U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Refuge Big Game Hunt

Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge

Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge allows hunting of deer, feral hogs, and turkeys through an annual big game hunt.

These hunts help maintain wildlife populations at a level compatible with available habitat and provide recreational opportunities. Three general hunts and one youth hunt will be conducted this year.

2016 Hunt Dates

Youth Hunt	November 11–13
General Hunt 1	November 18–20
General Hunt 2	December 2–4
General Hunt 3	December 9–11

Prior to hunting, each hunter must participate in hunter orientation. Orientations (roughly 45 minutes) will be held at Refuge Headquarters on hunt weekends at 12:00 pm on Friday. The Youth Hunt has an extra orientation available at 10:00 am on Saturday. Hunters shall attend only the orientation of their weekend hunt. Each hunt begins at 1:00 pm on Friday and extends through legal shooting hours on Sunday.

Changes to 2016 Hunts

1. Hunters may no longer attend any orientation prior to their hunt. They may only attend the orientation at the beginning of their weekend hunt. Adults who are drawn for the Big Game Hunt and who will supervise a youth hunter, may not count the Youth Hunt orientation as their Big Game Hunt orientation. The adult must return during his/her Friday Big Game Hunt orientation to earn credit.

2. Hunters will now only check in and check out from their hunt unit entrance gate. A check in/check out box is present by the gate for hunters to record every time they enter and leave.

3. Standby Hunting. Hunters interested in potential standby hunting opportunities must be present at orientation for each of the weekends they want to hunt. The fee is $80. A drawing will be necessary if more than one hunter is interested in the same location.

4. Hunt permits are ***not*** transferable.

5. A skinning and quartering area is ***not*** available at Headquarters.

6. Regarding the General Hunt, one non-hunting guest per hunter is allowed.

7. Guests may assist in game retrieval or field dressing activities.

This guest must remain with and be in sight of permitted hunter during scouting and hunting days. (This does not apply to Persons with Disabilities Hunt).

General Hunt

Hunters may shoot turkeys, feral hogs, and deer (either sex) may be taken. Each hunter is allowed to take only one buck (3 points or more). Refer to *Texas Parks and Wildlife Outdoor Annual* under "County Listings" for additional restrictions).

Youth Hunt

Youth hunters under the age of 17 may apply through the Texas Parks and Wildlife online drawing system. There are no application or permit fees for youth hunters. Each youth must be supervised during the hunt by a licensed hunter age 18 or older. During the youth hunt, turkeys, feral hogs, and deer (either sex) may be taken. Each youth hunter is allowed to take only one buck (3 points or more). (Refer to *Texas Parks and Wildlife Outdoor Annual* under "County Listings" for additional restrictions).

Hunters with Disabilities

Call the refuge for information regarding options available for youth and adults possessing a valid proof of disability as defined by Texas Parks and Wildlife hunting regulations.

Permit Process

Be sure to check the Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge hunting page and review the "Hunt Unit Descriptions" for details. This hunt season, permits will be issued through a partnership with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. All applications and payment must be made online here: tpwd.texas.gov/drawnhunts. When searching for Balcones Canyonlands NWR hunt, select *Browse Hunt Catalog*, then select the *By Area* tab. Drawings and award notifications for each hunt will be conducted at different times. Please consult the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department hunt application web page.

Hunt Regulations

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).

Hunters are assigned tracts to hunt. In some cases, hunters must park at a specific location but are allowed to walk around within their assigned tracts. Areas closed to hunting will be designated on maps and marked with signs and/or barricades.

Portable hunting stands are allowed. They may be set up on the last scouting day before your weekend hunt. The refuge is not responsible for theft of hunting stands. Driving nails, spikes, or other metal objects into trees or hunting from trees in which any objects have been driven into a tree is prohibited. The use or possession of all bait (commercial food pellets, mineral blocks, etc.) is prohibited during scouting and hunting. Dogs may not be used for scouting or hunting. Hunting is not allowed within 50 yards of a road open to vehicular travel or 200 yards of a building. Hunters should not shoot at a target that is not completely identified.

All hunters must visibly wear 400 square inches of hunter orange above the waist while hunting or scouting. All hunters must wear a hunter orange hat or cap.

Access to designated hunt units will be on improved roads only. When you arrive at your unit, the gate will be closed, but unlocked. Please close the gate after entering and check in. Please do not block gates or roads.

