

MOAPA VALLEY National Wildlife Refuge

Welcome to Moapa Valley National Wildlife Refuge, home of the Moapa dace, a small fish that does not occur anywhere else in the world. Here — in the middle of North America's driest desert — warm water springs bubble up from the earth to form the Muddy River, a crucial habitat for many rare and endemic species. The refuge is the first of its kind established to protect an endangered fish.

Explore this oasis by walking the short trail that meanders along a stream and through the refuge. A stream viewing area allows visitors to get a unique view of the world from the fish's perspective. Stops along the way tell the story of the many steps taken to protect this vulnerable fish. Learn about the Moapa White River springfish, Moapa pebblesnail, and Moapa Warm Springs riffle beetle, which are only found in this area.

"Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread in it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves."

— Chief Seattle, 1855



WHAT IS A NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE?

Simply put, national wildlife refuges are places where wildlife comes first. With over 550 refuges throughout the United States, the National Wildlife Refuge System is the only network of federal lands dedicated specifically to wildlife conservation.

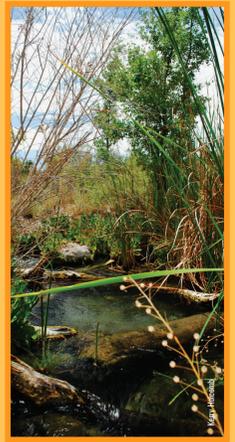
The Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex

Southern Nevada has four national wildlife refuges all within an hour and a half drive from Las Vegas: Desert, Pahrnatag, Moapa Valley, and Ash Meadows. Many wildlife refuges, like Pahrnatag NWR, were established to protect and enhance the resting and feeding grounds of migratory birds, creating a chain of stepping stones along major migration routes. Others, like Desert, Moapa Valley, and Ash Meadows, were established to conserve the natural homes of our rarest wild species, including desert bighorn sheep, unique wildflowers, and rare desert fish.

Wilderness in Your Backyard

Get away from the rush and noise of the city. The national wildlife refuges in southern Nevada allow you to experience a real sense of wilderness, marvel at the beauty of the Mojave Desert, watch rare wildlife in their native habitat, and know it will be here for generations to come.

Moapa Valley NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE



America's Great Outdoors

NEVADA

2012



Vicinity Map



SEASONS

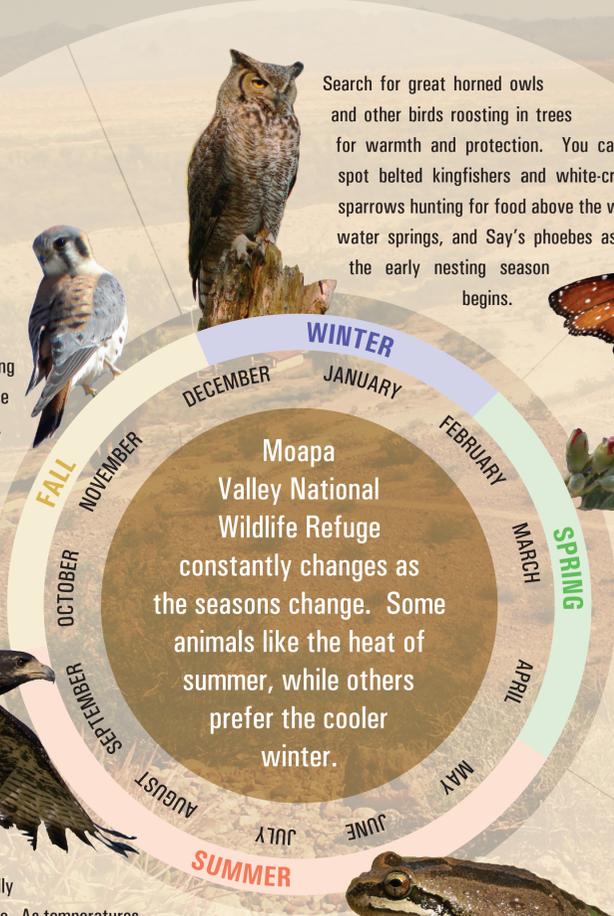
In response to the cooling weather, the rare desert tortoise prepares to enter its winter sleep, called brumation. Check the sky for American kestrels- small, colorful birds of prey- hunting for insects, lizards, or mice.

