

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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# Boyer Chute

*National Wildlife Refuge*



*Western meadowlark,*  
©Paul Christianson

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*“The prairie, in all its expressions, is a massive, subtle place, with a long history of contradiction and misunderstanding. But it is worth the effort at comprehension. It is, after all, at the center of our national identity.”*

Wayne Fields  
“Lost Horizon” 1988



*Greater yellowlegs, Randy Mays*



*The blue goose, designed by J.N. "Ding" Darling, has become the symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System*

### **About the Refuge**

Boyer Chute National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1992 to restore and protect fish and wildlife habitat in and along the Missouri River. The refuge is one of more than 560 refuges across the country. The National Wildlife Refuge System is the largest network of lands and waters in the world set aside for the benefit of wildlife.

### **Refuge History**

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. Boyer Chute National Wildlife Refuge shows how "working with others" can lead to a conservation success story.

The Boyer Chute (or channel) lies at the center of the refuge and runs parallel to the Missouri River. The chute carved out its path from an island formed by the Boyer River. It was blocked in 1937 to make boat travel on the river easier, not knowing that this would disturb valuable wildlife habitat.



*Boyer Chute was the first side-channel restoration project on the Missouri River. Jerry Grove*



The Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers worked together to restore the Boyer Chute. With the help of other conservation partners, the chute is once again a functioning part of the Missouri River. This cooperation continues today to benefit fish, migratory birds, endangered species, and resident wildlife.



### Wildlife & Habitat

Thousands of acres of floodplain forest, tallgrass prairie, and wetlands are currently being restored and protected within the refuge boundary. These habitats benefit a wide variety of wildlife including some 240 species of birds, 80 species of fish, and 70 species of mammals, reptiles, and amphibians.

Visitors to the refuge might see meadowlarks, yellow-rumped warblers, short-eared owls, and bald eagles. Along the waterways, you may see spotted sandpipers, great blue herons, hooded mergansers, or several species of ducks.



The prairie and wetland restoration programs benefit mammals such as white-tailed deer, beaver, muskrat, coyotes, badger, and bats. Aquatic and upland habitats provide homes for reptiles and amphibians, including northern prairie skinks, softshell turtles, ribbon snakes, Woodhouse's toads, and leopard frogs.



*Short-eared owl and Coyote*, ©J. Brandenburg, *Leopard frog*, T. Johnson, USFWS

Many fish species use the restored Boyer Chute. Common species include walleye, shovelnose sturgeon, white



*Releasing a pallid sturgeon*, USFWS

bass, flathead catfish, and forage fish (food for larger fish and fish-eating birds).

This diverse floodplain also provides suitable habitat for endangered species such as pallid sturgeon.



*Great blue heron*, Randy Mays



*Yellow-rumped warbler*, Randy Mays

## Enjoying the Refuge

The refuge is open daily from 1/2-hour before sunrise until 1/2-hour after sunset.

### Refuge Roads



A 2.3-mile paved road follows along the Boyer Chute. Parking areas and restrooms are accessible.

### Wildlife Observation



The refuge promotes wildlife-dependent recreational activities such as fishing, hunting, interpretation, wildlife viewing, environmental education, and photography.

### Hiking



Discover the woodland, grassland, and wetland habitats by hiking on one of the refuge's nature trails. Trails originate from the main parking lot and the South Chute parking lot. A shelter with tables is located at the beginning of the Oriole trail. Please refer to the refuge map.

### Lewis & Clark



Lewis and Clark expedition history is interpreted at the main parking lot.

Fishing is allowed year-round in the Missouri River and Boyer Chute.

### Fishing



An Iowa or Nebraska fishing license is required. State and federal regulations apply. Additionally, the following refuge specific regulations apply:

- No more than two lines with two hooks on each line may be used.
- Trot lines, bank lines, and float lines are prohibited.
- Archery and spearfishing are permitted for roughfish only.
- Digging or seining for bait is prohibited.
- Collection and/or possession of frogs, toads, turtles, clams, and all other wildlife is prohibited.



*Lewis and Clark captured a badger in the area that is now Boyer Chute National Wildlife Refuge; the specimen was probably sent back to President Thomas Jefferson. USFWS*

### Hunting



Limited hunting opportunities are allowed in the refuge. Contact the refuge manager for current regulations.

