Elizabeth Hartwell Mason Neck National Wildlife Refuge and Mason Neck State Park 2014 Deer Hunt Program

PURPOSE: To maintain the deer herd at a healthy level compatible with planned habitat goals and objectives while minimizing impacts to wildlife and visitors.

HUNT DATES: Thursday-November 20, Friday-November 21, and Friday-December 12, 2014.

PERMITS: Hunt permits are assigned by lottery and valid for one assigned hunting day. Selected hunters have until the end of the last orientation session on October 18, 2014 to purchase permits, after which the permits will be offered to qualified standbys. Permits remaining after the standby session will be available to hunters who wish to purchase additional permits to guarantee additional hunt days. Permits are $20.00 for the general public and $10.00 for Senior and Access Pass holders. Passes must be presented at purchase for discount. Permit fees are nonrefundable.

FIREARM QUALIFICATION: Selected hunters are required to qualify their firearm BEFORE the scheduled hunt dates. All applicants must qualify on an approved range. Firearms and ammo may be added to the qualification card any time before the hunt. Only firearms and ammunition listed on qualification cards may be used or possessed for the hunt. Qualification cards are valid for three years. C*ards from 2012 & 2013 remain valid this year.* Persons without a qualification card from an approved range will not hunt.

Buckshot: Applicants are limited to shotgun(s) 20 gauge or larger and #1 or larger buckshot (20 gauge may use #2 or #3 buck). Qualification consists of firing from an off-hand position, one shot at a 14" square target at 25 yards, with a passing scores of at least 3 pellets for 000, 4 for 00 or 0, 5 for #1, 6 for #2, and 7 for #3. Each hunter will be allowed 2 attempts per firearm.

Slug: There is no shotgun gauge limitation. Qualification consists of firing from an off-hand position to a 14" circle target at 50 yards. Each hunter is allowed 2 attempts per firearm.

NEW in 2014:

- Staff will not track, drag, or dress deer. Hunters without this ability must have an aide.
- No earn-a-buck rule this season.
- Limit one antlered deer per permit purchased.
- Check **all** harvested deer immediately.
- Official check-out time is 6:00 pm. Failure to check-out on time may result in a citation.

ORIENTATION: Selected hunters must attend an orientation session. Staff provides two options to complete the hunt orientation requirement. (1) Attend an orientation session in person on October 18, 2014 or (2) View the Mason Neck Hunt Orientation on-line, complete a 25 question test, and have the answers verified by staff. **If selected to hunt, time and location for in-person orientations and on-line orientation test checks will be provided on the hunt lottery notice.** Attending orientation sessions from a previous year, for another hunt, or at another agency's session cannot be counted towards this orientation requirement.

ALTERNATES: Permitted hunters have the option to hunt on other non-assigned hunt days as an alternate. Alternates may fill hunt spaces if assigned hunters do not show or leave the field early.

SWAPS: Hunters may trade amongst themselves or for unclaimed permits. Swaps may occur during the standby and extra permit sale session following the last orientation session on October 18, 2014. All permit trades must be approved and registered with hunt staff by the end of the standby and extra permit sale session. To swap, each hunter must have already purchased a permit. No one may hold a permit for a person who has not completed all requirements and purchased their own permit.

STANDBYS: Occasionally selected hunters fail to complete the requirements and cannot claim a permit. Unclaimed permits are made available to lottery selected, standby hunters. Standby hunters will have the letters "SB" and numbers on their notification letter indicating their lottery status. Standbys may claim a permit only if they have completed orientation before the swap and extra permit sales. Standby sales will occur following the last orientation session on Saturday, October 18, 2014.

SCOUTING: Scouting will occur on Sunday, Nov. 2 from 9:00am until 5:00pm. State Park parking fees are waived on scout day if a valid permit is displayed. On non-scouting days, hunters may visit park and refuge areas open to public entry but must obey all rules and regulations including payment of fees and not entering in to closed areas. Firearms are not permitted during scouting. Reflectors, ribbons, or any other material used to mark paths are prohibited during scout day. GPS units are recommended to mark desired locations. Staff will be available to answer questions at the Mason Neck State Park Visitor Contact Station.

HUNT AREA: Areas in the park and refuge form one hunting area. Hunting is allowed ONLY within designated boundaries illustrated on the map handout. Orange Carsonite posts with orange reflective tape and wide pink flagging on trees mark external boundaries and closed areas. Hunters are not to cross a hunt boundary unless accompanied by refuge or park staff.

Each hunter's permit corresponds with a designated parking lot. Hunters must begin the hunt from their designated parking lot but may WALK anywhere within hunt area. During the hunt, hunters may not use vehicles to access additional areas or drive other hunters to or from unassigned hunting areas.

Exceptions: Tree Stand Area (green reflective tape/orange post) and Mobility Impaired sites (MI#) are limited to hunters who request assignment when they check in. Hunters may not enter the tree stand area unless assigned or trailing a wounded deer. Hunters must request a refuge or park staff escort to trail a deer into the Tree Stand Area. Vehicles are permitted to travel on asphalt or gravel roads marked on hunt maps. Deer may be brought to nearest road for pick up, except Gunston Road.

