

CHARLES M. RUSSELL AND U.L. BEND NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

2020 HUNTING REGULATIONS

For up to date information and maps visit our refuge website: http://www.fws.gov/refuge/charles_m_russell/

General Information

Mechanized Vehicles

- Off-road travel is prohibited. (This includes shoreline travel and travel to retrieve game.)
- To limit erosion and to protect plants and wildlife, **all mechanized vehicles** (with the exception of snowmobiles) **are only permitted on numbered Refuge roads that are designated as open.**
- Snowmobiles are prohibited on all refuge lands and roads.
- Travel on closed roads is illegal.
- In winter conditions, snowmobiles and mechanized vehicles are allowed on the frozen ice of Fort Peck Reservoir below Soda Creek Bay.
- Vehicles may be driven, using the most direct route, up to 100 yards from an open road to establish and utilize temporary overnight campsites, except in designated wilderness areas.

All-terrain Vehicles

- ATVs include motorcycles, quadracycles, UTVs, etc.
- In order to operate on open Refuge roads, ATV operators must follow all mechanized vehicle regulations above, as well as the following regulations:

Montana resident ATV owners

- ATVs belonging to Montana residents must be street legal and must have a license plate, brake lights, and rear-view mirror.
- Operators must possess a proper driver's license

Non-resident ATV owners

- ATVs must be legally licensed from the state of origin. (If you can't license an ATV in your state, contact MT Fish Wildlife & Parks to get a temporary permit.)
- Operators must possess a proper driver's license.

Bicycles

- Bicycling is permitted year-round, but is allowed only on numbered roads, including seasonally closed roads that are numbered. Bicycles are not allowed in UL Bend designated wilderness areas.

Hunting

- Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on National Wildlife Refuge System lands 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 32).
- Firearms may ONLY be fired on the Refuge in conjunction with a legal hunt for which the hunter is licensed.
- Archery target shooting is allowed during archery season. All other target shooting is prohibited on the Refuge.
- Hunting on the Refuge is subject to Federal and State regulations. Consult all current Federal and State regulations prior to hunting on the Refuge. A Montana hunting license is required.
- Refuge specific hunting regulations are available on the Refuge website or at the Refuge headquarters and field stations by May 1 of each year.
- Hunting on the Refuge is permitted for bighorn sheep, coyotes, elk, mule deer, pronghorn, waterfowl, white-tailed deer, and upland game birds.
- All other wildlife is protected; this includes, but is not limited to, badger, bears, bobcat, cottontail rabbits, jack rabbits, moose, mountain lions, prairie dogs, snakes, wolves and other wildlife.
- The use or possession of alcoholic beverages while hunting is prohibited.
- Trapping is not allowed on the Refuge.
- The use of artificial lights to attract, search for, or spot wildlife is prohibited.
- Trail cameras are not allowed on the refuge.
- Youth hunts as described in the Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks Regulations are valid on the refuge.
- Non-motorized game carriers are allowed on the Refuge except on UL Bend designated wilderness areas.

Big Game Hunting

- Big game hunting seasons and harvest quotas on the Refuge may be more restrictive than State regulations. Check Refuge regulations, available on the Refuge web site or at the Refuge headquarters and field stations by May 1 of each year, for specific information.
- Portable tree stands and ground blinds are permitted. All portable tree stands and blinds must have the user's name, address, phone number, and automated licensing system (ALS) number visibly marked on the stand/blind. Tree stand identification must be visible from the ground. Ground blind identification must be visible from the outside of the blind.
- Each hunter is limited to three portable tree stands and/or ground blinds in aggregate. Portable tree stands or ground blinds can be installed on August 1 and must be removed by December 15 of each year. The construction or use of any permanent tree stand, ladder, or blind and the use of nails, wire, or screw-in spikes with stands, is prohibited.

