

Welcome to Des Lacs National Wildlife Refuge



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

Des Lacs National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) was established in 1935 as a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife.

The Refuge is one of over 550 Refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System – a network of lands set aside specifically for wildlife. Managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Refuge System is a living heritage, conserving wildlife and habitat for people today and for generations to come.

The Refuge encompasses more than 19,500 acres along the Des Lacs River from the Canadian border to a point 8 miles south of Kenmare, North Dakota. A mix of natural lakes and managed wetlands, along with native prairie uplands, provide a haven for migrating grassland birds, nesting waterfowl, and marsh birds.

Refuge Facilities

The Refuge is open to visitors from 5 am to 10 pm daily. The Refuge headquarters and visitor center is open from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday, except on Federal holidays. The Refuge Headquarters is located 1 mile west of Kenmare on Ward County Road 1A. Please see the map for more information about Refuge public use areas.

Wildlife Observation and Photography

Wildlife observation is permitted year-round in all open public use areas, nature trails, and the auto tour route. Permission is required to enter closed areas. A viewing scope provides visitors with an excellent view of Middle Des Lacs Lake on the observation deck at Refuge headquarters. See *Along the Souris River Loop Bird List* for more information regarding birds that frequent the Refuge. Over 250 species of birds can be seen on the Refuge.

Interpretation and Environmental Education

Interpretive displays are available at Refuge headquarters and focus on early history of the area, habitat management, waterfowl production, grassland birds, grebes, sharp-tailed grouse, and butterflies. The Refuge staff hosts a variety of special events and programs throughout the year. Please contact the Refuge staff for more information about education programs, associated equipment and learning sites, or visit the Refuge website.

Hunting

The Refuge is open to deer and upland game hunting. Hunting is permitted in designated areas during designated hunting seasons with the proper licenses. Non-toxic shot is required for upland bird hunting. Pre-season scouting is not permitted in closed areas. Firearms may be carried only while hunting during designated State hunting seasons. 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). See the hunting brochure, and contact the Refuge Manager for more information.

Accessibility Information

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 transfer relay service for TTY and voice calls to and from the speech or hearing impaired. For more information, or to address accessibility needs, please contact the Refuge staff at 701 / 385 4046, or the U.S. Department of Interior, Office of Equal Opportunity, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Prohibited Activities

- Remaining on the Refuge between 10 pm and 5 am
- Trespassing in closed areas
- Intoxicated and disorderly conduct
- Underage consumption of alcoholic beverages on the Refuge
- Open container of alcoholic beverage in a vehicle on the Refuge
- Littering
- Unleashed pets
- Use of all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles
- Off-road vehicle travel
- Geocaching or similar activity
- Swimming, water-skiing, sailing, jet boating or jet skiing, and any motorized boat
- Possession of fireworks
- Wildlife baiting, guiding operations, or dog training
- Camping
- Collecting animals and/or vegetation
- Searching for and/or disturbing or collecting prehistoric or historic artifacts

Des Lacs National Wildlife Refuge

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Kenmare, ND 58746

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701 / 385 3214 fax

deslacs@fws.gov

<http://www.fws.gov/jclarksalyer/deslacs>

For State relay service

TTY / Voice: 711

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

<http://www.fws.gov>

For Refuge Information

1 800 / 344 WILD

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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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Activity Guide



Public Use Areas

Canada Goose Trail

This 7½-mile scenic trail adjacent to the southern end of Upper Des Lacs Lake provides great viewing opportunities for migrating and breeding waterfowl. It is open to hiking, bicycling, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing. Visit during the fall to see the beautiful fall foliage.

Tasker's Coulee Day Use Area

This unique wooded area consists of mowed grass nature trails and opportunities for wildlife observation, hiking, or group events. A historic Civilian Conservation Corps shelter with tables is located near the parking area. A restroom is available at the site.

Munch's Coulee Nature Trail

This 1¼-mile trail is a designated National Recreation Trail. The first ¼-mile of the trail is level, hard-surfaced, and wheelchair accessible. The next 1-mile trail segment is mowed grass with some steep slopes, and provides breathtaking views of Lower Des Lacs Lake. The upland portion of the trail offers one of the best places on the Refuge to view native wildflowers and grasses.

Des Lacs National Wildlife Refuge Scenic Backway

This 19-mile Backway is part of a State system of scenic routes, and provides views of the Des Lacs Valley. Interpretive panels are located along the route and describe Refuge wildlife and habitat. This Backway offers excellent wildlife viewing opportunities. Keep a watchful eye out for deer and moose.

Boat Dock Day Use Area / Canoe Area

This area has an access area for canoes, tables, and a restroom. Only non-motorized boats are allowed on the water at the Boat Dock area. No swimming is permitted on the Refuge.