### Mushrooms

Certain areas of the refuge are open to the public for mushroom gathering. See map for open areas.



*Morel mushrooms, D. Menke, USFWS*

- Prohibited Activities**
- Fires* ■ All fires, including charcoal fires and grills, are not allowed.
- Camping* ■ Camping is not permitted.
- Watercraft/  
Swimming* ■ All watercraft and swimming are prohibited in the chute.
- Firearms* ■ Unauthorized use of firearms, fireworks, airguns, and all other weapons is prohibited.
- Trespassing* ■ Trespassing into closed areas is prohibited.
- Remaining or leaving vehicles on the refuge beyond 1/2-hour after sunset is prohibited.
- Alcohol  
and Illegal  
Substances* ■ Use or possession of alcoholic beverages is prohibited. Use or possession of any illegal drug or drug paraphernalia is prohibited.
- Disorderly  
Conduct* ■ Disorderly conduct or disturbance of the peace is prohibited. No intoxicated person shall enter or remain upon the refuge.
- Pets* ■ Dogs are permitted only under physical restrictive control of a leash at all times. Leashes may not exceed 6 feet in length.
- Horses* ■ Horseback riding is prohibited on the refuge.
- Collecting* ■ Collection or destruction of plant and animal life or parts thereof is prohibited. Collecting shed deer antlers is prohibited.
- Plants and animals collected or taken elsewhere shall not be introduced, liberated, or placed on any part of the refuge.
- Lights* ■ The use of artificial lights to take or locate wildlife is prohibited.
- ATVs* ■ ATVs, snowmobiles, and unlicensed vehicles are prohibited.
- Vehicles are allowed on public roads and designated parking areas only.

## Refuge Signs

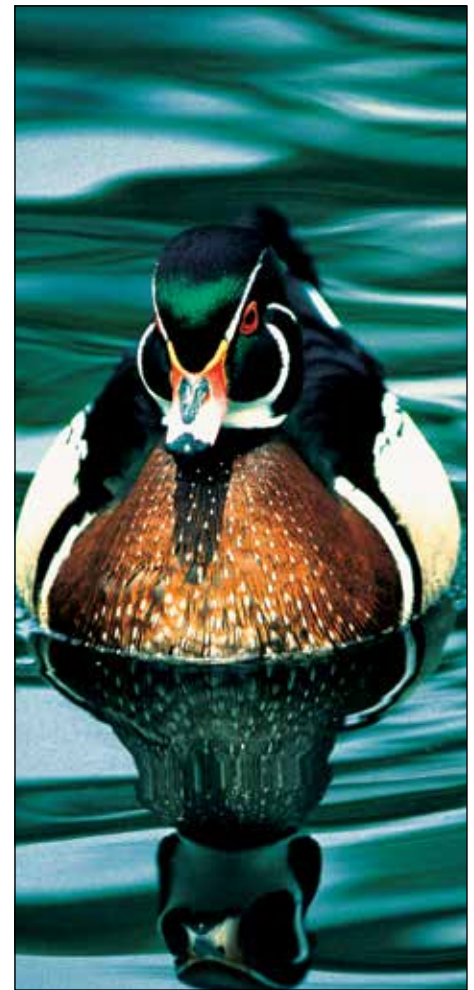
What these signs mean:



Refuge boundary sign. Public use permitted in accordance with refuge regulations.



