

Fort Niobrara

National Wildlife Refuge Hunting and Fishing



Hunting Regulations Table

Hunting is in accordance with State regulations. In addition, Refuge-specific regulations must be followed and are listed in the table below.

Activity	Other Regulations
Elk, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, white-tailed deer	<p>Hunter access is allowed from 2 hours before legal sunrise until 2 hours after legal sunset.</p> <p>State permitted archery and muzzleloader weapons are allowed for hunting.</p> <p>Use of Landowner Hunting Permits is not allowed on Refuge lands.</p> <p>Portable tree stands and ground blinds can be used from August 16 through January 31.</p> <p>Permanent tree stands/blinds, nails, screw-in steps, or other items that penetrate the outer bark of a tree are prohibited.</p> <p>Game carts or any other mechanized device used for retrieving game or transportation are prohibited in the Wilderness Area portion of the Refuge that is open for hunting.</p>
Muzzleloader - mule deer, white-tailed deer	<p>In addition to other regulations stated above for big game, a special access permit is required for muzzleloader hunting during the November Firearm season and the December Muzzleloader season. Application period for lottery drawing is August 15 - September 15.</p> <p>Contact the Refuge by phone or visit the Refuge website for more information.</p>
Coot, crow, dark geese, dove, duck, greater prairie chicken, hare, light geese, merganser, partridge, pheasant, quail, rabbit, rail, sharp-tailed grouse, snipe, squirrel, teal, turkey, woodcock	<p>Hunter access is allowed from 2 hours before legal sunrise until 2 hours after legal sunset.</p> <p>State permitted shotguns using non-toxic shot, archery, and muzzleloaders are allowed for hunting.</p>
Badger, bobcat, coyote, fox, furbearers, long-tailed weasel, mink, opossum, porcupine, prairie dog, raccoon, skunk, woodchuck	<p>Hunter access is allowed from 2 hours before legal sunrise until 2 hours after legal sunset.</p> <p>Shooting hours are one-half hour before legal sunrise to one-half hour after legal sunset.</p> <p>State permitted shotguns using non-toxic shot, archery, and muzzleloaders are allowed for hunting.</p>

Please read the entire brochure for additional Refuge information and regulations.

The Blue Goose is the symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System, a network of lands and waters managed for the benefit of wildlife and people.



Welcome

Welcome to Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge. The Refuge is 19,131 acres, and is located along the Niobrara River in north-central Nebraska. The Refuge was established in 1912 as a preserve and breeding ground for native birds. The purpose was expanded later that same year to include the preservation of bison and elk herds representative of those that once roamed the Great Plains.

General Information

Licensed motor vehicles are allowed only on public roads and trails as shown on the map.

Hunters may encounter bison at any time. Bison can behave in an unpredictable manner, and hunters, especially those with hunting dogs, should use caution when in close proximity to these animals.

Canoes, Kayaks, and Float Tubes

Canoes, kayaks, and float tubes that carry no more than four people each are allowed on the Niobrara River below Cornell Dam. All public entry is prohibited upstream of Cornell Dam. All River users must purchase a wristband at the kiosk located at the Refuge launch area as indicated on the map.

Horses

Access to the Wilderness Area by horse is only permitted at the Wilderness Overlook or at the Refuge Corrals and then over the Buffalo Bridge River crossing (see map).

Prohibited Activities

- Accessing the Refuge from private property.
- Use of ATVs and UTVs.
- Disturbing or collecting natural items (antlers, skulls, plants) or historic and archaeological features.
- Possession of toxic shot in the field.
- Target shooting.
- Tree marking and use of trail cameras.
- Possessing alcoholic beverages.
- Camping and fires.
- Possessing or discharging fireworks or explosives.
- Use or possession of air guns, spears, gigs, or other weapons.

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).

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. For more information please contact the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Equal Opportunity, <https://www.doi.gov/pmb/eeo/public-civil-rights>.

Hunting and Fishing Regulations

Hunting and fishing are permitted in accordance with Federal regulations governing public use on National Wildlife Refuges as set forth in Title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

Hunting and fishing are allowed on the Refuge in accordance with State regulations and the Refuge-specific regulations in this brochure.

Hunting

Hunting is allowed on Refuge lands located north and west of the Niobrara River. The River itself is not part of the hunt unit.

Hunting is prohibited within 200 yards of any public use facility.

Hunters must park in designated parking areas to access the Refuge for hunting (see map). Gates opened from these access points must be closed immediately after passing through.

Access for hunting is limited to walking and horseback.

See the Hunting Regulations Table for a complete list of species that can be hunted on the Refuge, as well as Refuge-specific regulations.

Fishing

Fishing is allowed on the Minnechaduzza Creek and along the Niobrara River downstream from Cornell Dam.

Access for fishing is allowed from legal sunrise to legal sunset.

Collecting baitfish, frogs, and turtles is not allowed.

