



U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
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NEWS

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Hunting and Trapping Closure and Restrictions Announced for Skilak Wildlife Recreation Area.

The Kenai National Wildlife Refuge today announced that at 12:01 a.m. November 10, 2013, the following permanent Federal hunting and trapping closures and restrictions for the Skilak Wildlife Recreation Area will take effect. This closure supports the enhanced wildlife viewing and environmental education and interpretation within Skilak Wildlife Recreation Area that has been in place since 1987 and maintains the same hunting and trapping restrictions that have been in place since the development of the 2007 Skilak Wildlife Recreation Area Management Plan and Environmental Assessment. This action was taken in response to the March 2013 Alaska Board of Game action to open this area to firearms hunting of wolf, coyote and lynx. This action and notice to the public is taken pursuant to federal regulations at 50 CFR 36.42 and will be published in the Federal Register on November 4, 2013.

The closure regulation reads as follows:

“The Skilak Wildlife Recreation Area (Skilak Loop Management Area), a 44,000-acre area of the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge), is bound by a line beginning at the easternmost junction of the Sterling Highway and the Skilak Loop Road (Mile 58), then due south to the south bank of the Kenai River, then southerly along the south bank of the Kenai River to its confluence with Skilak Lake, then westerly along the north shore of Skilak Lake to Lower Skilak Campground, then northerly along the Lower Skilak campground road and the Skilak Loop Road to its westernmost junction with the Sterling Highway (Mile 75.1), then easterly along the Sterling Highway to the point of origin.

The Skilak Wildlife Recreation Area (Skilak Loop Management Area) is closed to hunting and trapping, except that moose may be taken by permit (issued by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game) only, and small game may be taken from October 1 through March 1 by falconry and bow and arrow only, and by standard .22 rimfire or shotgun in that portion of the area west of a line from the access road from the Sterling Highway to Kelly Lake, the Seven Lakes Trail, and the access road from Engineer Lake to Skilak Lake Road, and north of the Skilak Lake Road, during each weekend from November 1 to December 31, including the Friday following Thanksgiving, by youth hunters 16 years old or younger accompanied by a licensed hunter 18 years old or older who has successfully completed a certified hunter education course, or was

born on or before January 1, 1986, if the youth has not. State of Alaska bag limit regulations apply.”

“This action makes permanent the hunting and trapping restrictions that were in place in the Skilak Wildlife Recreation Area under State of Alaska hunting and trapping regulations prior to 2013, and was needed to ensure consistency with our goals and objectives under approved refuge management plans for the area” said Deputy Refuge Manager Steve Miller in announcing the action. The Skilak Wildlife Recreation Area was first designated by the Refuge in 1985 as a special area to be managed with an emphasis on providing the public opportunities for wildlife viewing and environmental education and interpretation.

For additional information, please contact the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge office during regular business hours at (907) 262-7021.

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 www.fws.gov. Connect with our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/usfws, follow our tweets at www.twitter.com/usfwshq, watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwshq>.

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