Boyer Chute National Wildlife Refuge
C/O DeSoto NWR / 1434 N 316th Lane
Missouri Valley, IA 51555
Phone: 712-388-4800
E-mail: boyerchute@fws.gov
http://www.fws.gov/refuge/boyer_chute

TTY users may reach Boyer Chute through the Federal Information Relay System at 1-800-877 8339

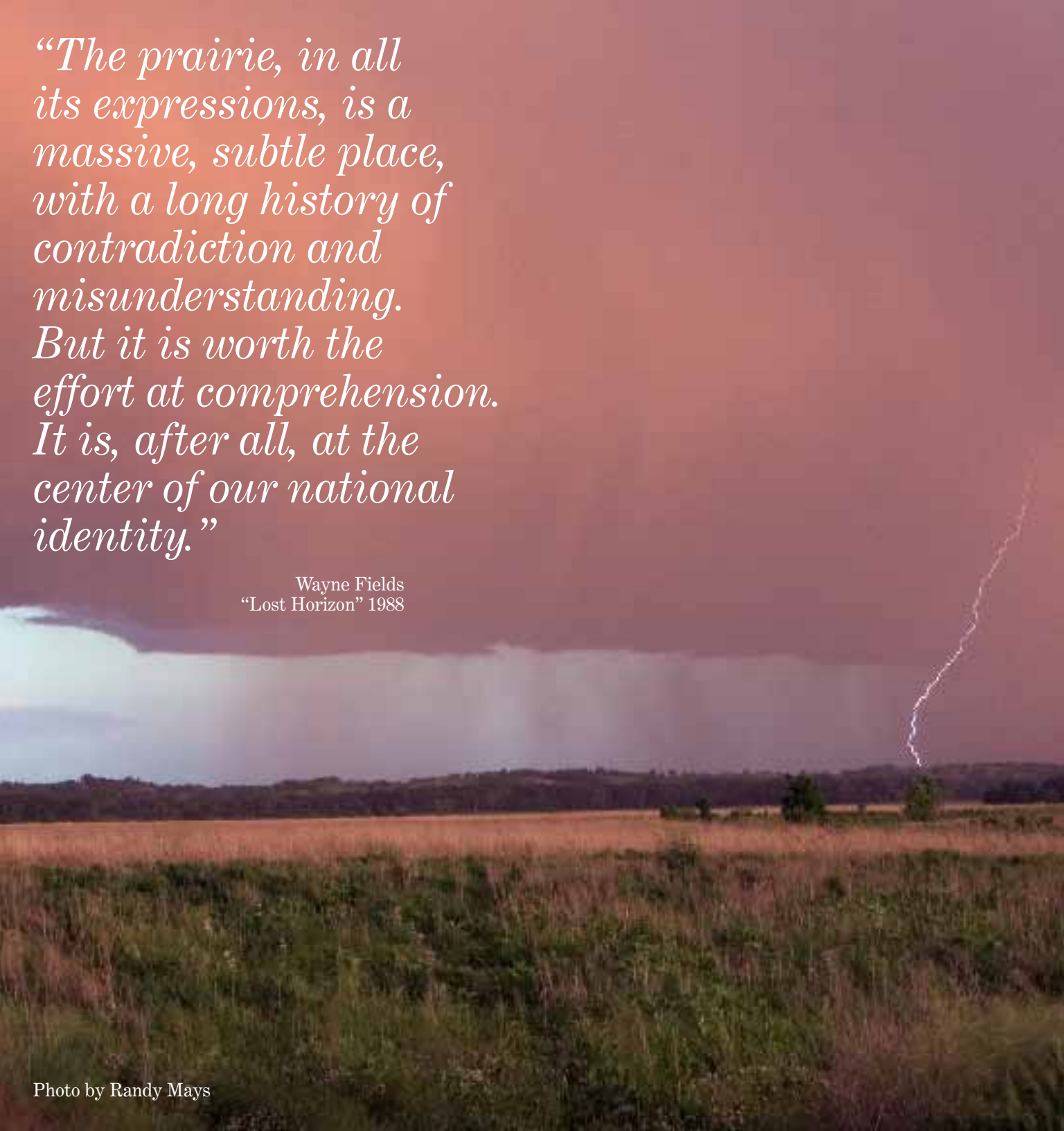
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD
http://www.fws.gov

