The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans” (National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997).

Chocow National Wildlife Refuge is an extremely important component for the conservation and enhancement of fish, wildlife, and plant resources within the National Wildlife Refuge System. Carefully managed hunting and fishing help maintain wildlife populations at levels compatible with their habitat, provide wholesome recreational opportunities, and permit the use of a valuable renewable resource.

The provisions listed within this publication supplement the general regulations that govern public use on National Wildlife Refuges as set forth in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) (http://www.ecfr.gov/). The public is encouraged to use Chocow National Wildlife Refuge for wildlife observation, photography, hunting, fishing, interpretation, and environmental education.

All other uses are prohibited unless specifically listed within this brochure or by posted regulatory sign. Additional information can be obtained by visiting the refuge’s visitor center.

The Refuge is open every day from one hour before sunrise until one hour after sunset.

Activities Allowed
- Wildlife Observation and Photography
- Wildlife Education and Interpretation
- Hunting in designated seasons and areas
- Fishing in designated seasons and areas
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Pets allowed on leash

Activities Not Allowed
- Harassing, feeding, driving, and/or baiting wildlife
- Swimming
- Night time activities
- Camping
- Open fires
- Collection, consumption, and/or removal of any and all objects, plants, or animals on the Refuge
- Release of plants or animals on the Refuge
- Target shooting
- Littering including the use of flagging or markers
- Learing personal property overnight or establishing permanent structures
- Metal detecting or searching for items of antiquity
- Off-road motorized vehicles and off-road biking
- Possession/use of alcoholic beverages
- Fishing tournaments
- Blocking gates with vehicles
- Horseback riding, domestic livestock
- Personal watercrafts, airboats, and hovercrafts

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Special Hunting/Fishing Regulations
- State bag limits, arms and ammunition, and other applicable State regulations apply. State hunting and fishing licenses are required on the Refuge in accordance with State regulations. All U.S. Coast Guard and State boating regulations will be enforced.

Hunts who fail to abide by any applicable regulations will be considered to be hunting without permission.

We recommend all user groups wear hunter orange during hunting seasons.

Hunting will not be permitted within 100 yards of the fenced-in Refuge work center area, hiking trail, or the Refuge boat ramp. Waterfowl sanctuary is open to all entry from March 1 through November 30.

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 321). Persons may only use approved nontoxic shot in #4 or smaller shotgun shells (see §32.2(k)), .22 caliber rimfire rifles, 17 caliber or legal archery equipment according to State regulations for federal lands. Firearms are prohibited in all federal facilities. Discharging a firearm for a purpose other than to take legal game animals during established hunting seasons is prohibited.

Only designated game species may be taken. Incidental species (beaver, nutria, feral hogs, raccoon, opossum and coyotes) may be taken during hunts with the weapon legal for those hunts. All other wildlife may not be molested in any manner.

We prohibit damaging trees or hunting from a tree that contains an inserted metal object (see §32.2(i)). Personal property must be removed from the Refuge each day except for one portable stand (including tripods and ground blinds) (see §27.83 of this chapter). The stand is required to be tagged with the State hunting license number permanently and legibly written on or attached to the stand. Stands left on the area do not reserve hunting locations. Portable stands may not be installed on the area prior to seven days before deer season opens, nor left longer than seven days after deer season closes. Stands not in compliance with these regulations may be confiscated and disposed of by USFWS.

Fishing is permitted year-around on Refuge waters except in the waterfowl sanctuary, which is closed from December 1 through March 1. Only fish, according to state regulations, may be taken, possessed, or transported.

Commercial Fishing – A Refuge Special Use Permit is required for commercial fishing.

Activities Allowed by Special Use Permit
- All commercial activities

Fishing: Year-round unless specified
- Sport fishing (rod/reel and pole/line only)
- Reptiles and Amphibians

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**Swallow Gnome**
- Squirrel, Rabbit
- Deer
- Coyote
- Beaver
- Nutria
- Opossum

**Other Species**
- Feral Hogs
- Taken as Incidental Species Only
- Taken as Incidental Species Only
- Taken as Incidental Species Only
- Taken as Incidental Species Only

**Fishing**
- Year-round unless specified
- All water bodies unless specified

**Reptiles and Amphibians**
- CLOSED
The blue goose, designed by “Ding” Darling, has become a symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System.