

Public Information Bulletin

National Wildlife Refuge System



Carolina Sandhills National Wildlife Refuge

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Refuge Accepting Public Comments on Proposed Turkey Hunt Application Process and Fee Changes for the 2024 Turkey Season

McBee, SC - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is accepting written public comments on proposed changes to the application process for the Turkey Quota Hunts at the Carolina Sandhills National Wildlife Refuge. A 14-day public comment period will take place from August 30, 2023 through September 13, 2023.

The Service has a proposed agreement with Recreation.gov to manage the Turkey Quota Hunt application and permitting process. Hunters will be able to apply electronically for an opportunity to participate in the refuge’s turkey hunts held annually in April. If drawn, each applicant will be notified by an e-mail from Recreation.gov and have a designated number of days to pay a hunt fee and claim their permit. The entire application, payment, and permit issuance will be electronic.

A fee analysis has been conducted to ensure the proposed fees are comparable to the fees charged on nearby public lands for similar opportunities. The range of costs for limited opportunity hunts for publically managed lands, including convenience, transaction and property fees, is \$8 to \$35 per hunter. The proposed electronic application fee for entering the turkey quota hunt drawing will be \$10 and up to three (3) hunters may apply as a group. If the group is successfully drawn, each member of the group may elect to claim their hunt permit for a fee of \$15 each. The previous application/hunt fee of \$12.50 per hunter was established in 1992.

The fees collected from the Turkey Quota hunt at Carolina Sandhills National Wildlife Refuge are used to support the hunt program by purchasing signs, brochures and other printed materials, maintenance of recreation facilities and enforcement and administration of being able to offer this recreational hunting opportunity.

We are interested in hearing from you regarding the proposed fee increases and the change to an electronic application and permitting process. You may submit written comments by mail or email between August 30, 2023 to September 13, 2023 to Carolina Sandhills NWR, 23734 US Highway 1, McBee, SC 29101 or to carolinasandhills@fws.gov. If you have questions or require more information, please contact the refuge at 843/335-8350 or at carolinasandhills@fws.gov. All comments will be reviewed and considered before a final decision is made.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit <http://www.fws.gov>.

End of Release