



This goose, designed by J.N. "Ding" Darling, is the symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Benton Lake National Wildlife Refuge

Hunting Information

Welcome

Benton Lake National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1929 as a refuge and breeding ground for birds. Covering 12,383 acres (19 square miles), the Refuge is located on the western edge of the northern great plains, 50 miles east of the Rocky Mountains and 6 miles north of Great Falls, Montana. Despite its name, Benton Lake is actually a 5,000-acre shallow wetland created by the last continental glacier.

Managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Refuge is one of more than 550 refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System — a system of lands set aside to conserve wildlife and habitat for people to enjoy today and for generations to come.

The Refuge headquarters is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, except on Federal holidays.

General Refuge Regulations

Vehicles and Parking

- Only legally licensed vehicles are allowed on the Refuge. Motorized off-road wheeled or tracked vehicles, such as motorcycles or all-terrain vehicles (ATV's), may not be used on the Refuge.

Fires and Camping

- Fires and camping are prohibited on the Refuge.

See the Refuge general brochure for additional information.

Refuge Hunting Regulations

Ducks, geese, coots, mergansers, tundra swans, gray partridge, ring-necked pheasant, and sharp-tailed grouse may be hunted as described in the following sections. Hunting rabbits or any other wildlife species, including furbearers (coyote, fox, raccoon, skunk, etc.), is prohibited.

- Parking is permitted in designated parking areas only and is strictly enforced.
- Current Federal and State regulations apply. Consult the Montana State Hunting Regulations for a complete list of State regulations (available at the Refuge headquarters, on-line at <http://fwp.mt.gov>, and at sporting goods vendors in Montana).

Seasons / Hours

- Hunting season begins opening day of waterfowl season and closes November 30. State seasons and hours apply within this time period.

Hunting Areas

- Hunting is allowed only in the areas posted as "Public Hunting Area." This area includes Units IVc, V, and VI (see map on the reverse side).
- Hunting is not allowed on or within 25 yards of dikes or roads except the portion of the dike between Units V and VI shown on the map. However, you must have a means of bird retrieval, either a boat or a trained dog, while hunting on this dike.
- Caution — water and muck near dikes may be very deep!
- Access to the Refuge hunt area from other than authorized Refuge parking areas is prohibited (including along Wilson Road).

Littering

- Please pack out any trash generated during your hunt, including spent shot shells.
- Please do not clean birds in the parking areas.

Retrieving

- Hunters may not enter closed areas to retrieve birds. Be sure to allow enough room between the closed area boundary and where you are hunting to retrieve your birds.

Firearms

- 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).

Special Shot Restrictions

- Non-toxic shot is required for both waterfowl and upland bird hunting.
- Possession of lead shot while in the field on the Refuge is prohibited.

Boats

- Non-motorized boats are permitted. Montana State laws requiring registration and safety equipment apply.

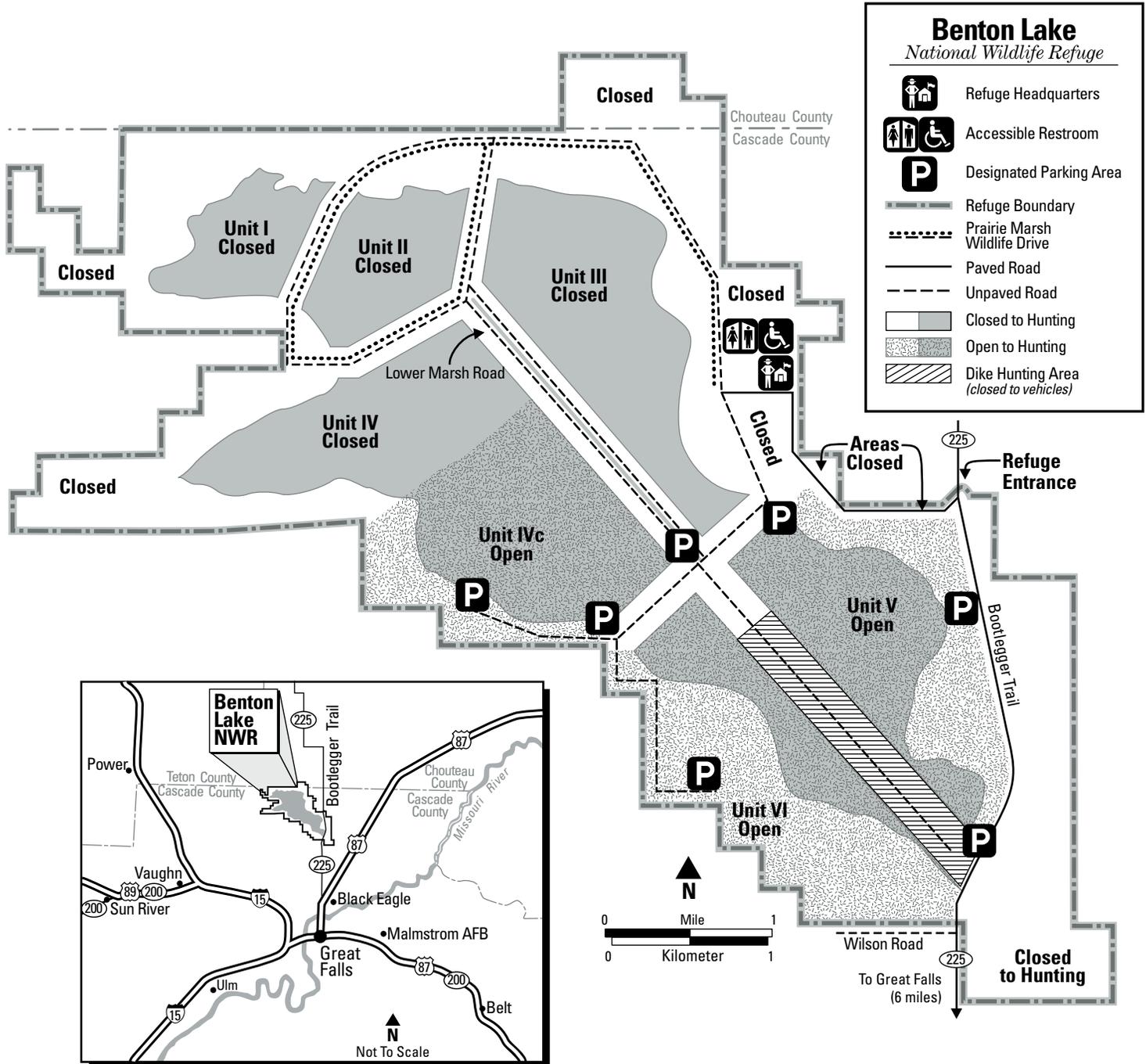
Blinds

- Temporary portable blinds or blinds made of natural vegetation may be used.
- Blinds may not be built on the Refuge prior to the opening day of hunting season.
- All blinds are available on a first-come, first-served basis, regardless of who set up the blind.

Accessibility

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 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 / 727 7400, or the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Equal Opportunity, 1849 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20240.

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Refuge signs and their meaning



Refuge Boundary
Authorized entry only



Public Hunting Area
Area behind this sign open to hunting per Refuge Hunting Regulations.



Closed Area
No public entry



Non-toxic Shot Zone
Non-toxic shot must be used for all hunting.

Benton Lake National Wildlife Refuge
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406 / 727 7400
406 / 727 7432 fax
bentonlake@fws.gov
<http://www.fws.gov/bentonlake>

For State relay service
TTY / Voice: 711

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
<http://www.fws.gov>

For Refuge Information
1 800 / 344 WILD

March 2010

