General Provisions

Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge is one of over 560 national wildlife refuges. A primary objective of a national wildlife refuge is to provide habitat for the conservation of fish and wildlife. Sport fishing is permitted at a level compatible with the environment, providing wholesome recreational opportunities, and permitting the use of a valuable renewable resource.

The regulations listed below supplement the general regulations which govern fishing on wildlife refuge areas as set forth in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 32. Fishing will be in accordance with applicable state regulations subject to the following special regulations.

Sport Fishing Regulations

Tennessee Refuge is composed of three units (see map). Each unit has fishing opportunities available seasonally.

Fishing in interior impoundments is permitted during daylight hours only.

Refuge boat ramps are open during daylight hours only except Henry Co. Port which can be accessed anytime.

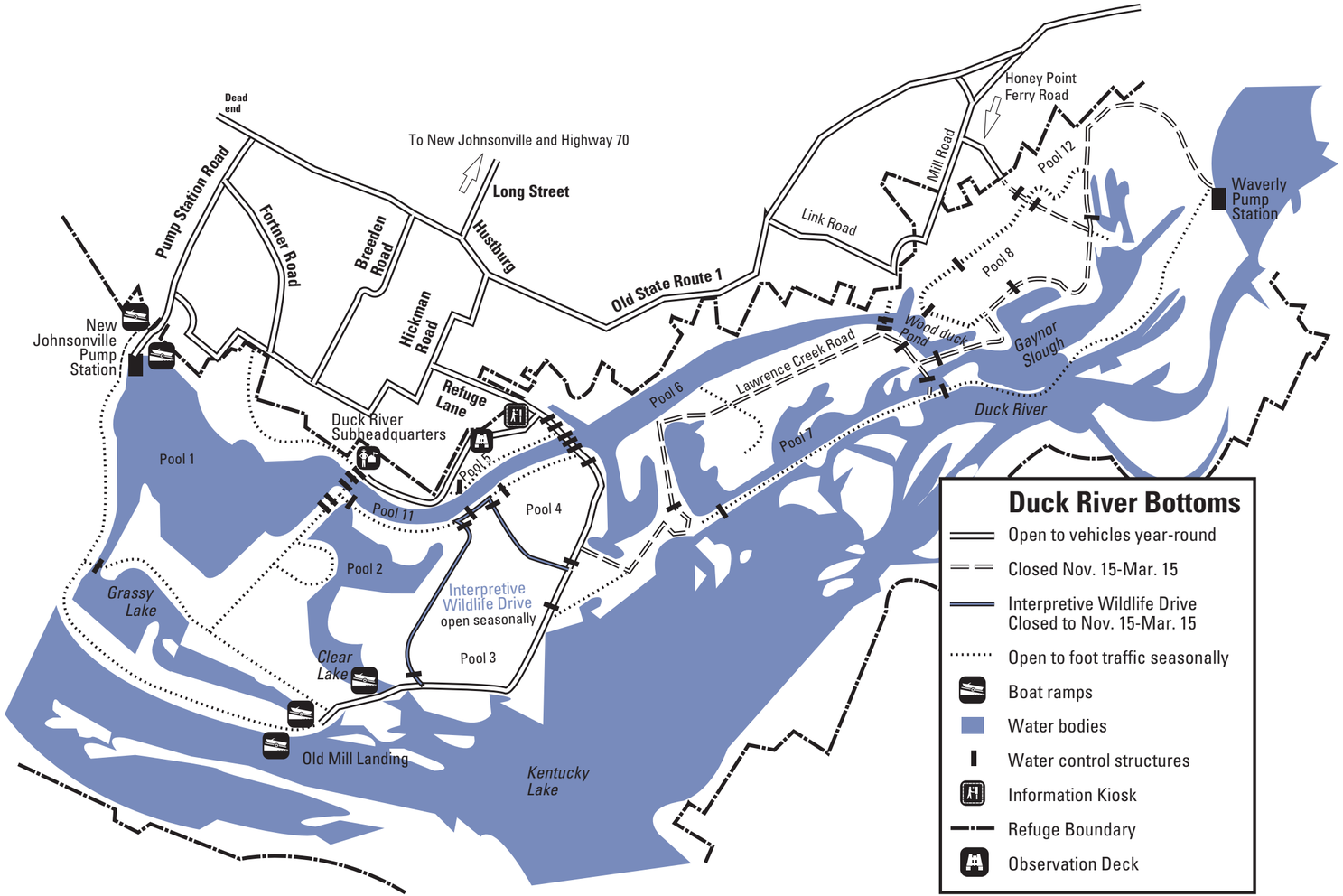
Swamp Creek, Sulphur Well Bay, Bennetts Creek and all interior impoundments are closed to fishing from November 15 through March 15. The remainder of the refuge portion of Kentucky Lake will remain open year-round. Bank fishing is permitted year-round along Refuge Lane and from the New Johnsonville Pump Station.