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Boyer Chute

National Wildlife Refuge

Western meadowlark,
©Paul Christianson



"The prairie, in all its expressions, is a massive, subtle place, with a long history of contradiction and misunderstanding. But it is worth the effort at comprehension. It is, after all, at the center of our national identity."

Wayne Fields
"Lost Horizon" 1988

Photo by Randy Mays

Greater yellowlegs, Randy Mays

This blue goose, designed by J.N. "Ding" Darling, has become the symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System

About the Refuge

Boyer Chute National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1992 to restore and protect fish and wildlife habitat in and along the Missouri River. The refuge is one of more than 550 refuges across the country. The National Wildlife Refuge System is the largest network of lands and waters in the world set aside for the benefit of wildlife.

Refuge History

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is "working with others, to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people." Boyer Chute National Wildlife Refuge shows how "working with others" can lead to a conservation success story.

The Boyer Chute (or channel) lies at the center of the refuge and runs parallel to the Missouri River. The chute carved out its path from an island formed by the Boyer River. It was blocked in 1937 to make boat travel on the river easier, not knowing that this would disturb valuable wildlife habitat.

Boyer Chute was the first side-channel restoration project on the Missouri River. Jerry Grove

The Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers worked together to restore the Boyer Chute. With the help of other conservation partners, the chute is once again a functioning part of the Missouri River. This cooperation continues today to benefit fish, migratory birds, endangered species, and resident wildlife.

Short-eared owl and Coyote, ©J. Brandenburg, *Leopard frog,* T. Johnson, USFWS

Wildlife & Habitat

Thousands of acres of floodplain forest, tallgrass prairie and wetlands are currently being restored and protected within the refuge boundary. These habitats benefit a wide variety of wildlife including some 240 species of birds, 80 species of fish, and 70 species of mammals, reptiles and amphibians.

Visitors to the refuge might see meadowlarks, yellow-rumped warblers, short-eared owls, and bald eagles. Along the waterways, you may see spotted sandpipers, great blue herons, hooded mergansers, and several species of ducks.

The prairie and wetlands restoration program benefits mammals such as white-tail deer, beaver, muskrat, coyote, badger, and bats. Aquatic and upland habitats provide homes for reptiles and amphibians, including northern prairie skinks, softshell turtles, ribbon snakes, Woodhouse's toads, and leopard frogs.

Many fish species now use the restored Boyer Chute. Common species include walleye, shovelnose sturgeon, white bass, flathead catfish, and forage fish (food for larger fish and fish-eating birds).

This diverse floodplain also provides suitable habitat for endangered species such as pallid sturgeon.

Releasing a pallid sturgeon, USFWS

Great blue heron, Randy Mays

Yellow-rumped warbler, Randy Mays

Enjoying the Refuge

The refuge is open daily, from 1/2-hour before sunrise until 1/2-hour after sunset.

The refuge promotes recreational wildlife-oriented activities such as fishing, hunting, hiking, interpretation, wildlife viewing, environmental education, and photography.

Refuge Roads

A 2.3-mile paved road follows along the Boyer Chute. Parking areas, restrooms, and fishing piers are all accessible.

Hiking

Wildlife Observation

Discover the woodland, grassland, and wetland habitats by hiking on one of the refuge's nature trails. Trails originating from the Main parking lot are the North Island trail (grass), South Island trail (grass), Oriole trail (gravel), and Meadowlark trail (concrete and gravel). Shelters with tables are placed along the Oriole and Meadowlark trails. The Headwaters trail (gravel and grass) at the North Chute parking lot and Confluence trail (grass) at the South Chute parking lot offer visitors a view of the inlet and mouth of the chute.

