

Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge

Fishing & Crabbing Regulations



Fishing is permitted in accordance with all applicable state regulations (<https://dnrec.alpha.delaware.gov/fish-wildlife/fishing/>) and special refuge regulations.

Recreational fishing and crabbing are permitted on designated areas of Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge. All State fishing regulations apply on the refuge, including open seasons, limits, and permitted species. Commercial fishing and crabbing is prohibited.

Gear- All fishing and crabbing gear must be attended and you must remove all personal property at the end of each days fishing activity.

Fishing will be conducted by hook and line only. Crabbing will be conducted using only hand lines, dip nets, and collapsible traps. Crab traps may not be left unattended, the owner must be present. All other types of crabbing equipment are prohibited.

Bait fish and grass shrimp may be collected with a dip or cast net for use on the refuge.

There is a 30 horsepower limit on boat motors in Prime Hook Creek and the Slaughter Canal. Air thrust boats and jet skis are not permitted.

Permits – No Refuge-specific permits are required. A valid State license is required. The license must be exhibited to Federal and State officers upon request.

Hours – The refuge is open for fishing access from 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset.

Vehicles - Motor vehicles are permitted on designated roads open to public travel. Parking is permitted in designated parking areas. All State regulations and laws are applicable. Boats must be launched from designated points of access/ramps.

A wheelchair accessible fishing pier on Fleetwood Pond is available for disabled anglers.

Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge is carry-in/ carry-out facility. Please take all your trash with you including fishing line which is a hazard to wildlife.

Contact Information

Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge
11978 Turtle Pond Road, Milton, DE 19968.
(302) 684-8419.
www.fws.gov/refuge/primehook/

Fishing & Crabbing Areas – Fishing & Crabbing are allowed at the following locations. No other waters are open to fishing or crabbing. See map.

Fowler Beach – On the beach (Oct 1st– Mar 1st)

Slaughter Canal – Shore access at Fowler Beach Rd and Slaughter Beach Rd crossings. Area south of the south Fowler parking lot is closed.

By boat North of Fowler Beach Rd. Boats are not permitted south of Fowler Beach Rd.

Slaughter Creek – Shore access at Cods Rd crossing.

Prime Hook Creek – Boat access between Foord's landing and Waples Pond.

Headquarters Canal – Shore access along the Dike trail and at the HQ boat ramp dock.

Turtle & Fleetwood Ponds – Boats or Shore. Boats limited to human or electric power.

Petersfield Ditch – Shore access only at the Broadkill Rd crossing.

Seasonal Closures –

–Fowler Beach will be closed from March 1 through September 30 due to nesting State endangered least terns and American oystercatchers, and the federally endangered piping plovers.

–Western Prime Hook Creek (from Foord's Landing to Waples Pond): Closed every day during the deer and waterfowl hunting seasons, which typically starts on September 1 and ends in early February.

–Turtle & Fleetwood Ponds (in HQ Area): Closed only for a limited number of days for deer hunts.

–Slaughter Canal (boat access): Except for Sundays, closed from September 1 through February.



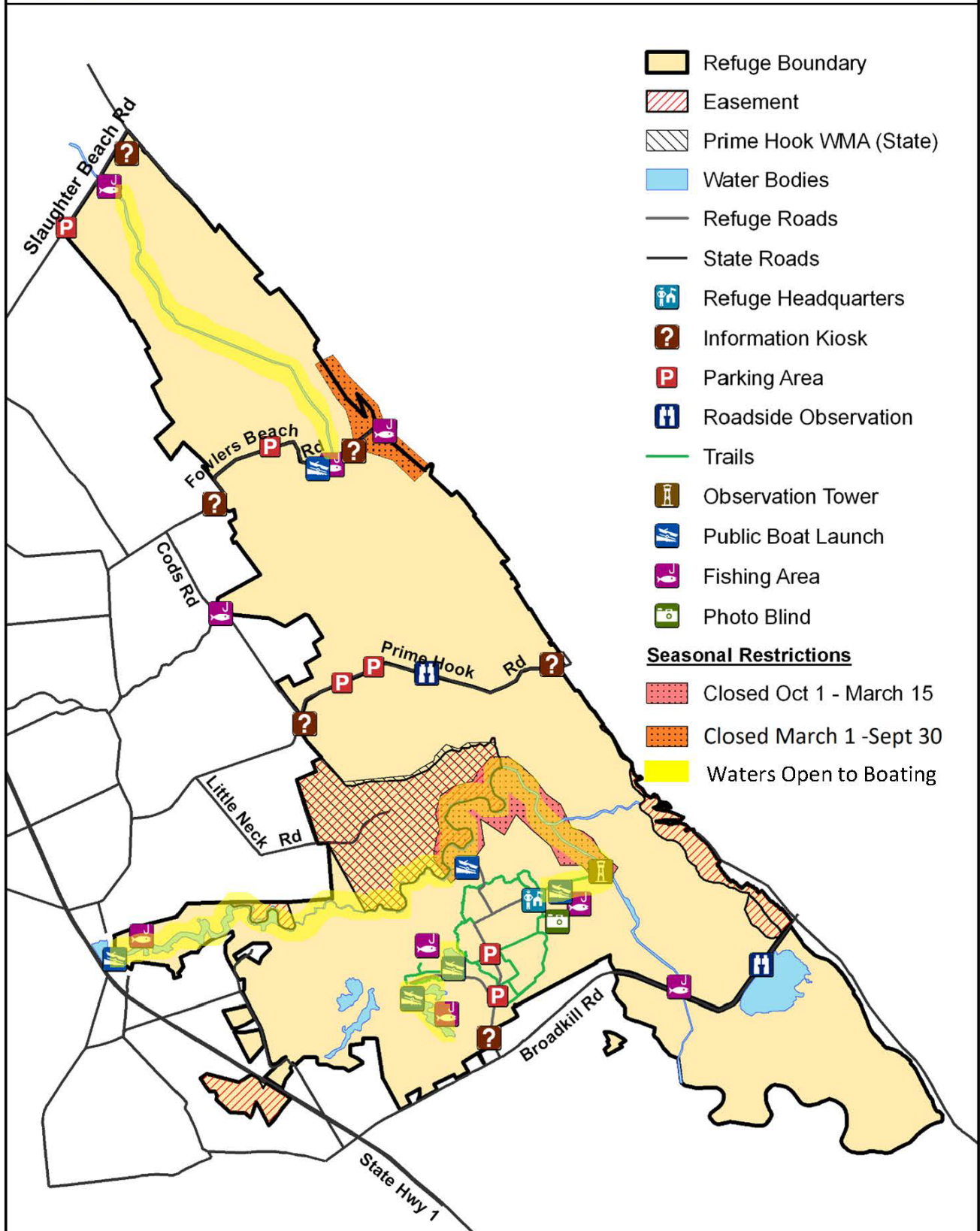
Steve Hillebrand/USFWS

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PRIME HOOK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Fishing and Crabbing Map



- Refuge Boundary
- Easement
- Prime Hook WMA (State)
- Water Bodies
- Refuge Roads
- State Roads
- Refuge Headquarters
- Information Kiosk
- Parking Area
- Roadside Observation
- Trails
- Observation Tower
- Public Boat Launch
- Fishing Area
- Photo Blind

- Seasonal Restrictions**
- Closed Oct 1 - March 15
 - Closed March 1 -Sept 30
 - Waters Open to Boating

Produced by Coastal Delaware NWR Complex, Milton, DE
 Refuge Boundary & Facilities: USFWS
 Map Projection: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
 Map Date: 08/20/09