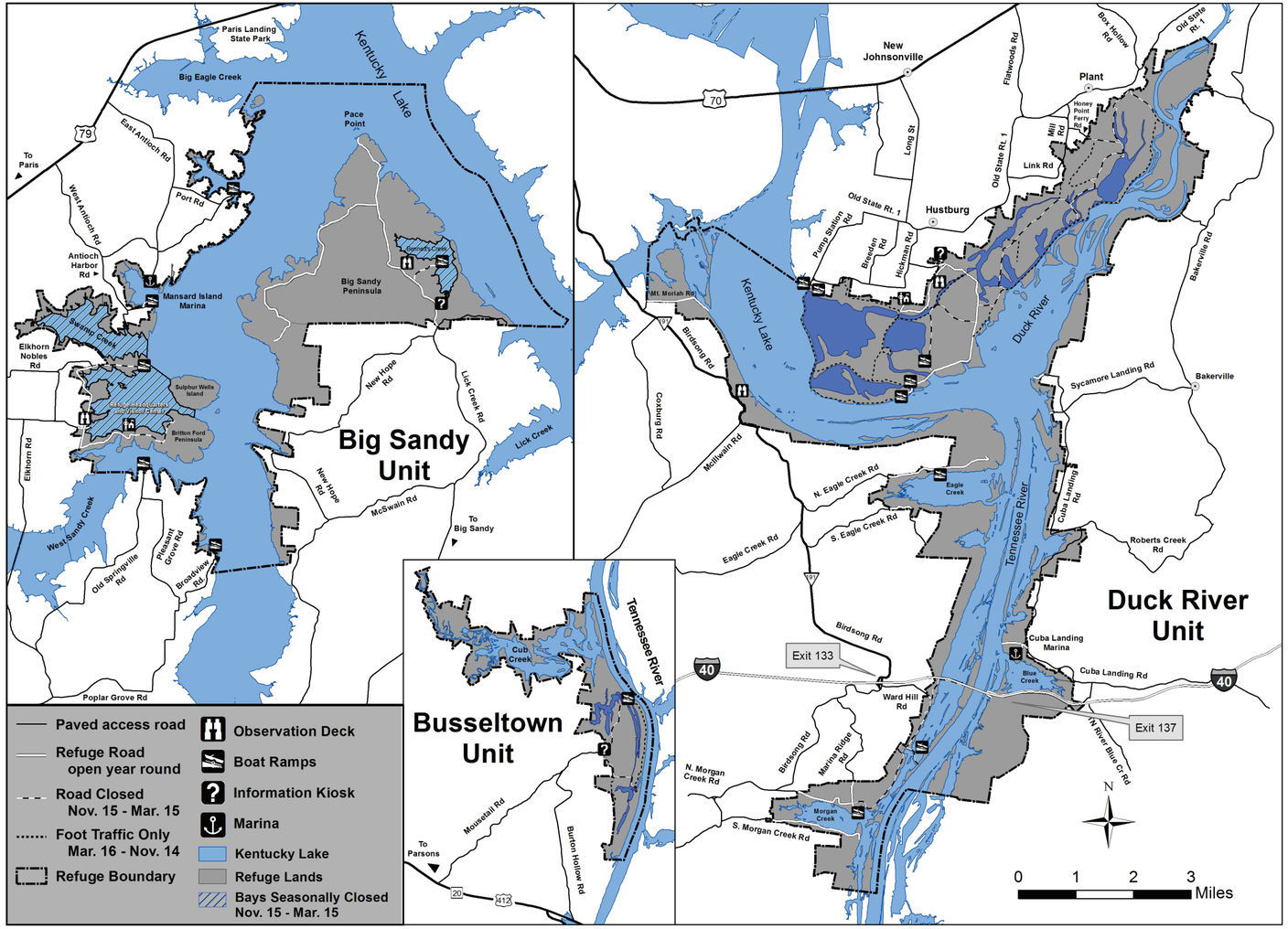
Refuge boat ramps seasonally closed from November 15 - March 15 include: Swayne Point, Bobcat Den, Mansard Island, LCM Landing, Pool 1 ramp, Grassy Lake, Clear Lake, Gaynor Slough, Nix Landing, and Busseltown Boat Ramp.

Any portion of the refuge may be closed by floodwaters, to protect nesting eagles, or for other administrative purposes.

Interior impoundments are shallow and full of hidden obstacles. Boat travel is restricted to a “Minimum Wake” speed for your safety. Litter is unsightly, illegal, and a hazard to wildlife. Please dispose of unwanted material properly.

- Unlicensed vehicles (ATV’s, golf carts, etc.) use on the refuge is prohibited.
- Camping and campfires on the refuge are prohibited.
- Vehicles must remain on refuge roads that are designated open.
- We prohibit leaving boats unattended on the refuge after daylight use hours.
- We prohibit swimming in refuge impoundments and from boat ramps and boat docks.
- Operation of a motor vessel under the influence of alcohol is prohibited.
- Searching for or removing any object of antiquity including arrowheads, pottery, or other artifacts is prohibited.
- We prohibit trotlines, limblines, jugs and slat baskets in refuge pools and impoundments.
- We prohibit taking frogs, turtles or crawfish on the refuge.
- We allow bowfishing in refuge impoundments and on Kentucky Lake and Barkley Lake.
- Interpretive Wildlife Drive pulloffs for wildlife viewing only. Vehicles may not be left unattended.





U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Tennessee

National Wildlife Refuge Fishing Regulations

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