Camping

- Any camping unit and/or party is limited to 14 days within any 30 day period. Any property including camping equipment, boats, trailers, and other personal property left unattended for a period in excess of 72 hours is subject to removal.
- Select a safe place for campfires. Build only small fires, and make certain that your fire is completely out when you leave. Campfires must be attended at all times.
- Please check at any Refuge office or the Refuge web site for fire restrictions during dry periods.
- Collection and use of dead and downed wood for campfires is allowed on the Refuge. Cutting of standing timber, live or dead, is prohibited.
- All human waste, including tissue paper, must be buried immediately.
- Dumping of RV tanks (gray or black water) on the Refuge is prohibited.
- Help keep the land and wildlife healthy. Pack out all trash, and restore your campsite to a natural condition when you leave.

Developed Campgrounds

- Developed camping areas near the Refuge are available at James Kipp Recreation Area (managed by the Bureau of Land Management Monument Office, Fort Benton, MT 406.622.4000 or 877.256.3252), Crooked Creek, Devils Creek, Forchette Bay, The Pines, Nelson Creek, McGuire Creek, Rock Creek, Fort Peck Recreation Areas (all managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Peck, MT 406.526.3411) and Hell Creek State Park/Recreation Area (managed by the State of Montana, Hell Creek State Park Manager 406.557.2362).

Dispersed Camping

- Camping outside of a developed campground is allowed on the Refuge, unless the area is designated as closed, following the regulations below.
- Camping with a vehicle must take place within 100 yards of numbered roads that are designated as open.
- Direct access by mechanized vehicles from a numbered route is permitted to establish and utilize temporary overnight campsites within 100 yards of numbered roads designated as open. Select the most direct route to avoid damage to soils and vegetation.

Backcountry Camping

- Backpacking and horse camping are allowed on the Refuge, except in closed areas. For more information, contact a Refuge office.

Hiking and Horseback Riding

- Back-country travel, whether by foot or on horseback, requires special preparations and precautions. Drinking water is generally unavailable.
- Back-country travelers should be familiar with the isolated character of the Refuge and should be prepared for emergencies. Weather conditions can change rapidly – be prepared. Expertise with map and compass is recommended.
- Only certified noxious-weed-seed-free forage is allowed on the Refuge to prevent the spread of noxious weeds. Contact a Montana State University county extension office for a list of approved forage vendors.
- All horses, mules, llamas, and other types of pack animals must be tied, hobbled, or confined while in camp. Pens are provided at some Army Corps of Engineers Recreation sites.

Alcoholic Beverages

- Possession and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages by persons under the age of 21 is prohibited. Buying, selling, providing, distributing, or allowing underage persons to possess or consume alcohol is prohibited.

Collection of Natural Items and Artifacts

- Collection of antlers and animal skulls is illegal. These items are an important source of renewable calcium for elk, deer, and other wildlife on the Refuge.
- The picking or harvesting of any berries, mushrooms, or plants (including edible) is prohibited on the refuge.
- Removing any natural items such as fossils, rocks, dried wood, and black diamond willow from the Refuge is prohibited.
- There are many interesting historic buildings on the Refuge. Please enjoy them as they are, and do not remove parts of the buildings or artifacts found within or around them.

Aircraft

- The use of aircraft over Refuge lands to disturb, harass, drive, pursue, rally or hunt wildlife or to locate wounded animals is strictly prohibited.
- It is illegal to operate unmanned aircraft (drones) on or over refuge lands
- Aircraft may not land on Refuge lands. Landing of fixed-winged aircraft is only allowed on the surface of Fort Peck Reservoir in the Landing Area and in Landing Zones that are defined in the Charles M. Russell NWR Guide Map.