Listen for tree frogs or chorus frogs croaking loudly at dusk along water's edge. As temperatures soar, look for zebra-tailed lizards darting in the heat. When they run they lift their tails up, exposing the stripes that give the lizards their name. Can you spot any red-tailed hawks teaching their young how to hunt?

Search for great horned owls and other birds roosting in trees for warmth and protection. You can spot belted kingfishers and white-crowned sparrows hunting for food above the warm water springs, and Say's phoebes as the early nesting season begins.

As spring wildflowers burst into bloom, like yerba mansa and desert marigold, you can find colorful migrating birds and painted lady butterflies passing through on their way north. Look closely near the warm water springheads — you might see Moapa dace and Moapa White River springfish. These fish spawn year-round, but spawning reaches its peak in the spring.

Moapa Valley National Wildlife Refuge constantly changes as the seasons change. Some animals like the heat of summer, while others prefer the cooler winter.



REFUGE REGULATIONS

Due to its small size, fragile habitats, and on-going restoration, the refuge is only open on Friday, Saturday and Sunday from Labor Day weekend through Memorial Day weekend. Weekday visits- especially for groups- are scheduled on request.

This is a day use facility. No camping or overnight parking.

Even the best behaving pet can unintentionally scare or harm our wildlife. Please keep pets leashed at all times and remember to clean up after them.

Trash cans have been provided for your convenience. Please help keep your refuge clean by disposing of waste properly.

The streams are home to rare and endangered aquatic species. Please keep them and their home safe - no swimming, wading, or fishing.

Domesticated animals can carry diseases fatal to their wild relatives. They are often ill-adapted to survive on their own and may eat some of the native species. If you have a cat, goldfish, or any other pet you can no longer take care of, please find a new home for it away from the refuge - no animal dumping

Only street legal vehicles are allowed in the refuge - no all-terrain vehicles (ATVs). Please protect wildlife habitat - please park in designated area.

Hunting is not allowed. Transportation and possession of firearms must be in accordance with federal and Nevada state laws.

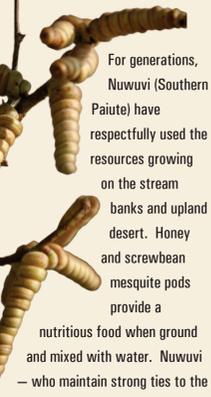
Explosives and fireworks are not permitted.

Do not remove any fossils or any other natural or cultural objects - it not only prevents future visitors from being able to enjoy them, but is also a violation of federal law.



Photo credits: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service: Owl, butterfly, tree frog Sharon Schaefer: Red-tailed hawk Allison Manwaring: Kestrel Kerry Holcomb: Background image

HISTORY OF THE VALLEY AND REFUGE



For generations, Nuwuvi (Southern Paiute) have respectfully used the resources growing on the stream banks and upland desert. Honey and screwbean mesquite pods provide a nutritious food when ground and mixed with water. Nuwuvi — who maintain strong ties to the land — still value these resources.

The Old Spanish Trail from New Mexico to California passed through this area by the late 1700s, bringing trappers and traders. Mormon settlers arrived in the mid-1800s. Farmers and ranchers tapped the valley's springs, and utilized the rich resources of the Muddy River and its floodplain.

During the 1950s several resort businesses were established, flourishing for decades by diverting spring water to create an oasis of warm water swimming pools for visitors. Declining business and various wildfires between the late 1970s and the early 1990s saw the closure of most of these resorts and the eventual purchase of properties from willing sellers by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Why are they endangered?

