Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge

Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge, established in 1980, is located in the Tensas River Basin in northeastern Louisiana. The refuge is comprised of extensive bottomland hardwood areas, streams, lakes, and wetlands that support a tremendous diversity of wildlife. Permits are required for hunting, fishing, and/or boating on this refuge. Permits are required for all activities on the Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge System as set forth in Title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service brochure "Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge Hunting and Fishing Regulations, 2019-2020" mentioned below.

General Regulations

Hunting and fishing regulations are designed to protect the sportman and wildlife populations. The regulations below supersede the general regulations in the National Wildlife Refuge System Act and Title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). All refuge users are expected to be familiar with applicable State regulations subject to the following conditions:

Required Permits

Account Public Use Permit (Required for all non-quota fishermen 16 years of age and older)

An Annual Public Use Permit is required for participation in any refuge hunting or fishing season. This permit allows users to participate in all refuge hunts (except Quota Hunts) and other permissible activities.

Required Permits

Motor Vehicles and ATVs

All motor vehicles are restricted to normal passenger vehicle roads. Roads and trails may be closed to vehicle use due to adverse conditions. We allow ATV travel on designated roads, hunting and/or fishing access only from October 1 to February 29 by permit only. ATV travel is prohibited on refuge roads. We define an ATV as an off-road vehicle not legal for highway use designed to travel on roads, trails, or designated off road areas. UTVs (side-by-sides) are also prohibited. The speed limit on all refuge roads and ATV trails is 25 MPH unless otherwise posted. ATV trails may be no more than 3 or 4 wheels, having a seat designed to be straddled by the operator and handlebars for steering control with factory specifications not to exceed the following: 750 pounds, 85 inches long, 48 inches wide and tires no larger than 26” x 12” with maximum 1” height and maximum allowable tire pressure of 15 PSI. The use of UTVs (side-by-sides) is prohibited. The speed limit on all refuge roads and ATV trails may only be used by 4 wheels until 2 hours after legal sunset. No trailers may be pulled behind an ATV. Using an ATV to travel off of a designated trail in order to retrieve game, or for any other reason is strictly prohibited. Non-motorized bicycles are permitted on roads and maintained trails.

Check-Out Portion: This portion must be completed daily and put in a permit box prior to the day’s activity.

Check-In Portion: This top portion must be completely filled out and put in a permit box prior to the day’s activity.

Check-Out Portion: This middle portion must be carried by each person on the refuge. To complete the self-clearing process, both front and back of the check- out portion must be completed. Please completely fill out the card with information including whether or not game was harvested, hours spent, species hunted and method used. This completed portion must be put in a permit box immediately upon exiting the refuge at the end of each day.

Trotlines

Trotlines must be attached with a length of cotton line that extends into the water, must be tended at least once every 24 hours and reset when exposed by wading water. Trotlines must be removed when not in use.

Specific Fishing Regulations

Sport Fishing

State creel limits and regulations apply.

Tentlimes

Tentlimes must be attached with a length of cotton line that extends into the water, must be tended at least once every 24 hours and reset when exposed by wading water. Tentlimes must be removed when not in use.

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Trotlines must be attached with a length of cotton line that extends into the water, must be tended at least once every 24 hours and reset when exposed by wading water. Trotlines must be removed when not in use.
Use or possession of any type of material to be used as targeting or trail markers and vane, except bright corks, can be used to mark trails.

Direct supervision means that the person being supervised is within a normal audible voice range and in direct line of sight of the supervising person at all times while hunting. The supervising adult is responsible for preventing the youth from engaging in conduct that would constitute a violation of refuge regulations. Persons supervising youth hunters are responsible for violations of laws and regulations committed by the youth hunter(s) they are supervising while on the refuge. Foul language is prohibited.

Physically Challenged Hunters

Hunters under 60 years of age who wish to use the refuge’s Physically Challenged ATV trails must possess LDWF’s Physically Challenged Hunter Permit. More information about this program can be found at http://www.crt.louisiana.gov/permit/physically-challenged-hunter-permit. Hunters under 60 years of age may use the trails without LDWF’s Physically Challenged Hunter Permit. Physically challenged users are acting on behalf of one person along to assist them. Physically challenged users are encouraged to consult with refuge staff for available options and alternatives that may make their visit more enjoyable.

Use or possession of alcohol while hunting or fishing is prohibited.