Regulations

All information pertains to the **Refuge portions** of Hunting Districts (HD) for deer and elk 410, 417, 621, 622, 631, 632, 652, and 700; antelope 480, 481, 620, 650, and 700; and for bighorn sheep 482, 622, and 680. These regulations are **in addition** to state regulations. All hunting licenses and permits are issued by Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks. No additional licenses or permits are needed from CMR or UL Bend Refuge. Youth hunts as described in the Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Regulations are valid on CMR. All wildlife species not specifically listed in these regulations are protected. This includes badger, bear, bobcat, cottontail rabbits, jack rabbits, moose, mountain lions, prairie dogs, snakes, wolves and other wildlife. Trapping is not allowed on the Refuge.

ANTELOPE:

State Licenses are valid on CMR for HD 480, 481, 620, 630, 650, and 700
Season dates same as State season.

BIGHORN SHEEP:

State Licenses are valid on CMR for HD 482, 622, and 680.
Season dates same as State season.

BIRD HUNTING

- Waterfowl, upland game, turkey, and webless migratory bird hunting is allowed in accordance with State seasons and limits.
- Hunters must use and may possess only approved non-toxic shot in the field for all shotgun hunting on the Refuge.
- The use of dogs for hunting waterfowl and upland game birds is permitted. Dogs must be under the control of their owner at all times and cannot be left unattended at any time.

COYOTE HUNTING:

Coyote hunting is allowed from the first day of the antelope rifle season through March 1. Coyotes may be hunted only from 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset (no permit required). Coyotes cannot be hunted with the aid of dogs, aircraft, or mechanized vehicles.

ELK:

State elk hunting Permits are valid on CMR for HD 410, 417, 621, 622, 631, 632, and 700. B Licenses are valid on CMR with exceptions below.

State Permits 004-00, 410-02, 620-20, 698-00, 699-00 and 007-00 are NOT valid on CMR. Shoulder Seasons are NOT valid on CMR.

Archery Only – Season dates same as State season.

Rifle – Season dates same as State season.

HD 417 and 652 - General Elk License valid per state regulations.

MULE DEER:

HD 410, 417, 621, 622, 631, 632, and 700, Either-sex with General Deer A License. Mule deer B licenses are NOT valid on the CMR.

Archery Only – Season dates same as State season.

Rifle - Season dates same as State season.

HD 652, State Permit required with General Deer A License. Mule deer B licenses are NOT valid on the CMR.

Archery Only – Season dates same as State season.

Rifle - Season dates same as State season.

WHITE-TAILED DEER:

HD 410, 417, 621, 622, 631, 632, 652 and 700, Either-sex with General Deer A License. B Licenses are valid on CMR.

Archery Only – Season dates same as State season.

Rifle - Season dates same as State season.

All wildlife species not specifically listed in these regulations are protected. This includes, but is not limited to, badger, bobcat, bear, cottontail rabbits, jack rabbits, moose, mountain lions, prairie dogs, snakes, wolves and other wildlife.

Additional Information:**Accessible Wildlife Viewing and Hunting Blinds**

The Refuge has two hunting/viewing blinds available for use. Both of these blinds are open to the general public with the understanding that visitors with disabilities have priority use. They are available on a first come, first serve basis. For detailed information, visit http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Charles_M_Russell/visit/visitor_activities/Accessible_Blinds.html

- The Hell Creek Blind is available for use year-round and located in the bottoms of Hell Creek, approximately twenty-five miles north of Jordan, MT, close to Hell Creek State Park. For more information on the Hell Creek Blind, call the Sand Creek Field Station or check the Refuge web site.
- The Manning Blind is available for use year-round and located along the Missouri River (Manning Bottoms) on the western side of the Refuge and is approximately 10 miles east of Highway 191 and the Fred Robinson Bridge. For more information on the Manning Blind, call the Sand Creek Field Station or check the Refuge web site.

Accessibility Information

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs and activities of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is available to all individuals regardless of physical or mental ability. Dial 711 for a free connection to the State transfer relay service for TTY and voice calls to and from the speech and hearing impaired. For more information or to address accessibility needs, please contact the Refuge staff at 406 / 538 8706, or the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Equal Opportunity, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.