Moapa dace were common in the Muddy River when they were discovered in 1938. However, changes to their habitat made it hard for the dace to survive. Irrigation ditches were built for nearby farming, and water from the springs was diverted. Non-native palm trees were introduced, reducing water flow and dry fronds fueled wildfires. Resort owners developed the warm springs into swimming pools and hot tubs. Blue tilapia, a fish from Africa, was released into the river and began preying on the dace.

Recognizing these threats to the Moapa dace species, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and its partners took action. Over the refuge's history, the natural landscape has been restored by the



removal of resort structures and many palm trees, and the reestablishment of native plants and natural stream courses. Barriers now prevent tilapia from entering the refuge. As the dace's habitat continues to improve, its numbers are expected to rise.



BIRDS

More than 230 bird species have been identified near the Muddy River. Many live here year-round, drawn by the flowing water and abundant food. Others are migrants, stopping on their way along the Pacific Flyway. Listen closely for bird sounds — the steady tapping of sapsuckers and other woodpeckers or the buzzing of hummingbirds. Look for the subtle movement in the willow or bushes that could be caused by warblers or finches.

The National Audubon Society has recognized Moapa Valley as an Important Bird Area because of the high diversity of birds it supports.



ABOUT THE SOUTHERN NEVADA AGENCY PARTNERSHIP

The Southern Nevada Agency Partnership is a partnership of four federal land management agencies: Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Park Service (NPS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and U.S. Forest Service (USFS). The agencies work with one another, the local communities, and many organizations to conserve and enhance the federal lands of southern Nevada for current and future generations.

