

Public Use/ Hunting and Fishing Regulations

Washita National Wildlife Refuge

General Information

By law, National Wildlife Refuges are closed to all public use activities unless expressly permitted. Hunting, fishing, and certain other public uses are permitted on portions of the Refuge. The regulations listed in the Fishing and Hunting Regulations supplement the General Regulations that govern public use on National Wildlife Refuges as set forth in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations.

When permitted, hunting, fishing, and other public uses on areas of the Refuge will be in accordance with applicable State laws unless otherwise listed. To ensure your safety and enjoyment while visiting Washita NWR, please take the time to become familiar with the current regulations and authorized activities before entering the refuge. Additional information can be obtained by visiting the Refuge Headquarters located 5 miles west, 1 mile north, and 1/2 mile west of Butler, OK, by calling 580/664-2205, or by visiting www.fws.gov/refuge/Washita/.

Hunting Information

Washita NWR is closed to all hunting seasons except those which are specifically permitted. Limited seasons and special refuge regulations

apply. The following seasons are open per special refuge regulations: deer, quail, rabbit, and sandhill crane. All seasons not listed in this brochure are closed.

About 6,000 acres of Washita National Wildlife Refuge are open to hunting. The refuge boundary is marked by white 11x14-inch metal boundary signs.

Persons with disabilities are encouraged to participate in hunting on the refuge. An accessible hunting blind is available for goose and sandhill crane hunters. Contact the refuge manager for guidelines to obtain special access.

Hunting is permitted on the refuge in designated areas seasonally (see map for specific locations and closures). All hunting is in accordance with State of Oklahoma Hunting Regulations and is subject to additional refuge regulations.

Parking
Parking is available at refuge recreation areas. Hunters may access hunt areas only from designated parking areas. Please see map for parking area locations.

Deer Hunting
Deer hunting is available through the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) Controlled Hunts Program. The number of hunters and bag limits are determined by the refuge annually based on current biological data. More information on controlled hunts is available at www.wildlifedepartment.com.

Quail / Rabbit Hunting
Quail and rabbit hunting is allowed in designated areas of the refuge from November 9, 2019–February 15, 2020. Hunters may possess **only** federally approved non-toxic shot while in the field. Please see map for open areas.

Rabbit Hunting
Rabbit hunting is allowed in designated areas of the refuge from October 1, 2019–March 15, 2020 with closures for the first nine days of deer gun season (November 23–December 1, 2019), and during the refuge deer hunts (October 4–5, November 8–9 and 12–13, 2019). All rabbit hunting is shotgun only. Hunters may possess **only** federally approved non-toxic shot while in the field. Please see map for open areas.

Waterfowl and Sandhill Crane Hunting
Waterfowl and sandhill crane hunting is conducted on selected weekends and Wednesdays during the State Waterfowl Season. Please contact the refuge for further information on waterfowl and sandhill crane hunts at Washita NWR, or visit our

website at www.fws.gov/refuge/Washita.

Use of Hunting Dogs
Hunting dogs are permitted for hunting migratory and upland game birds only during designated open seasons. Neither hunters nor dogs may enter closed areas of the refuge. Training of dogs is not authorized.

General Fishing Information

The Washita River and Foss Reservoir provide feeding and spawning habitat for many species of fish. The most sought after species found in refuge waters are the channel catfish, flathead catfish, crappie, walleye, white bass, and largemouth bass.

About 8 miles of the Washita River and 2,000 acres of Foss Reservoir are located within the Washita NWR. The Refuge boundary is marked by white 11x14-inch metal boundary signs and by buoys on Foss Reservoir.

Persons with disabilities are encouraged to participate in fishing on the refuge. An accessible fishing pad is located at Turkey Flats Recreation Area. Contact the refuge manager for guidelines to obtain special access.

Fishing is permitted on the refuge in designated areas year round, and by boat from March 15–October 14 (see map for specific locations and closures). Taking of the various game fish and designated creel limits are as specified in the State of Oklahoma Fishing Regulations. Legal means of take are as stated in the State Fishing Regulations.

