

# News Release

Midwest Region

Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge

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Contact: Neil Vincent, Park Ranger, (618) 998-5954

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 27, 2014

### Changes to the Refuges Controlled Waterfowl Hunt for the 2014/15 Season

Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge is proposing modifications to the Controlled Waterfowl Hunt. These modifications are due to the results in operational changes to the program. This hunting program has been administered by the Friends of Crab Orchard Refuge since the 2001 waterfowl season. Changes in the National Friends Policy prohibits friends organizations from administering these type of programs, so beginning with the 2014/15 waterfowl season the Refuge will assume the administration of the waterfowl blinds.

The location of the daily draw will also be changing from the Refuge's Visitor Center to the Crab Orchard Lake Campground. The draw will continue to take place at 5:15 am Wednesday through Sunday. The Refuge is proposing to charge a daily fee of \$30.00 per blind with a maximum of 4 hunters per blind. Also hunters with an America the Beautiful Senior or Access pass will receive a 50% discount. Generated revenue will continue to help the Refuge with repairs and maintenance of the waterfowl blinds and other recreation areas on the Refuge.

Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge participates in the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act Fee Program. The majority of revenue collected in this Program is returned to the Refuge and is used to fund backlogged maintenance and visitor-related projects that provide direct benefit to Refuge visitors. Recent past fee-funded projects include: rehabilitation of campsites, a new visitor contact facility at the Crab Orchard Lake Campground, and the expansion and improvement of parking areas at Devils Kitchen and Little Grassy Lake boat ramps.

You can find copies of the proposed fee plan and analysis on our website at

[http://www.fws.gov/refuge/crab\\_orchard](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/crab_orchard). If you have comments, questions or require more information contact Neil Vincent at (618) 998-5954.

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](http://www.fws.gov). Connect with our Facebook page, follow our tweets, watch our YouTube Channel, and download photos from our Flickr page.

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# **Proposal Recreation Fee Program Addition**

## **Crab Orchard National Wildlife and Fish Refuge U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 3**

**Site.** Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge

**States.** Illinois

**Proposed Modification.** We are proposing to add a daily rental fee for waterfowl blinds to the Refuge's current recreation fee program. This fee activity has occurred on the Refuge for several years, but has recently been administered by the Friends of Crab Orchard. Changes to the Fish and Wildlife Services Friends policy prohibit Friends from collecting these fees. This modification will allow the Refuge to retain the revenue collected from this fee activity to assist with the administration of this activity as well as providing a quality service for the Refuge's waterfowl hunting program.

**Proposed Fee.** A daily fee of \$30.00

Individuals with Interagency Senior or Access Passes will receive a 50% discount.

**Justification.** There will be cost involved in managing this hunting program; an exact cost at this time is difficult to derive. However, staff involved include visitor service staff (e.g., daily fee collection, publications, hunting statistics, answering question, hunter interactions), maintenance staff (e.g., blind repair, mowing, weed control, habitat restoration), biology staff (e.g., habitat restoration), and law enforcement staff (e.g., monitoring, signage and discipline). The Refuge receives no special allocation to cover these costs.

**Public Notification and Involvement.** A news release will be issued in October 2014 notifying the public the location of the blinds and how to participate in the daily draw.

**Anticipated Income.** We anticipate an income of \$5,000.

**Planned Use for Revenue.** We plan to use the revenue to upgrade existing waterfowl blinds as well as some habitat restoration within the hunting area.



## Fee Analysis and Justification

### U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Recreation Site Selection/Fee Determination Analysis

Site: Crab Orchard NWR

Comparison of: Daily Waterfowl Hunting Blind Fee

Date of last fee change: New Fee

(Complete form for each type of fee e.g., entrance, hunting, fishing, ATV, campground, special permit fee, and other use fees.)

	Name of FWS Facility, Service Provided	COMPARABLES		
	Crab Orchard NWR	Union County Refuge (IDNR)	Horseshoe Lake (IDNR)	
Quality of facility as compared to FWS facility listed (S = Superior, A = Average, I = Inferior)		A	A	
Distance (miles from FWS Unit)	N/A	35	45	
Daily Blind Fee	\$30.00 per blind (4 –hunters maximum)	\$10.00 per hunter (2-hunters max.)	\$10.00 per hunter (2-hunters max.)	
DISCOUNTS:				
Seniors	50%	0%	0%	
Disabled	50%	0%	0%	
Services/Amenities				

Conclusion/Recommendation (Use back of form if necessary):

Fee for this activity will be: ***\$30.00 per blind***

- Has the refuge conducted public outreach to gauge the level of public acceptance? **Yes**
- When does the site anticipate beginning to collecting the new/modified fees? **November 27, 2014.**
- Provide a detailed explanation of how these new fees will be collected [i.e., Staffed entrance station or visitor center desk, under cooperative agreement or concessions contract, using automated fee equipment, collaboration with other Federal land-management agencies, use of National Reservation contract, use of pipe safes and honor systems, use of automated entry gates, etc.] ***A daily drawing will be collected each morning of the hunt at the Crab Orchard Campground. Fee will be collected by Refuge staff as well as Refuge Volunteers..***
- If the new fee is to be collected by a contractor or partner, does the site have an agreement or contract? **N/A**
- Have you identified a fee manager/coordinator? **YES**

Name: Neil Vincent

Series/Grade: GS-025-09

Phone: 618-997-3344

6. What has your site done to make the public aware of the plans for new or increased fees? **Published a news release in the local and surrounding area newspapers.**

7. Will there be any negative public reaction to the proposed fee changes? If yes, please explain in detail. No

8. If your program involves startup of a new fee operation, please answer the following:

a) Additional FTE's? **No** If so, how many?

What job series?

What grade?

Permanent, seasonal or term?

b) What infrastructure improvements (new construction or rehab) are needed? **2 Blind we be rehabbed**

Has planning been initiated? Yes

What is the time frame for construction completion? October 2014

c) What is the estimated cost of infrastructure improvements? **\$3000.00 (funds donated by the Friends of Crab Orchard.**

d) What additional supplies and equipment are needed, such as cash registers, safes, etc.?

Provide specific items and amounts.

e) Totals for "Non-Recurring Start-Up" Costs:

Recurring Personal Services	\$2,000.00 (staff salaries)
Infrastructure Needs	\$
Capital Equipment	\$
Supplies	\$200.00 (maps and regulations)
Other	\$

f) Grand Total for "Non-Recurring Start-Up" Costs \$2,200.00

9. Annual Cost of Fee Collection

(Recurring , Non-Recurring Operations and Capital costs)

a) Estimated Recurring Operations FY 2015

Personal Services	\$2,000.00
Supplies	\$200.00
Other - Services	\$
Other - Util., Vehicle., Travel	\$
Total	\$2,200.00