Lewis & Clark

Lewis and Clark expedition history is interpreted at the Main parking lot.

Fishing

Fishing is allowed year-round in the Missouri River and Boyer Chute, except when the chute is ice covered. Two fishing piers along the paved road offer over water accessibility.

An Iowa or Nebraska fishing license is required. State and federal regulations apply. Additionally, the following refuge specific regulations apply:

- No more than two lines with two hooks on each line may be used.
- Ice fishing is not permitted.
- Trot lines, bank lines, and float lines are prohibited.
- Archery and spearfishing are permitted for roughfish only.

Lewis and Clark captured their first badger in the area that is now Boyer Chute National Wildlife Refuge. USFWS

- Digging or seining for bait is prohibited.
- Collection and/or possession of frogs, toads, turtles, clams, and all other wildlife are prohibited.

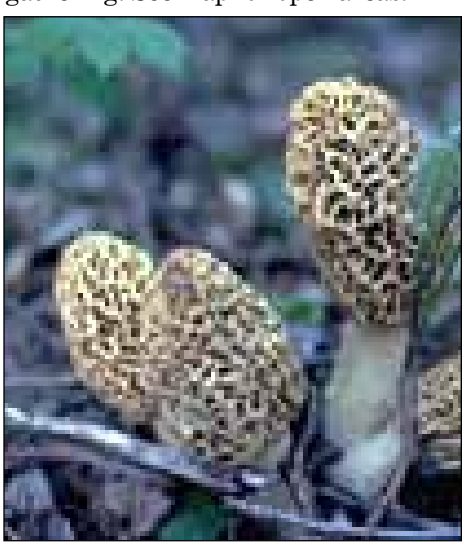
Hunting

Limited hunting opportunities are allowed in the refuge. Contact the refuge manager for current regulations.

Mushroom/ Berry Gathering

Certain areas of the refuge are open to the public for mushroom gathering. See map for open areas.

* DOGS are permitted under the restrictive control of a leash not longer than 6 ft.



Morel mushrooms, D. Menke, USFWS

Prohibited Activities

Fires
- All fires, including charcoal fires and grills are not allowed.

Camping
- Camping is not permitted.

Watercraft/ Swimming
- All watercraft and swimming are prohibited in the chute.

Firearms
- Unauthorized use or possession of firearms, fireworks, airguns, and all other weapons are prohibited.

Trespassing
- Trespassing into closed areas is prohibited.
- Remaining on the refuge beyond 1/2-hour after sunset is prohibited.

Alcohol and Illegal Substances
- Use or possession of alcoholic beverages is prohibited. Use or possession of any illegal drug or drug paraphernalia is prohibited.

Disorderly Conduct
- Disorderly conduct or disturbance of the peace is prohibited. No intoxicated person shall enter or remain upon the refuge.

Pets and Horses
- Pets (other than dogs) and horses are not permitted on the refuge.

Collecting
- Collection or destruction of plant and animal life or parts thereof is prohibited. Collecting shed deer antlers is prohibited.
- Plants and animals collected or taken elsewhere shall not be introduced, liberated, or placed on any part of the refuge.

Lights
- The use of artificial lights to take or locate wildlife is prohibited.

ATVs
- ATVs, snowmobiles, and other unlicensed vehicles are prohibited.
- Vehicles are allowed on public roads and designated parking areas only.

Refuge Signs- What these signs mean:

Refuge boundary sign. Public use permitted in accordance with refuge regulations.