Open Areas
Most areas of the refuge located east and north of Foss Lake are open to public access. Areas west of Foss Lake, and south of the Washita River are closed to all public access. Please see map for open area locations.

Parking
Parking is available at refuge recreation areas. Anglers may access fishing areas only from designated parking areas and by boat from Foss Reservoir. Please see map for parking areas.

Boating
Boats are allowed on refuge waters from March 15–October 14. We do not allow boats and other flotation devices on refuge waters from October 15–March 14. Use caution when navigating refuge waters. Numerous submerged tree stumps exist in shallow waters and river currents can be hazardous. Swimming is not allowed in refuge waters. Jet-ski/personal watercraft, water skiing, knee boarding, wakeboarding, tubing, and all other water sports are prohibited on refuge waters. Boats may not be beached on shores located within the closed areas of

the refuge. Please see map for closed areas.

Boat Ramps
Boat ramps are located at Turkey Flats Recreation Area, and Riverside Recreation Area. Although difficult, light-weight john boats and canoes may be launched from the bank at the river bridge at McClure Recreation Area. Public boat ramps are also located on the south side of Foss Reservoir on Foss State Park. Please see general refuge regulations for more information on boating.

Public Use Regulations

Hiking
The Refuge has hiking trails located at Riverside Recreation Area and at the Centennial Trail Recreation Area. The trails are open during daylight hours only. Open areas of the refuge may be accessed on foot. Please see map for locations of open areas and trails. Other hiking trails may be located near the refuge at Foss State Park.

Motorized Vehicles
All vehicles must remain on existing roads or in designated parking areas. Blocking gates or roadways is prohibited. All-terrain vehicles (ATVs) are prohibited.

Boating
March 15–October 14
Boat ramps are located at Turkey Flats Recreation Area and Riverside Recreation Area. Although difficult, light-weight john boats and canoes may be launched from the bank at the river bridge at the McClure Recreation Area. Public boat ramps are also located at Foss State Park. Use caution when navigating refuge waters. Numerous submerged tree stumps exist in shallow waters and river currents can be hazardous. Swimming is not allowed in Refuge waters. Jet-ski/personal watercraft, water skiing, kneeboarding, wakeboarding, tubing, and all other water sports are prohibited on refuge waters. Boats may not be beached on shores located within the closed areas of the refuge. Please see map for closed areas.

Animals/Pets
Hunting dogs are permitted for hunting migratory and upland game birds only during designated open seasons. Neither hunters nor dogs may enter closed areas of the refuge. Training of dogs is not authorized. All other pets must be on a leash or in your vehicle.

Horseback riding is not allowed.

Equestrian trails are designated on Foss State Park.

Weapons
Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on national wildlife refuges must comply with all provisions of State and local law. Persons may only use (discharge) firearms in accordance

with refuge regulations (50 CFR 27.42 and specific refuge regulations in 50 CFR Part 32).

Closed Areas
Designated areas will be closed to hunting, fishing and hiking (see map for specific open locations and closures). Some areas are closed to all forms of public entry. Other areas may be closed for special management or safety reasons.

Camping and Fires
Camping and fires are not allowed on Washita NWR. The nearest campgrounds to the refuge are located at Foss State Park, headquarters located south of Foss Dam on State Highway 44.

Refuge/Cultural Resources
All government property including natural, historic, and archaeological features are protected by federal law. Searching for or removal of objects of antiquity or other value is strictly prohibited.

Prohibited Activities
• Littering, dumping garbage, waste or household items.

• Whole fish or parts of fish may not be left at recreation areas.

• Release of wild or domestic animals.

• Spotlighting—artificial light may not be used to locate wildlife.

• Taking of wildlife or plants (including cutting live trees or brush, mushroom picking, and deer shed or feather collecting) other than specified in this brochure.

• Marking trails with paint or flagging tape, ribbons, or trail tacks.

• Camping and fires.