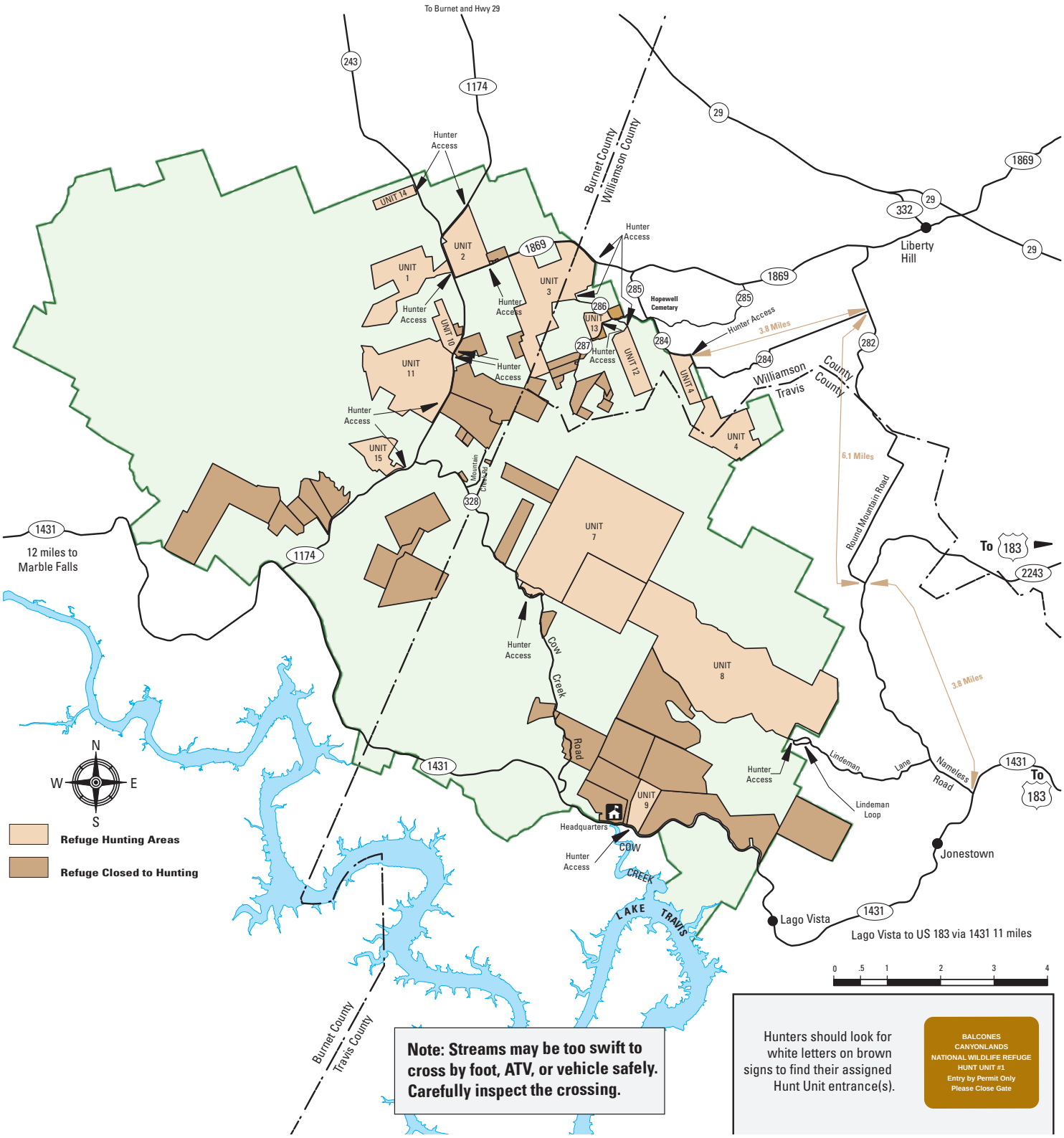
Fires, camping, target practice, and possession or use of alcoholic beverages while on the refuge are prohibited.

Scouting

Permitted hunters may scout designated hunt areas during daylight hours on November 5–10, November 17, December 1, and December 8. On scouting days, hunters do not check in and out at Refuge Headquarters.

The refuge manager may close all or part of the refuge–including roads– without notice to safeguard resources or for safety reasons. Also, prescribed burns may be conducted in portions of hunting units during non-scouting and non-hunting dates to improve habitat.

For Additional Information Contact:

Refuge Manager
Balcones Canyonlands NWR
24518 FM 1431, Box 1
Marble Falls, Texas 78654
512/339-9432
512/267-6530 Fax
www.fws.gov/refuge/balcones_canyonlands/

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