Fort Niobrara NWR
39983 Refuge Road
Valentine, NE 69201
402-376-3789
fortniobrara@fws.gov
http://www.fws.gov/refuge/fort_niobrara

For State Transfer Relay Service
TTY / Voice: 711

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

For Refuge Information
1-800-344-WILD

September 2020



Fort Niobrara

National Wildlife Refuge

Refuge boundary

Public road

Wildlife drive

Wilderness access route

Wilderness open to hunting

Open to hunting

Closed to hunting

Linked symbols designate accessible feature

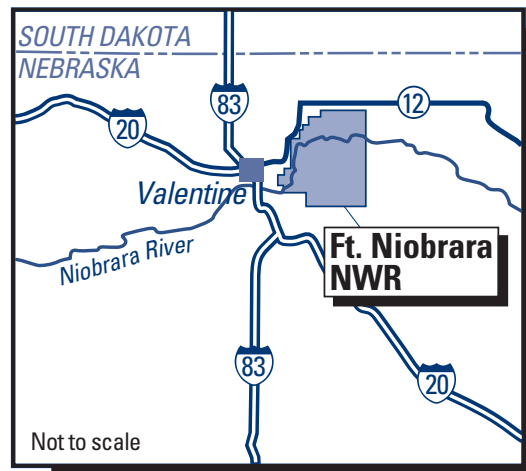
Headquarters and visitor center

Restroom

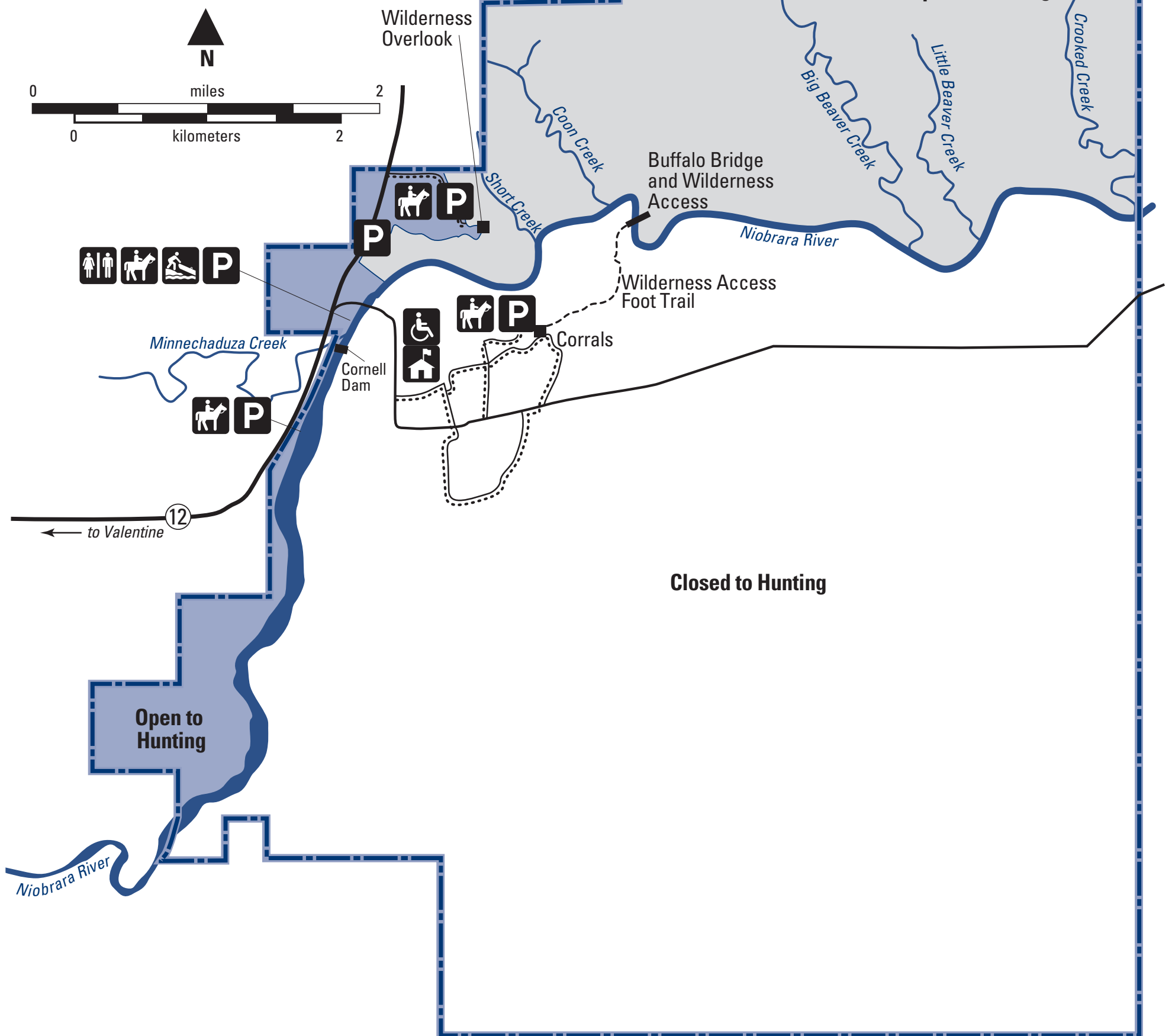
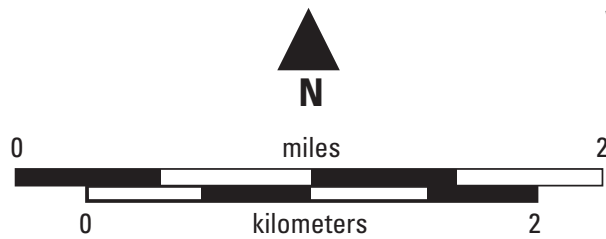
Hunter parking and access

Foot trail and horseback access

Fort Niobrara launch area (recreation fee station)

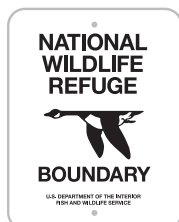


Not to scale



Signs

The wording of the sign applies to the area located behind the sign, except for parking signs. Please respect the following signs.



Entry permitted in accordance with Refuge regulations.



All entry prohibited.



Hunting, weapons, and game retrieval are prohibited.



All vehicle traffic prohibited.



Designated areas to park vehicles while hunting.