No entry allowed

Wood Duck, S. Maslowski, USFWS

Boyer Chute
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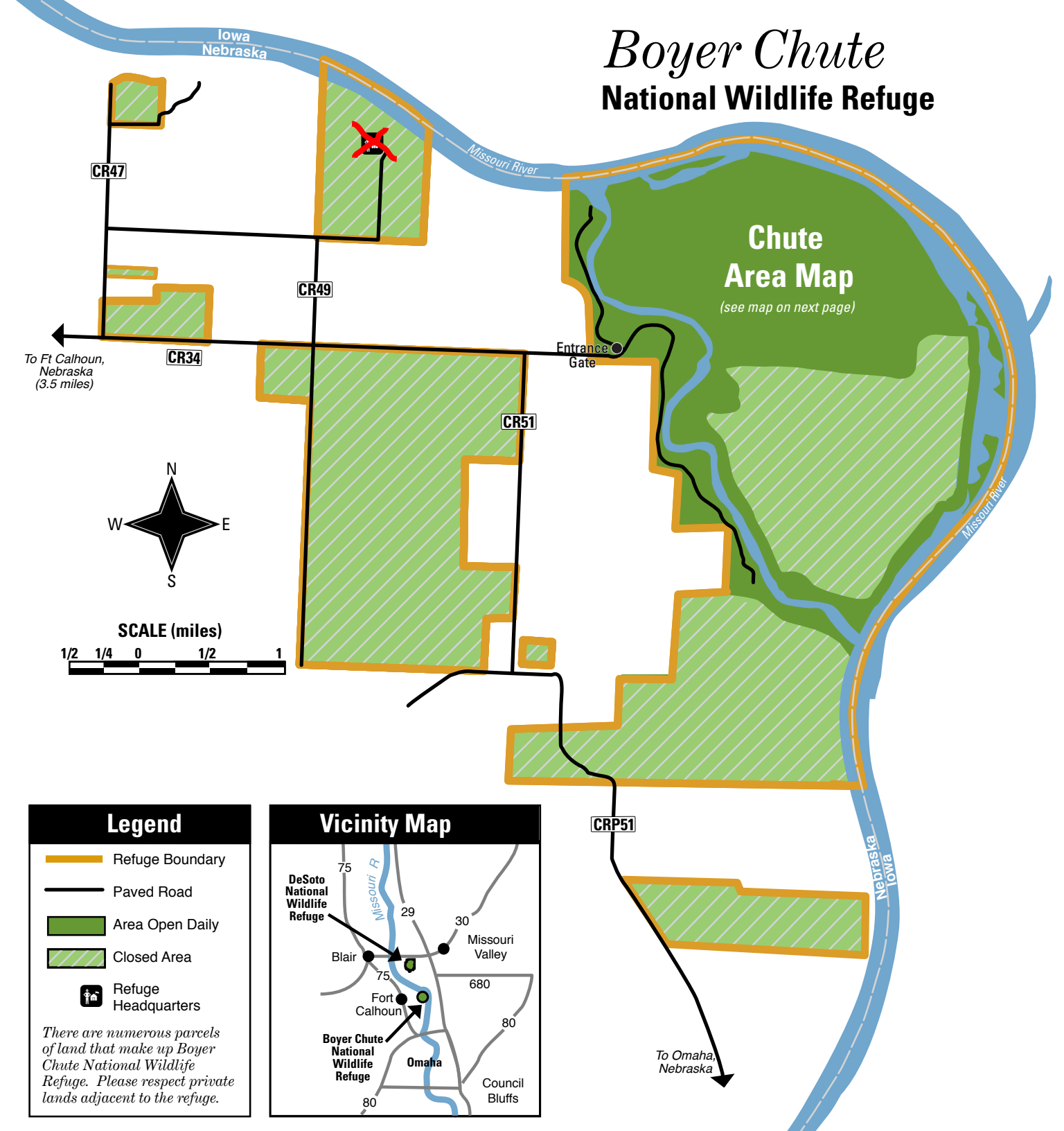

