

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Lake Ophelia

## National Wildlife Refuge Hunting, Fishing and Public Use Regulations 2020-2021



To:

Lake Ophelia  
National Wildlife Refuge  
401 Island Road  
Marksville, LA 71351  
318/253 4238  
<http://www.fws.gov/lakeophelia>

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
1 800/344 WILD

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### 2020-2021 Lake Ophelia NWR Hunting, Fishing, and Public Use

Central Louisiana NWR Special Recreational Activity Permits are \$20.00. Our Special Recreational Activity Permit may also be purchased on-line for \$20.00 at <https://CentralLA.RecAccess.com>. RecAccess accepts all major credit cards. All hunters are encouraged to purchase permits on-line.

### The Refuge

Lake Ophelia National Wildlife Refuge, established in 1988 primarily to preserve wintering and breeding habitat for waterfowl, is located in the Red River floodplain in east central Louisiana, approximately 10 miles north-east of Marksville. Public hunting and fishing is permitted on approximately 12,000 acres during specific times of the year.

Individuals utilizing the refuge are subject to inspections of permits, licenses, hunting equipment, bag limits, boats, vehicles, and their contents by refuge officers.

To ensure your safety and enjoyment while visiting Lake Ophelia, please take the time to become familiar with the following regulations.

### General Regulations

Hunting and fishing regulations are designed to protect the sportsman as well as wildlife populations. The regulations below govern hunting and fishing on national wildlife refuges as set forth in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations. Hunting and fishing will be in accordance with applicable state regulations, except where otherwise stated.

The refuge is open to public access for the purposes of hunting from 4 am to two hours after sunset, with the exception of Lake Long Road, which is open to thru traffic 24-hours/day. The refuge boundary is marked with signs and yellow paint.

### Weapons and Ammunition

Archery equipment and primitive firearms as defined by the State of Louisiana (LDWF) are permitted during the applicable Refuge hunt. Youth hunters are not allowed to use modern firearms during Refuge primitive firearms hunts. Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on Refuge must comply with all provisions of state and local laws. Refuge users may only possess approved nontoxic shot while on the Refuge, with the exception that lead shot is allowed during turkey hunting season only. Pistols/handguns are not allowed for big or small game hunting.

### Note: Use and/or possession of buckshot is prohibited.

Possession of shot larger than that legal for waterfowl hunting is prohibited; use or possession of lead shot is prohibited refuge wide.

### Exceptions

During quota deer and turkey hunts, lead ammunition legal for taking deer and turkey may be used. Small game may be hunted with up to a .22 magnum caliber rimfire rifle using lead ammunition during open seasons.

### Permits

**An annual Special Recreational Activity Permit is required for all hunters and fishermen 16 years old and older, and for all terrain vehicle (ATV) use on the refuge.**

The Central LA NWR (20.00) Special Recreational Activity Permit applies to all refuges within the complex (Lake Ophelia, Grand Cote, and Catahoula). Permits are available at the Refuge headquarters located at Grand Cote National Wildlife Refuge, 401 Island Road, Marksville, LA 71351. Office hours are Monday through Friday 7:30 am to 4 pm, except on federal holidays when the office is closed. Permits may also be purchased at the Catahoula NWR Office, located at 210 Catahoula NWR Road, Jonesville, LA 71343 on US Highway 84, approximately 12 miles east of Jena, LA and 1 mile west of the junction of highways US 84 and LA 28. On weekdays and weekends, permits may be purchased at T-Mark and Bri Grocery store, located at 5090 Highway 452 Marksville, LA 71351 and at T-Town located at 5925 Highway 84, Jonesville, LA 71343.

Our Special Recreational Activity Permit may also be purchased on-line at <https://CentralLA.RecAccess.com>. All permits purchased on-line must be printed and in the hunter's possession.

Refuge permits authorize participation in all refuge hunting and fishing activities. The permit must be signed and in your possession whenever hunting, fishing, or using an ATV on the refuge, and acknowledges your understanding of refuge regulations.

### Commercial Activities

Commercial hunting and fishing activities are prohibited. Specifically, we prohibit any person or group acting as a hunting guide, outfitter, or in any other capacity that any other individual pays or promises to pay directly or indirectly for services rendered to any other person(s) hunting on the refuge, regardless of whether such payment is for guiding, outfitting, lodging or club membership.

## Lottery Primitive Firearm Deer Hunts December 5-6, January 9-10, January 23-24

### NEW! How to Apply for Deer Lottery Hunts

#### On-line Applications

Hunters are now required to apply for Deer Lottery Hunts on-line at <https://CentralLA.RecAccess.com>.

During the application process you will be provided with an immediate account number. Please save this number for your records once your application is complete.

Paper Applications are no longer accepted by mail or in person at The Central Louisiana Refuge Complex office in, Marksville, LA. Applications must be completed on-line at <https://CentralLA.RecAccess.com>.

**NEW:** All Deer Lottery Hunts require an application to be completed and processed online through RecAccess. Hunters may apply from August 1-31, 2020 at <https://CentralLA.RecAccess.com>.

You must provide an email address when signing up. Additional instructions can be found on the website. Hunters will be notified of their drawing status on Friday September 11, 2020.

If you have any questions about the application process, visit at <https://CentralLA.RecAccess.com> for further step by step instructions.

#### Group Hunts

Two to five individuals may be processed as a group or a hunt party. Up to five individuals may apply in a group. Applicants will only have to enter their hunt selection once during the process, but will need the name and address information for the other hunters in their group. Any on-line applications that are received separately will be treated as separate applications.

