal NWR Hunting Season Dates and Regulations				
<p>For all deer and turkey harvested on the refuge, the hunter will immediately (prior to moving the animal) complete the hunting license kill information using "Felsenthal NWR" as zone of kill.</p> <p>A hunter born after 1968 must carry a valid Hunter Education Card. Hunters under 16 years old do not need to have a card if they are under the direct supervision (within arm's reach) of a holder of a valid hunting license of at least 21 years of age. Youth hunters under the age of 16 who have a valid Hunter Education Card must also be supervised by an adult not less than 21 years old but must only be in sight and normal voice contact with the adult. An adult may supervise only one youth for big game hunting and up to two youths for waterfowl and small game.</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas posted with "No Hunting Zone" signs are closed to all hunting. Hunting from an area where a shooting lane has been cut is prohibited Hunting within 150 feet of roads, trails and pipelines open to motor vehicle use (including ATV/UTV trails) is prohibited. Possession and discharge of more than 25 shot shells on persons or in vehicles is prohibited for all hunters during waterfowl hunting season. Possession, placement or hunting over bait, salt or any ingestible attractant is prohibited. 				
Species	Type	Season Dates	Bag Limits/Harvest	Specific Regulations
Duck, Goose and Coot	<p>Hunters may not enter the hunting area before 4 am. Hunters must remain at their vehicle until 4 am if accessing hunting area by foot or ATV/UTV. Hunters accessing their hunting area by boat may only leave ramp in designated areas (see map).</p> <p>Hunting ends at noon each day. Only portable blinds are permitted.</p> <p>All duck hunting equipment (blinds, guns, decoys, etc.) must be removed by 1:00 pm each day, either to a designated camping area, vehicle or off the Refuge.</p> <p>Unlawful to discharge or possess more than 25 shotshells per person, per day except during Refuge Waterfowl Youth Hunt.</p> <p>September teal season shooting hours are from sunrise until noon.</p> <p>To possess, or take or attempt to take waterfowl with the use of, any simulated wing movement decoy or any decoy other than an artificial decoy that imitates the appearance of waterfowl is prohibited. Exception: Manually operated "jerk strings" may be used to simulate decoy movement.</p>			
	Legal method	State Duck and Teal Season (including the State Youth Hunts and Special Active Duty Military and Veteran Hunts).	State bag limit Geese and Coots can be taken during state duck season when state seasons for these species are open.	
Squirrel and Rabbit	Legal method	Sep. 1 - Jan. 31	State bag limit	Dogs allowed December 1 through January 31. Closed during Quota Deer Hunts.
Quail	Legal method	Nov. 1 - Jan. 31	State bag limit	Closed during Quota Deer Hunts.
Woodcock	Legal method	State Season	State bag limit	Closed during Quota Deer Hunts.
Raccoon and Opossum	Legal method	Sunset Nov. 14 - Jan. 31	State bag limit	Use of dogs required during hours of darkness. Closed during Quota Deer Hunt.
Deer	<p>Felsenthal NWR is within the AGFC's Tier 2 CWD Management Zone. Tier 2 CWD Management Zone regulations apply with the exception that button bucks will NOT be considered antlerless deer. Please have any harvested deer tested for CWD at designated CWD testing locations. During the first two days of each permitted quota hunt, all harvested deer must be checked in and tested. To report sick deer, please contact AGFC at 1800-482-9262.</p> <p>Deer stands and/or game cameras may be placed on the refuge starting on the opening day of Archery Season and must be removed by January 31. Limit is one deer stand and/or game cameras per person. All stands and cameras must be clearly labeled.</p> <p>Portable, pop-up blinds, must have 144 square inches of blaze orange or chartreuse visible from all sides of the blind during firearms Deer seasons on the Refuge.</p> <p>Portable tree stands and ground blinds left unattended must have the owner's Arkansas Game and Fish Commission license customer ID number clearly written in a conspicuous location.</p> <p>Conducting or participating in deer drives is prohibited. A deer drive is defined as a deliberate action by one or more persons (whether armed or unarmed) whose intent is to cause deer to move within firearm range of one or more participating hunters.</p> <p>The use of deer decoys is prohibited.</p>			
	Archery/Crossbow	Sep. 23 - Jan. 31	Total deer harvested refuge-wide is 2 deer (2 does or 1 buck and 1 doe) regardless of method. A doe must be harvested on the refuge and checked before harvesting a buck. A legal buck is any male deer.	Closed during Quota Deer Hunts. All harvested deer are REQUIRED to be immediately checked at a designated self-check station where a confirmation card should be obtained and kept with the deer while on the refuge.
	Muzzleloader	Oct. 21 - 25		Quota permit required. During the first two days of the hunt, all harvested deer are REQUIRED to be checked at a staffed-check station. During the remainder of the hunt, harvested deer should be immediately checked at a designated self-check station where a confirmation card should be obtained and kept with the deer while on the refuge.
	Modern Gun	Nov. 11 - 14		Archery, crossbow and muzzleloader permitted.
	Youth Modern Gun	State Designated Weekends	Harvest same as above but doe first is not required.	Quota permit required. During the first two days of the hunt, all harvested deer are REQUIRED to be checked at a staffed-check station. During the remainder of the hunt, harvested deer should be immediately checked at a designated self-check station where a confirmation card should be obtained and kept with the deer while on the refuge. NEW Archery, crossbow and muzzleloader permitted.
Turkey	Archery/Crossbow	Spring State Season	State bag limit	Closed during Quota Gun Turkey Hunts.
	Youth Modern Gun	First two days of state youth season	One (1) legal turkey according to state definition.	Quota Permit Required. Youth Hunt restricted to youth 15 years of age and younger (age at opening of state-wide youth deer season) accompanied by one adult 21 years or older. Turkeys must be checked in accordance with state Turkey Hunt regulations.
	Modern Gun	First three days of state season	One (1) legal turkey according to state definition. No jakes (per state regulations).	Quota permit required. No one may accompany permit holder while hunting. Turkeys must be checked in accordance with state Turkey Hunt regulations.
Beaver, Nutria, Coyote		Any Refuge Hunt	No bag limit.	May be taken incidental to any daytime Refuge Hunt (without the use of dogs) with legal hunting equipment and ammunition allowed for that Hunt.
Feral Hogs		Muzzleloader and Modern Gun Deer Hunts Archery Season: Nov. 1 - Dec. 31	No bag limit.	In accordance with Arkansas Game and Fish Commission regulations concerning the taking of feral swine on WMAs. Live hogs may not be transported or possessed.
Furbearer	Trapping	Sunrise Nov. 15 - Jan. 31		Refuge Special Use Permit required and available at refuge office. Closed during Quota Deer Hunts.