Tree Stands and Ground Blinds

Do hunters may not leave deer stands unattended before the first day of the archery season and must remove their stands by the last day of the refuge archery season. Each hunter hunting during the archery season may only bring one stand. If left unattended, the stand must be clearly marked with the name and address of the owner. Portable stands may be removed from trees daily and free-standing stands must be placed in a non-hunting position when unattended.

State tagging system, bag limits, and regulations apply unless otherwise specified. All deer and turkey harvested on the refuge must be validated according to state regulations by calling 844-522-4255 or going online (https://la-web.s3licensing.com), even if checked at a manned check station.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hunt</th>
<th>Season Dates</th>
<th>Bag Limit</th>
<th>Regulations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small Game-Squirrel and Rabbit (without dogs)</td>
<td>October 5 – December 31, 2019</td>
<td>No small game hunting in closed areas.</td>
<td>2019-2020 Hunting Seasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Game-Squirrel and Rabbit (without dogs)</td>
<td>January 1, 2020 – February 29, 2020</td>
<td>Solid hunter orange or blue cap required.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nuisance Hunter(s)</td>
<td>May 1 – September 30, 2019</td>
<td>No more than 3 dogs per hunting party.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Waterfowl (Ducks, Stipps, and Coots)</td>
<td>Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays of regular waterfowl season until 2 pm</td>
<td>No hunting in closed areas or areas designated as no waterfowl hunting areas (see map). Constructing and using a permanent or put blinds is prohibited. Portable blinds and decoys must be removed daily by 5 pm.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground Squirrel, Opossum, and Fox (without dogs)</td>
<td>October 5 – February 29, 2020</td>
<td>No more than 3 dogs per hunting party.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey Youth</td>
<td>Saturday, Sunday prior to State season until 2 pm</td>
<td>Limit 1 gobbler per season, 2 gobblers per season</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Physically Challenged 

Hunters under 60 years of age who wish to use the refuge’s Physically Challenged ATV trails must possess LDWF’s Physically Challenged Hunter Permit. More information about this program can be found at http://www.crt.louisiana.gov/permit/physically-challenged-hunter-permit. Hunters under 60 years of age may use the trails without LDWF’s Physically Challenged Hunter Permit. Physically challenged users are acting on behalf of one person along to assist them. Physically challenged users are encouraged to consult with refuge staff for available options and alternatives that may make their visit more enjoyable.

Use or possession of alcohol while hunting or fishing is prohibited.

Trapping

No incidentals species may be harvested with weapons legal for the day. No incidental species may be harvested during nighttime raccoon hunts. NO feral hogs may be taken with the aid of dogs.
2019-2020 Hunting Seasons - continued

State tagging system, bag limits, and regulations apply unless otherwise specified.

All deer and turkey harvested on the refuge must be validated according to state regulations by calling 844/522 4325 or online (https://la-web.s3licensing.com/), even if checked at a manned check station.

**Deer-Staff**

**Deer-Youth**

**Deer-All deer and turkey harvested on the refuge must be validated according to state regulations by calling 844/522 4325 State tagging system, bag limits, and regulations apply unless otherwise specified.**

**Hunt Dates**

Jul. 1-31, 2019

Dec. 7, 2019

Jan. 1, 2020

Dec. 7, 2019

Dec. 1-31, 2019

Dec. 7, 2019

Oct. 26-27, 2019

Dec. 1-31, 2019

Oct. 26-27, 2019

**Bag Limit**

Limit 1 deer per day, antlerless or antlered only

Limit 1 deer per day, antlerless or antlered only

Limit 1 deer per day, antlerless or antlered only

Limit 2

Limit 2

Limit 2

Limit 2

Limit 1

Limit 1

Limit 1

**Regulations**

Closed during refuge-wide Youth and Quota Modern Firearm deer hunts. Use and/or possession of pods, chemical drugs or explosive tips is prohibited. Hunters using archery equipment during the Antlerless Gun hunt must follow additional regulations (see below: Longbow, compound bow, and crossbow or any bow drawn, held, or released by mechanical means are legal means of take. Persons possessing, transporting or carrying firearms on the refuge must comply with all provisions of state and local laws.

Archery equipment, primitive weapon, muzzleloader, or modern firearm are authorized methods of take. Scouting in, hunting in and/or shooting into or across reforested or closed areas is prohibited. Hunters using primitive weapons or muzzleloaders must follow all modern firearms regulations (no hunting in reforested areas). Hunters using archery equipment must follow all modern firearm regulations (including all hunter orange or blue pink requirements and no hunting in reforested areas). All hunters must wear and display 400 square inches of solid hunter orange or blue pink vest and a solid hunter orange or blue pink cap when in the field. Deer harvested during this hunt must be self-cleared using the orange Self-Clearing permit (See Self-Clearing Permit section). Adult may supervise no more than 1 youth. All other public use is prohibited.