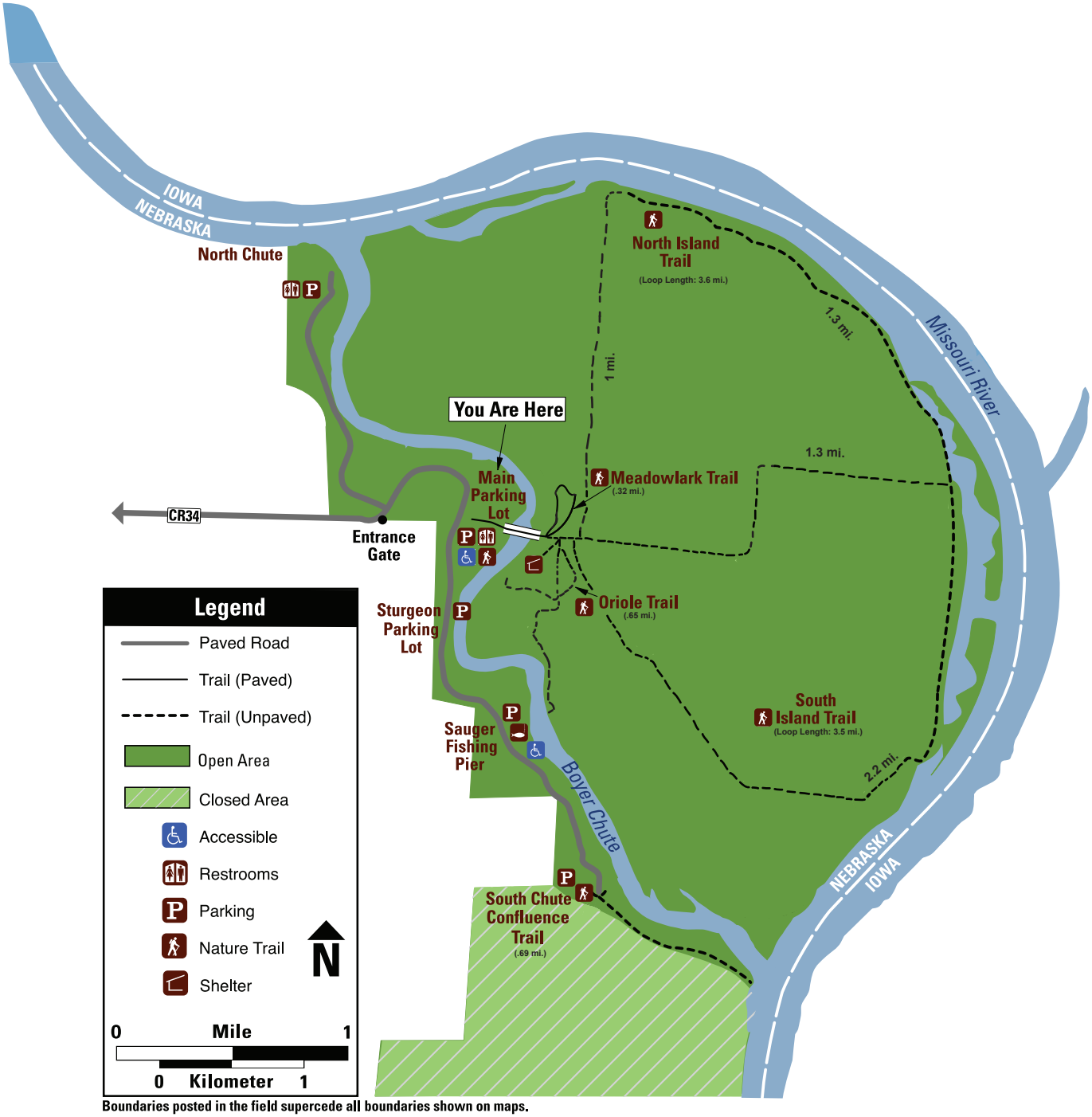

Boundaries posted in the field supercede all boundaries shown on maps.