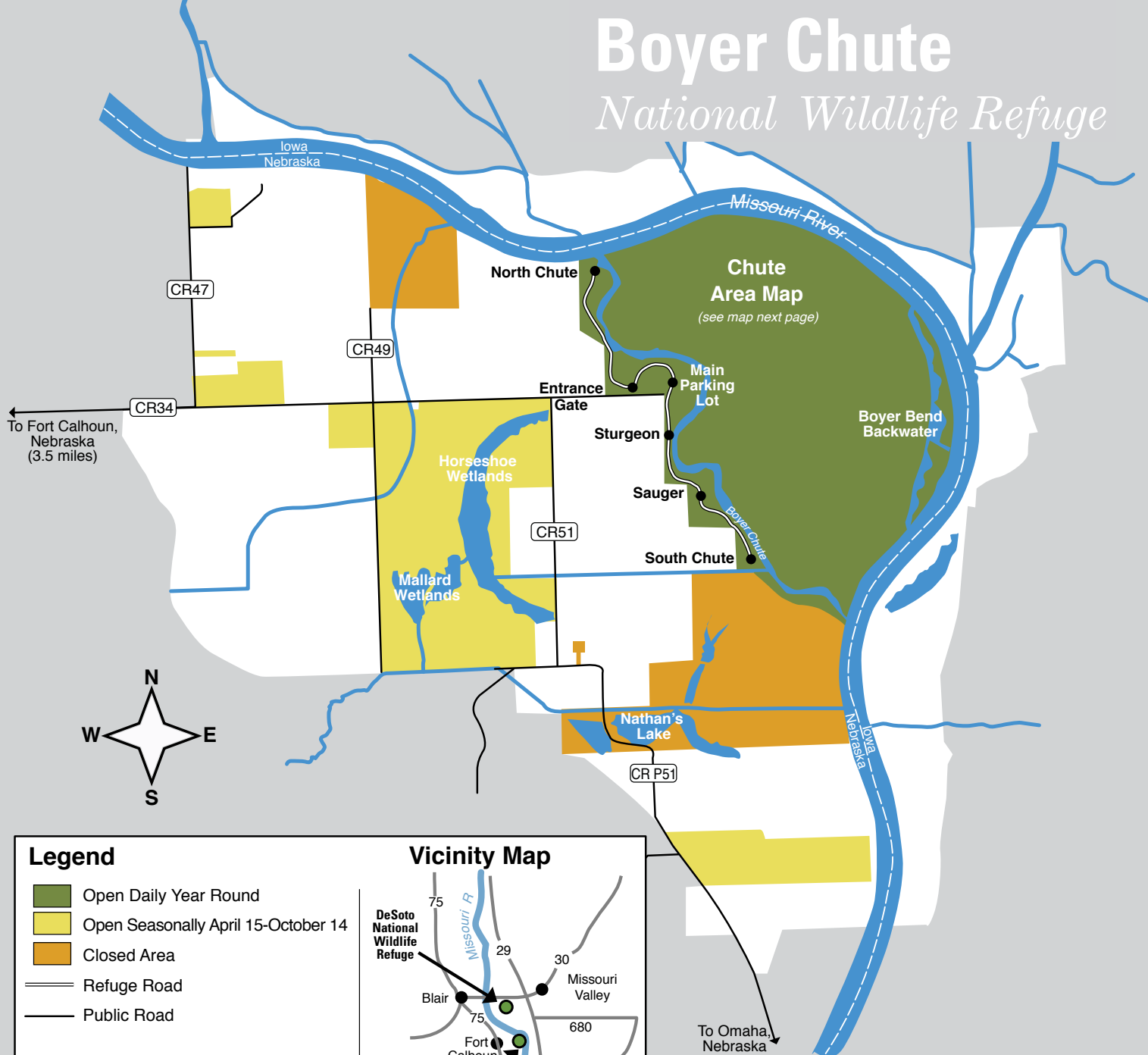
No entry allowed



Wood Duck, S. Maslowski, USFWS

# Boyer Chute

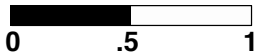
## National Wildlife Refuge



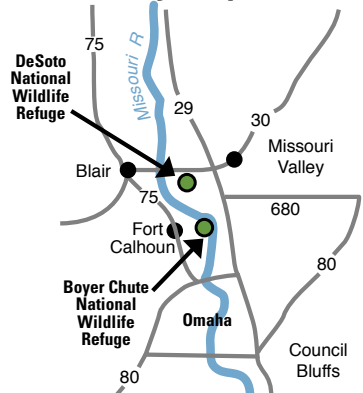
### Legend

- Open Daily Year Round
- Open Seasonally April 15-October 14
- Closed Area
- Refuge Road
- Public Road

### Map Scale (miles)



### Vicinity Map



*There are numerous parcels of land that make up Boyer Chute National Wildlife Refuge. Please respect private lands adjacent to the refuge.*