There is a \$5.00 application fee for each individual applying for a lottery hunt. Application fees must be in the form of credit card for on-line applications. You can combine application fees for each member into one payment. This fee is non-refundable and must be received with your application.

Completed on-line applications and the \$5.00 application fee must be submitted to RecAccess by close of business on August 31.

Permits are non-transferable and must be in the hunter's possession at all times while on the refuge during the permitted hunt. Only hunters with valid lottery permits are permitted on the Refuge during Refuge lottery hunts.

## Lottery Youth Deer Hunts November 23, December 12, and January 30

There will be three lottery deer hunts for youths ages 12-15 (applicants must be 12 by the date of the hunt). A total of 30 youths will be selected (10 per hunt). Applicants previously selected are not eligible to apply.

Ten, three-man ground blinds will be provided. Each youth must be accompanied by one parent/guardian 21 years or older. A refuge staff/volunteer will also accompany each youth to their blind. Rifles will be allowed.

### Spring Turkey Hunts (First 16 days of the State Season)

Turkey hunting is allowed until 12 noon. Hunt Areas 1B and 2B closed during turkey season. ATV's are restricted to marked trails. The use of turkey gobbler/jake decoys and incidental hog hunting during refuge turkey season is prohibited. Harvested turkeys must be checked at T-Mark and Bri Grocery, located seven miles south of the refuge on Highway 452.

#### Motorized Vehicles

All motorized vehicles are restricted to roads that are delineated on the refuge map. The vehicle speed limit shall not exceed 25 mph, except as otherwise legally posted.

Boones and Buck Roads are now motor vehicle access only. Hunters will be required to park at designed parking lots and access ATV trails from parking areas. **NO ATV's allowed on Boones and Buck Road.**

#### All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)

Use of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) is restricted to designated ATV trails. ATVs are allowed only for hunting, fishing, and other wildlife related activities. ATVs will not exceed 25 mph when driven on the Refuge.

ATVs used on the Refuge will not to exceed the following: weight – 750 lbs., length – 85”, and width – 48”. ATV tires are restricted to those no larger than 28 X 12 with a maximum lug height of 1”

and a maximum allowable tire pressure of 7 p.s.i. as indicated on the tire by the manufacturer. **ATV trails are open from September 1 through the last day of the Refuge turkey season.** Exceptions are the Duck Lake trail and the Westcut trail which are open to fisherman March 1-October 15.

#### Boats

Lake Ophelia (the lake itself) is open only during the Unit 1B archery deer season, only electric or non-motorized boats may be used in the lake. Scouting is allowed in Unit 1B

starting September 1 when ATV trails open. Boats may not be left on the refuge overnight.

Lake Long, Possum Bayou (South of boat ramp), and Dooms Lake are open to boat access from September 1 through the last day of archery season and only electric or non-motorized boats may be used.

Duck, West Cut Lakes, Nicholas, Possum Bayou (North of boat ramp), Palmetto Bayou and Point Basse are open to boat access from September 1 through the last day of archery season and motors up to 35 horsepower may be used. ATV's are allowed on these designed trails from March 1-October 15 for the purpose of fishing.

#### Prohibited Activities

The following activities are prohibited on Lake Ophelia National Wildlife Refuge:

- Possession or distribution of bait while in the field and hunting with the aid of bait, including any grain, salt, minerals, or any non-naturally occurring food attractant.
- **Hunting or the discharge of firearms within 150 feet from the centerline of roads, maintained trails, and utility right-of-ways is prohibited.**
- Use or possession of any type of material used as flagging or trail markers, except bright eyes or reflective tape.
- Use of pistols or handguns for hunting.
- Use or possession of alcoholic beverages while hunting.
- Littering or leaving personal items, other than what is identified in this brochure.
- Camping/overnight parking.
- Taking of wildlife, or parts of, or plants (including cutting trees or brush) other than specified in this brochure.
- Target practice.
- Trapping.
- Use of horses or mules.
- Fires.
- Spot-lighting – including the use of automobile/ATV artificial light may not be used to locate wildlife.
- Man-drives for deer or feral hogs.
- Crawfishing.

- Searching for or removing any object of antiquity including arrowheads, pottery or other artifacts.
- Blocking gates or roadways with vehicles or ATVs.
- Driving or screwing a nail, spike or other metal object into a tree or to hunt from any tree in which such an object has been driven; or using climbing spikes.
- Possession of saws, saw blades, or machetes.
- Harvest of frogs, turtles, snakes, shells, or mollusks.
- Collection and removal of deer antlers.
- Use of remote cameras.
- Use of deer or turkey gobbler decoys.
- Geocaching.

#### Specific Hunting Regulations

**During the Archery season hunters will be allowed state bag limit harvest two deer - (one antlered and one antlerless) per day.**

**All hunters must check-in and check-out after each hunt using a self-clearing permit available from a check station.** Reporting your hunting activity and any wildlife harvest information will help us better manage the Refuge. Hunter participation and wildlife harvest data are vital to the management of Refuge. **Do not to fill out a self-clearing permit for scouting!**

No individual may enter the Refuge earlier than 4 am and must exit no later than two hours after legal sunset for that day. Waterfowl hunting must cease by 12 noon and all decoys and blinds removed from the hunting area by 1 pm. Turkey hunting must also cease by 12 noon.

The International Bowhunters Certification Course is not required for archery hunting.

Only portable and ground deer stands may be used. Deer stands may be placed on the refuge in a non-hunting position one day prior to the archery season and must be removed from the Refuge within one day after the archery season closes. **No exceptions!** Hunters may place only one deer stand on the Refuge. Deer stands must have the owners name, address and phone number clearly printed on the stand. Portable and ground stands must be placed in a non-