

General Regulations



- Public use of refuge lands, facilities, and parking lots is permitted 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset.
- Hiking and cross-country skiing are permitted on designated trails.
- Dogs and other pets must be on a leash at all times.
- Bicycling is permitted only on refuge service roads.
- Fishing is not permitted along the banks of the Platte River or Rice Lake.
- Many access sites to the river and the lake are available in the local area.
- Camping, overnight parking, and open fires are not permitted.
- Horses, dog sleds, skijoring, snowmobiles and all other off-road utility vehicles (ORUV) are not permitted.
- Dog training and target shooting are not permitted.
- All collection or removal of items, including antler sheds and wildflowers, from the refuge is prohibited.
- Drones prohibited; launching, landing, or disturbing wildlife by aircraft (drones) on the refuge is prohibited.
- Special hunts are available for persons with disabilities. See the refuge hunting map and regulations sheet, or contact Complex Headquarters for detailed information.

Volunteer Opportunities

The refuge offers a wide variety of volunteer opportunities. To learn more or to receive an application form, visit the Get Involved page on the refuge website or email the refuge.

Directions



The refuge is located in central Minnesota, approximately 8 miles southeast of Little Falls and 30 miles north of St. Cloud. From U.S. Highway 10 take Morrison County Highway 35 east. Travel 4.5 miles to the Platte River Bridge. After crossing the bridge, take the first left to the Platte River Trailhead and the Maintenance Office.

Signs to Know



Refuge Boundary



No Hunting



Closed to All entry

Crane Meadows is part of the Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge Complex and is managed out of the Complex Headquarters in Zimmerman, MN. Visitors may contact staff at Complex Headquarters with recreation, public use, habitat management and volunteering questions.

Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge
19502 Iris Road
Little Falls, MN 56345

Complex Headquarters: 763-389-3323
FAX: 763-389-3493

Crane Meadows Maintenance Office: 320-632-1575
FAX: 320-632-5471

TTY users may access the Federal Information Relay Service at 800-877-8339

Crane Meadows Website Address:
www.fws.gov/refuge/crane_meadows/

Crane Meadows Email Address:
CraneMeadows@fws.gov

January 2020



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Crane Meadows

National Wildlife Refuge

Public Use Regulations & Map





Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1992 to preserve a large, natural wetland complex and is one of four refuges that make up the Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge Complex. A wide variety of wildlife may be seen or heard as they use the sedge meadows, shallow lakes, and other wetland habitats on the refuge. Restored tallgrass prairie and oak savanna habitats host a wealth of songbirds, as well as an array of wildflowers. The refuge serves as an important stop for many species of migrating birds in the spring and fall. This area harbors one of the largest nesting populations of greater sandhill cranes in Minnesota. The refuge is open to visitors 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset within the guidelines listed in this brochure. Consult the website for refuge conditions, upcoming events, and recent sightings.

The "Blue Goose" symbolizes the National Wildlife Refuge System, a network of over 567 refuges protected and managed for wildlife, habitat, and people.

Hiking Trails

The refuge offers a scenic 3.7 mile accessible hiking trail that leads the visitor along the banks of the Platte River to the edge of Rice Lake. There are two wildlife observation decks, with one adjacent to the Platte River near the trailhead, and the other, outfitted with a spotting scope, overlooking Rice Lake. The trail is for foot travel only; bicycles and horses are not permitted. Dogs and other pets must be on a leash at all times.

Cross Country Skiing

The Platte River Hiking Trail is groomed for cross-country skiing during the winter, as conditions permit. Hikers and snowshoers are asked to be respectful of tracks set by skiers and hike to the side of the trail.

Platte River Trail



- Refuge Boundary
- Maintenance Office
- Information Kiosk
- Restrooms
- Accessible
- Wildlife Observation Deck
- Parking
- Dam
- Boat Access
- Bench
- Roads
- Platte River Trail
- Wetland
- Open Water