A valid permit is required for the Deer Quota Hunt in addition to an Annual Public Use Permit, a Self-Clearing Permit, and valid state license and tags. Please see application instructions below. Only those persons with valid Quota Modern Firearm permits may be present on the Refuge during the Quota Modern Firearm hunts. Youth ages 8-17 may apply but MUST be grouped with a person 18 years of age or older who will supervise and be responsible for any violations and regulations committed by the youth. Each adult may only supervise one youth. Primitive weapon, muzzleloader, or modern firearms are the only authorized methods of take. Scouting in, hunting in and/or shooting into or across reforested or closed areas is prohibited. Hunters using primitive weapons or muzzleloaders must follow all modern firearms regulations (no hunting in reforested areas). All hunters must wear and display 400 square inches of solid hunter orange or blue pink vest and a solid hunter orange or blue pink cap when in the field. Deer harvested during the Nov. 23-30 Quota hunt must be self-cleared using the orange Self-Clearing permit (See Self-Clearing Permit section). Deer harvested during the Dec. 14-15 Quota hunt must be checked at a manned check station on the first day (7 am-7 pm) and second morning (7 am-2 pm). Manned check stations include: Tendal, Crossroads, Red Barn, Sharkey, McLemore and Crystal. Outside of these hours, deer must be self-cleared using the orange Self-Clearing Permit (See Self-Clearing Permit section).

**How to Apply**

All Deer Quota Hunts require an application to be completed and processed online through iSportsman. Please see the website for complete instructions. Online Hunters may apply online at https://tensas.sportsman.net. Every applicant must register for an account which will enable them to check on their status and receive notifications. Please provide an email address when signing up.

The application period for deer quota hunts will open on Monday, July 1 and will remain open through Friday, Sep. 6. The drawing will take place the week of Sep. 16. Hunters will be notified of their drawing status no later than 11:59 pm on Friday, Sep. 20, 2019. Payment: If drawn for the hunt, there is no additional fee. Hunters will be notified of their drawing status no later than 11:59 pm on Friday, Sep. 20, 2019. The drawing will take place the week of Sep. 16. Please provide an email address when signing up.

Each hunter may only apply one time for one hunt. Submission of any person’s name more than one time will result in disqualification.

Adult may supervise no more than 1 youth. All other public use is prohibited.

**Primitive Weapon Definition**

Use and/or possession of pods, chemical drugs or explosive tips is prohibited. Hunters using archery equipment during the Antlerless Gun hunt must follow additional regulations (see below: Longbow, compound bow, and crossbow or any bow drawn, held, or released by mechanical means are legal means of take. Persons possessing, transporting or carrying firearms on the refuge must comply with all provisions of state and local laws.

1. Rifles or pistols, .44 caliber minimum, or shotguns 10 gauge or smaller, all of which must load exclusively from the muzzle or cap and ball cylinder, use black powder or approved substitute only, take ball or bullet projectile only, including sabotged bullets, including primitive firearms known as “muzzle” primitive firearms.

2. Single shot, breech loading rifles, .55 caliber or larger, having an exposed hammer that use metallic cartridges loaded either with black powder or modern smokeless powder.

3. Single shot, breech loading shotguns, 10 gauge or smaller, having an exposed hammer, loaded with ribbed slug. USE AND/OR POSSESSION OF RIBBED SLUG IS PROHIBITED.

**Dear-All Time Wheelchair User**

This hunt is held in conjunction with the Tensas River Refuge Association and the NWTF Wheelin’ Sportsmen program and requires an application to be submitted to the refuge for the lottery drawing.

Contact the refuge for more information 844/522 4325. Areas within 250 yards of the Closed Area boundary are closed to all public access and hunting on the days of those hunts.

**Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge**

Legend

- Visitor Center
- Refuge Boundary
- Closed Area
- No Waterfowl Hunting Area
- Checked-In Premises
- Refuge Parking
- Private Inholdings
- Manned Check-Station/Clearing Permit Stations
- Self-Clearing Permit Stations
- Roads
- ATV trails
- Handicap ATV Trails
- Boat Launch
- Walking Trail
- Wildlife Drive

South Exit (NE 26): Game, USGS, Interpretive Center In, NE 26 Exit (NE 26): Refuge Office, Visitor Center, Campground Exit (NE 26): Refuge Office, Visitor Center, Campground