TREE STAND AREA: This area provides additional safety to the Gunston Road corridor by elevating the hunters to shoot downward. Hunters may request the Tree Stand Area during check-in. Only hunters with tree stands are allowed in the area. Hunters must set up and remain in their stand during hunting hours before 10:00am and after 1:00pm. From 10:00am until 1:00pm, hunters may be on the ground relocating. Firearms must be unloaded while on the ground unless trailing wounded deer.

MOBILITY IMPAIRED (MI) AREA: Mobility Impaired hunters must meet state requirements (permanently unable to walk) and obtain a state certificate to shoot from a vehicle. MI hunters may choose one of three sites assigned for limited mobility (one hunter per site). MI hunters must remain within 100' of their designated site. All MI hunters are required to have an aide while hunting.

HUNTER AIDES: Aides may assist hunters with the inability to track, drag or dress a deer. Staff will not track, drag, or dress deer. Aides must be authorized by staff and noted on the hunter's permit at time of purchase. Aides may set up, retrieve deer, and remain in a vehicle or with the hunter. Aides who have completed orientation and possess a valid hunting permit for the day may hunt, but must assist the hunter as needed. Aides may not drive deer to the hunter.

YOUTH HUNTERS: Hunters under 18 must be accompanied by a licensed adult in visual and verbal contact at all times. The adult may not be armed to hunt unless in possession of a hunt permit for the same day. Adults may only supervise one youth at a time. Youths may not be left alone in a vehicle while the adult hunts.

HUNTER CHECK IN-OUT: All hunters must check in with the check station at the entrance on High Point Road when beginning a hunt or returning to the field. Selected hunters will be admitted and checked in at 5:45 am. Selected hunters not present by 6:15 am will lose their spot and must join the alternate line to hunt. Spaces not filled by 6:15 am will be offered to alternates. Alternates may form a line at 5:45 am and will be admitted as spaces become available. No hunters admitted after 3:30 pm.

Hunters must check out when leaving the hunt area for any reason. Shooting ends at 5:00 pm. If a deer is harvested after 4:30 pm, call the check station with hunter name, assigned parking lot number, estimated time of arrival, and contact number. Official check-out time is 6:00pm unless prior arrangements have been made with check station staff. Failure to check-out on time may result in a citation and possible loss of hunt privileges.

2014 SEASON HARVEST LIMITS:

1. White-tailed deer are the only legal species to be hunted.
2. Antlered and antlerless deer may be harvested in any order. An antlerless deer does NOT need to be harvest prior to antlered deer
3. No antler restrictions
4. Limit of one buck per permit.
5. Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) tags are for antlerless deer only and do not count against daily or annual bag. Hunters will have access to as many DMAP tags as needed.
6. Hunters must make a reasonable effort to retrieve a wounded deer and must report wounded deer to staff.
7. All deer must be field dressed and presented at the check station.
8. Deer may not be processed (cut up) in the field. Entrails (guts) must be buried or removed if near a public trail or road.

TAGGING and DEER CHECK STATION. All harvested, dressed deer must be checked immediately. Notch tags in the field for harvested antlered deer. Hunters will receive DMAP tags for harvested antlerless deer at the check station. Virginia check cards are issued by staff for all harvested deer. Once deer are checked, hunters may return to their assigned area and continue hunting for the remainder of the day.

ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS:

1. Virginia State hunting regulations along with refuge and park special regulations apply.
2. Hunters must possess a valid Virginia hunting license, big game tags, refuge permit, and qualification card. Refuge permits must be visible in the windshield or driver's window on hunt and scout days. Licenses and qualification cards must be carried in the field.
3. Hunters must wear at least 400 square inches of solid blaze orange visible 360° on head, chest and back in a conspicuous manner at all times, including when in a stand or blind. Camouflage orange is not acceptable.
4. It is illegal to construct permanent stands or install a nail, spike, or other metal object into trees. Portable stands and blinds must be removed daily. No trees or branches may be cut. Screw-in footsteps and spiked tree stands are prohibited.
5. Hunters may not shoot or hunt within 100 yards of any drivable roadway within the hunt area. There are no 100 yard buffers along the secondary roads to Tree Stand Area or Parking Lots 9, 10, and 18. Shooting across or along any road is prohibited.
6. Hunters may only use or possess firearms and ammunition listed on their qualification card. Firearms must be unloaded and cased or broken down, except when in the assigned hunt area.
7. No unauthorized persons will be permitted in the hunt area or at the deer check station.
8. Hunter aides must be listed on permits prior to the hunt for safety reasons. Aides may set up, retrieve deer, and remain in a vehicle or with the hunter. Aides who have completed orientation and possess a valid hunting permit for the day may hunt, but must assist the hunter as needed.
9. Hunters under 18 must be accompanied by a licensed adult in visual and verbal contact at all times. The adult may not be armed to hunt unless in possession of a hunt permit for the same day.
10. Possession or use of alcoholic beverages and illegal substances during the hunt is prohibited.
11. Fires are prohibited.
12. Any violation of the permit will result in administrative cancellation and/or criminal charges.