

# Sacramento NWR Complex Hunt Program Procedures

## During Covid-19 Pandemic

The health and safety of our employees and visitors is our highest priority. To accomplish this, the US Fish & Wildlife Service is adhering to the most current guidance from the CDC, OPM, OEM and other health authorities. We are also following the guidance provided by state and local authorities.

We encourage all visitors to follow CDC guidance to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. These measures include following routine precautions like washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze, and most importantly, please stay home if you feel sick.

Some people are at a higher risk of getting very sick from this illness, such as older adults and people with chronic conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and lung disease. Visit CDC's website for higher-risk individuals for more information and guidance.

### **Safety Precautions at the Check Stations**

The following precautions were made to keep all hunters and check station staff safe during the pandemic:

- The waiting area outside each check station will be enlarged to provide additional area for social distancing.
- Check station staff will be wearing masks and will keep at least a 6-foot distance from hunters. Check station staff will be working in teams. If one staff member gets sick, the entire team will have to stop working. Check stations and hunting areas will have to close if there isn't sufficient staff to work the check stations.
- If at any point the check station windows and waiting area is over crowded with hunters, the check station personnel will stop processing reservations, lottery, etc.
- Plexiglass will be added on the shelves at all check stations to maintain proper distancing and allow check station staff to clean off surfaces on a regular basis.
- Check station windows will remain mostly closed and only opened at the bottom to exchange documents. Check station staff will fill out entry permits and pass them to hunters through the opening in the window.
- Check station staff will check hunting licenses, validations, and season passes by having the hunter hold them up to the window.
- Check station staff will verify day passes through the window and hunters will put the passes in a drop box outside the check station.
- Additional loud speakers will be added to the check stations so that staff can communicate more effectively with hunters.
- Staff are looking into purchasing transmitters to play communications from the loud speakers over a radio station so that hunting parties can listen to announcements from inside their vehicles. Staff hope to have it operational by opening day.
- Hand sanitizer will be added in all portable restrooms but hunters are recommended to bring hand sanitizer with them.
- Hunters are permitted to enter only one lottery for one type A wildlife area each Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday for the 2020-21 waterfowl season. Hunters in violation of this regulation are subject to citation and a seasonal ban from National Wildlife Refuge hunting areas.

## Lottery Entry

- Check station gates will open at 6 p.m. to allow hunters inside the check station parking lot.
- The check station will open at 7 p.m. to begin signing hunters up for the lottery. Lottery applications will be accepted until 8 p.m.
- Hunters are permitted to enter only one lottery for one type A wildlife area each Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday for the 2020-21 waterfowl season. Hunters in violation of this regulation are subject to citation and a seasonal ban from National Wildlife Refuge hunting areas.
- If a hunter's name is on more than one lottery list, whether they entered the lottery or someone entered the lottery for them, on any given night they will be in violation and subject to a citation and a seasonal ban from National Wildlife Refuge hunting areas.
- Hunters will be removed from all lottery lists if their names are entered more than once and will not be permitted to hunt the following morning and subject to a citation and a seasonal ban from National Wildlife Refuge hunting areas.
- One member of each hunting party is allowed to sign up to three additional hunters on their lottery card without them being present.
- Hunters entering the lottery will be asked to wait in a single file line with at least 6 ft of space between lottery groups. Cones will be placed in 6 ft increments to assist in keeping everyone safely distanced.

## Reservations

### Start Times (no changes)

- Sacramento NWR – 2 ½ hours before shoot time
- Delevan NWR – 2 ½ hours before shoot time
- Colusa NWR – 2 hours before shoot time
- Sutter NWR – 2 hours before shoot time

### Calling Reservations

- At any point if the check station windows and the area in front of the check station is overcrowded with hunters, the check station personnel will stop processing reservations. It is very important that hunters follow these guidelines to ensure the safety of check station staff and the hunting public.
- Check station staff will begin by calling Mobility Impaired (MI) reservations first. Only MI reservation holders and their hunting parties will be allowed within the area outside the check station. All other reservation holders will be required to wait in their vehicles or in the parking lot.
- After MI reservations are processed, check station staff will call reservations 1 – 5 to enter the area outside the check station and begin processing those reservations. This same process will continue until all reservations have been called.
- We recommend arriving at the check station prior to the set reservation start time or the night before if you wish to check previous shoot day hunt results and blind averages. Hunting parties will not be permitted to enter the area outside the check station until their reservation group is called. Hunting maps, previous season blind averages, and habitat descriptions are all posted on the Sacramento NWR Complex website. <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Sacramento/visit/hunting.html>
- We highly recommend reservation hunting parties to pre-register at the check station the night before or to arrive early in the morning before reservation processing begins. If a hunting party has pre-registered, only one member of the hunting party needs to return to the check station to select a hunting location, collect hunting permits, and to hand in day passes. The rest of the hunting party should remain at their vehicles to prevent crowding.

## **Lottery**

### Start Times (no changes)

- Sacramento NWR – 1 ½ hours before shoot time
- Delevan NWR – 1 ½ hours before shoot time
- Colusa NWR – 1 hours before shoot time
- Sutter NWR – 1 hours before shoot time

### Calling Lottery Numbers

- Check station staff will begin by calling Mobility Impaired (MI) lottery groups to fill any vacant MI blinds or to allow those groups to go on the blind waiting list to refill MI blinds.
- After the MI lottery groups have been called check station staff will begin calling lottery numbers in groups of 5 to either select a vacant blind, free roam, blind waiting, or free roam waiting.
- Lottery numbers will continue to be posted on the lottery board and will account for the total number of hunters in the party. The first five lottery numbers will not be numbered 1 – 5 but could instead be lottery numbers 1 – 16 depending on how many members are in each hunting party. This process will be continued until all lottery numbers have been called or the quota is filled.

### Blind Waiting/Free Roam Waiting

- When a hunting party is called through the lottery or first-come, first-serve they will still have the option to go blind waiting or free roam waiting. Once their number or name is called they can request to be placed on the blind or free roam waiting list.
- When hunters are waiting to refill a blind or free roam they will not be allowed to wait around the check station. Hunters will be asked to remain at their vehicles until their name is called to come up to the check station window to refill a vacant blind or enter free roam.

### **First-Come, First-Serve**

- Check station staff will continue to sign hunters up on the first-come, first-serve list if they do not make it in time to enter the lottery. However, check station staff will not sign hunters up on the first-come, first-serve list until after they are done posting the lottery results on the lottery board.
- Hunters will not be able to sign themselves up on the first-come, first-serve list like we did in the past.

### **Lottery Purge**

- If the hunting area is full, the lottery purge will be at 8 a.m. Hunters will be asked to remain in the waiting area or at their vehicles until their names are called to respond to check station staff. Check station staff will give additional time between calling names so that everyone has enough time to get up to the check station and respond.

### **Checking Out**

- When hunters check out of the hunting area we ask that they park their vehicle and bring their harvested birds and entry permit to the bird checking tables and place them on the tables. Check station staff will take the entry permit and record the hunters harvest.
- Check station staff will not be going from vehicle to vehicle collecting entry permits and checking hunters harvest in their vehicles.