

Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge

Hunt Plan Amendment 2023

For 2023-2024 hunt season, the Service will open newly acquired 98 acres (geospatial) added to the Rapids Lake Unit to hunting of migratory game birds, upland game and big game in accordance with existing state, local, and refuge-specific regulations. This unit contains oak savanna, prairie, and upland forest habitats with access to Rapids Lake. Specific location information includes:

Township:	Section:	Range:
115 North	25	24 West
115 North	36	24 West
115 North	31	23 West

See Figure 1 for a map of the area and hunt unit.

The hunt program will continue to be administered as described in the Migratory Game Bird, Big Game and Upland Game 2017 – 2018 Hunt Plan and the 2021 – 2022 Hunt Plan Amendment in addition to this hunt plan amendment to account for acres added to the existing Rapid Lakes Unit. Opening these lands to hunting will provide additional opportunities for the public to enjoy wildlife-oriented recreation. There will be no changes to the code of federal regulations or the administration of the hunts including species, method of take or timing of hunting. Hunting opportunities for species already open to hunting include migratory game birds (coot, dove, duck, gallinule, geese, moorhen, rail, snipe, woodcock, crow), upland game (coyote, fox, grouse, opossum, partridge, pheasant, rabbit/hare, raccoon, skunk, squirrel, turkey) and big game (white-tail deer). Most hunting on the Rapids Lake Unit is in accordance with state regulations except for big game: white-tailed deer and upland game: coyote, crow, fox (red and gray), opossum, raccoon and skunk. White-tailed deer is open for archery only; however, is still open to firearms white-tailed deer hunting for refuge special hunts by permit where hunting locations and conditions can be controlled for safety. This includes the current Recruitment, Retention, and Reactivation (R3) “Learn to Hunt” program managed by Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. For the Learn to Hunt program and any additional special hunts for white-tailed deer where firearms may be used non-lead ammunition use is required. Fox, opossum, and raccoon can only be hunted from 1/2 hour before legal sunrise until legal sunset, from the beginning of the State season through the last day of February, on designated areas of the refuge; coyotes and skunks can only be hunted from 1/2 hour before legal sunrise until legal sunset, from September 1 through the last day of February, on designated areas of the refuge; and crows can only be hunted during the State-designated crow seasons, which occur between September 1 and the last day of February, on designated areas of the refuge. All hunting is lead-free.

Signatures

Submitted By:

Project Leader Signature and Date

Concurrence:

Refuge Supervisor Signature and Date

Approved:

Regional Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System Signature and date

Figure

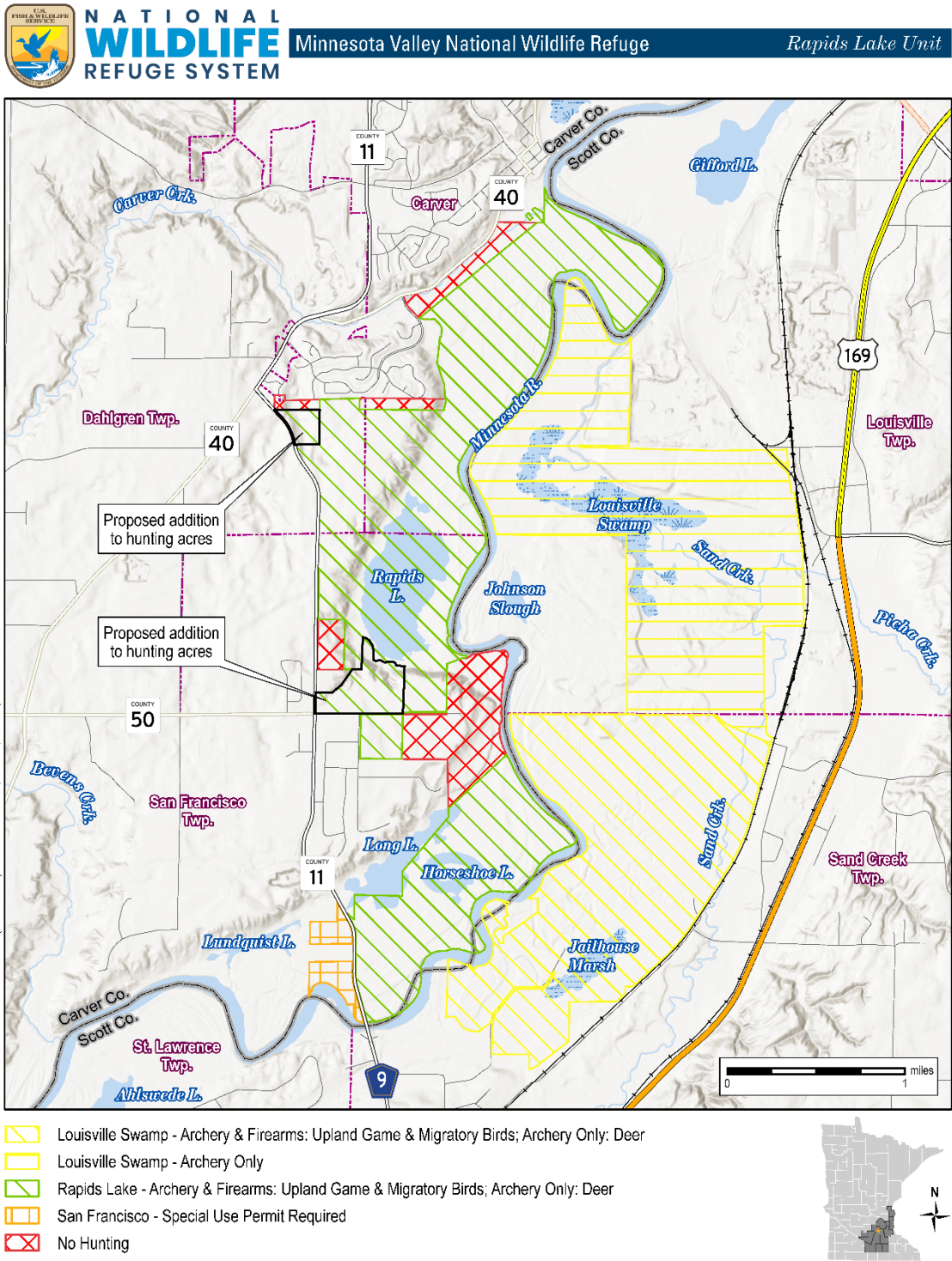


Figure 1: Map showing proposed additions to hunting acres