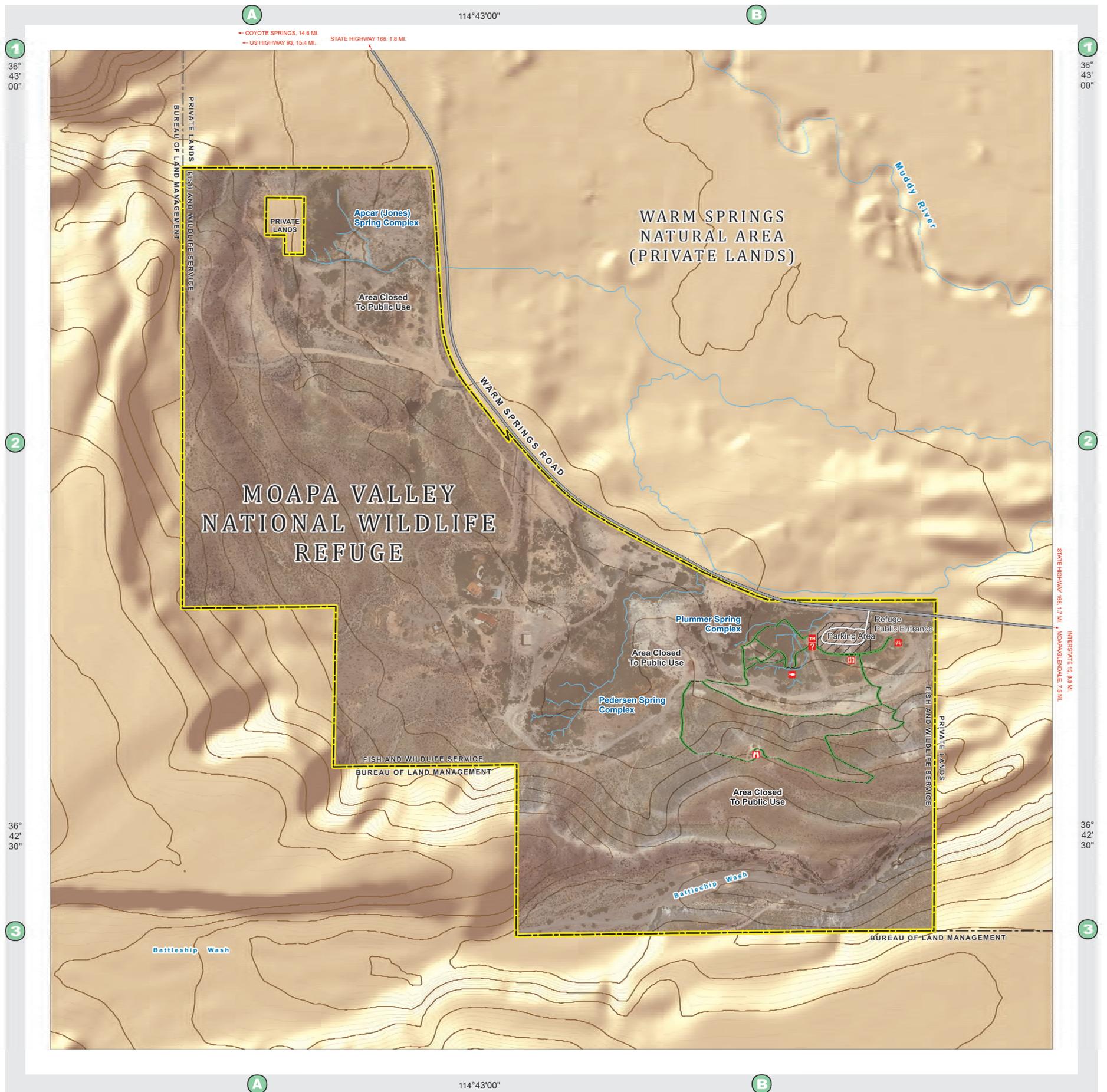
ABOUT FRIENDS OF NEVADA WILDERNESS

Friends of Nevada Wilderness is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting Nevada's wild heritage. We inform the public about the importance of Nevada's public lands, and team up with federal land management agencies and volunteers—people just like you—to care for Nevada's wild places. Together, we work to heal wildlife habitat, maintain trails, and protect natural resources for current and future generations. Join us today, and make a difference that lasts a lifetime.

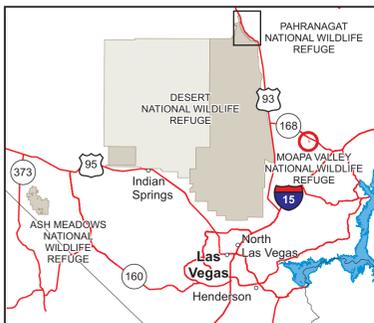
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CLARK COUNTY VICINITY MAP



MAP SCALE 1:2,400

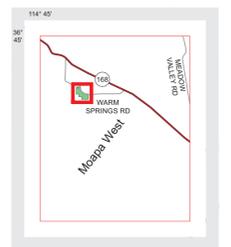


LEGEND

- NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE BOUNDARY
- FEDERALLY ADMINISTERED LAND
- ROAD - PAVED
- ROAD - UNPAVED
- TRAIL - NON-MOTORIZED USE
- STREAM - PERENNIAL
- GROUP PAVILION / PICNIC AREA
- RESTROOMS
- TRAILHEAD
- INFORMATION
- WARM SPRINGS OVERLOOK
- STREAM VIEWING AREA



QUAD INDEX



PROTECT THE WILDERNESS: MINIMIZE YOUR IMPACT

Leave No Trace of Your Visit

In order to protect the unspoiled wild nature of wilderness for future visitors, it is crucial to minimize the impact of your visit by following these general Leave No Trace principles:



leave no trace
CENTER FOR OUTDOOR ETHICS

Plan Ahead & Prepare

Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you will visit. Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.

Travel & Camp on Durable Surfaces

Concentrate use on existing footpaths, washes, and campsites

Dispose of Waste Properly

Pack it in, pack it out. Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter including toilet paper. Leave the site cleaner than you find it.

Leave What You Find

Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts. Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.

Minimize Campfire Impacts

Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the backcountry. Instead, consider using a lightweight stove for cooking or even try "no cook" meals. Be aware of seasonal fire restrictions.

Respect Wildlife

Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not feed, follow or approach animals.

Be Considerate of Other Visitors

Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience. Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises