

Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge

Public Use Regulations 2016-2017

Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge

Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge, established in 1980, is located in the Tensas River Basin in northeastern Louisiana. The Refuge is composed of extensive bottomland hardwood forests intermingled with sloughs, swamps, and lakes that support a tremendous diversity of wildlife. Public Use, including hunting and fishing, is governed by this brochure and the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) mentioned below.

General Regulations

Hunting and fishing regulations are designed to protect the sportsman and wildlife populations. The regulations below supplement the general regulations which govern hunting on National Wildlife Refuges as set forth in Title 50 of the CFR. Hunting will be in accordance with applicable State regulations subject to the following conditions. **All activities are prohibited unless permitted by this brochure.** Prohibited activities include but are not limited to littering, camping/overnight parking, fires, use of metal detectors, and unleashed pets.

Required Permits

Annual Public Use Permit

(Required for all hunters and fishermen)
An Annual Public Use Permit is required for participation in any Refuge hunting or fishing season. This permit allows users to participate in all Refuge hunts (except Quota Modern Firearms Deer Hunts) and other permissible activities, and acknowledges your understanding of the regulations contained in this brochure. Permits are available online at www.tensas.isportsman.net.

Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge
2312 Quebec Road
Tallulah, LA 71282
318/574 2664

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

June 2016



Permit cost is \$20.00 per person and includes the ability to use an ATV on designated trails. No permit is required of anglers and boaters who do not travel on Refuge roads and/or launch on the Refuge as long as they do not get out of the boat onto the Refuge.

Self-Clearing Permit (Required)

An orange Self-Clearing Permit (OMB Control No. 1018-0153) is required for all activities (hunting, fishing, hiking, bird watching, sight-seeing, etc.) on the Refuge unless otherwise specified. Self-Clearing Permits are not required for persons only traveling through the Refuge provided that the most direct route is taken and no activities or stops take place. Self-Clearing Permits can be obtained at Refuge entry points and at the Visitor Center. Self-Clearing Permits consist of three portions: Check-In, Check-Out, and a Vehicle Tag.

Check-In Portion: This top portion must be completed daily and put in a permit box prior to the day's activity.

Check-Out Portion: This middle portion must be carried by each person while on the Refuge. To complete the self-clearing process, both front and back of the check-out portion must be completed. Please completely fill out the card with information including whether or not game was harvested, hours spent, species hunted, and method used. This completed portion must be put in a permit box immediately upon exiting the Refuge at the end of each day.

Vehicle Tag Portion: Each person parking an automobile on the Refuge must leave his/her vehicle tag (bottom portion of card) on the dashboard of the vehicle used to enter the Refuge with the date and permit number facing up so that they can be easily read from outside of the vehicle. Each person riding in the vehicle should also display their vehicle tag so that all permit numbers can be read from outside of the vehicle. This must be done only when the vehicle is parked and left unattended on the Refuge.

Refuge Access During Hunting Season

No individual may enter the Refuge earlier than 4 am and must exit the Refuge no later than two hours after legal sunset unless they are participating in the nighttime raccoon hunt. During Refuge-wide open youth, antlerless, quota modern firearm, and primitive weapon deer hunts, all other public use (including but not limited to small game hunting, scouting, birdwatching, hiking, etc.) is prohibited.

Motor Vehicles and ATVs

All motor vehicles are restricted to normal passenger vehicle roads. Roads and trails may be closed to vehicle use due to adverse conditions. We allow ATV travel on designated trails for access from September 15 to February 28 by permit only. ATV travel is prohibited on Refuge roads. We define an ATV as an off-road vehicle not legal for highway use designed to travel on 3 or 4 wheels, having a seat designed to be straddled by the operator and handlebars for steering control with factory specifications not to exceed the following: Weight 750 pounds, length

All Refuge hunters and fishermen 16 years of age and older are now required to purchase an Annual Public Use Permit.

These permits are available online at www.tensas.isportsman.net. Cost is \$20.00 per person. This permit allows individuals to participate in open (non-quota) hunting and fishing seasons in accordance with all other rules and regulations.

85 inches, width 48 inches, and tires no larger than 25" x 12" with maximum 1" lug height and maximum allowable tire pressure of 7 PSI. The use of UTVs (side-by-sides) is prohibited. The speed limit on all Refuge roads and ATV trails is 25 MPH unless otherwise posted. ATV trails may only be used from 4 am until two hours after legal sunset.

No trailers may be pulled behind an ATV. Bicycles are permitted on roads and maintained trails. Using an ATV to travel off of a designated trail in order to retrieve game, or for any other reason, is strictly prohibited.

All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Permit

Annual Public Use Permits (see Required Permits) are now required instead of the old ATV Permits. To use an ATV on the Refuge, hunters must purchase their Annual Public Use Permit (see Required Permits) which allows them to use ATVs on designated trails without an additional sticker or permit.

Louisiana Black Bears

It is unlawful for anyone to take, harass, disturb, and/or harm any Louisiana black bear. All Refuge users are encouraged to carry bear spray and visit the Refuge website for more information (http://www.fws.gov/refuge/tensas_river/).

NEVER FEED OR APPROACH BEARS.

Always use good hunter ethics and make sure of your target. The Louisiana black bear can be mistaken for a black feral hog in palmetto or heavy cover, so always clearly identify your target. Read the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service brochure "*Hunting in Louisiana Black Bear Habitat*" for more information.

Signs



This sign marks the outer Refuge boundary. Public entry by foot is generally authorized during legal hours on Tensas River NWR. Boundaries are also designated by yellow paint on trees.



This sign means that the area is closed to all public entry. Do not trespass behind this sign for any reason other than emergency. Closed Areas are also designated by red paint on trees.



This sign means that the area is closed to hunting. This area can be walked across as long as your firearm is unloaded.

Specific Fishing Regulations

Sport Fishing

State creel limits and regulations apply.

Trotlines

Trotlines must be attached with a length of cotton line that extends into the water; must be tended at least once every 24 hours and reset when exposed by receding waters. Trotlines must be removed when not in use.

Frog Hunting

Frog hunting may occur by any legal means in the Tensas River and Indian Lake only. State bag limits and seasons apply.

Boating

State regulations apply. Boats may not be left overnight on the Refuge. We allow non-motorized boats, electric motors, and outboard motors not greater than 10 HP to be operated in all Refuge lakes, streams, and bayous with the exception of Indian Lake and the Tensas River. Outboard motors greater than 10 HP may be used in Indian Lake and the Tensas River according to state regulations. All motorized boats must utilize navigation lights according to State regulations.

Specific Hunting Regulations

Hunters are authorized to take only species listed within this brochure. Harming or needlessly disturbing any plants or other wildlife is prohibited.

Prohibited Activities

- Hunting, or shooting within 150 feet of a designated public road, Refuge maintained road, trail, fire breaks, dwellings, above ground oil or gas or electrical transmission facilities or designated public facility. A maintained road, fire break, or trail is defined as one which has been mowed, disked, or plowed and is free of trees.
- Possession or distribution of bait while in the field and hunting with the aid of bait, including any grain, salt, minerals, or any non-naturally occurring food attractant on the Refuge
- Spot-lighting; use of artificial light to locate wildlife

- Blocking trails, gates, or roadways with vehicles
- Use or possession of night vision equipment
- Possession of limb saws, tree cutting saws or any other equipment of this nature
- Man-drives for game
- Use or possession of deer and male turkey decoys
- Use of or installation of remote trail cameras
- Collecting or harvesting any articles of antiquity, plants, animals or parts thereof is prohibited unless specifically authorized by this permit
- Use or possession of alcohol while hunting or fishing
- Trapping
- Target practice
- Use or possession of any type of material to be used as flagging or trail markers and reflective tape, except bright eyes, and clip-on trail markers clearly marked with name and address
- Field dressing game or cleaning fish within 150 feet of parking areas, maintained roads, or trails

Youth Hunters

All individuals 17 years of age and younger are defined as youths and must be under the direct supervision of an adult. Supervising adults must be 18 years of age or older with proof of successful completion of a hunter education course approved by Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. Individuals born before September 1, 1969 may also supervise youths as long as they possess a valid hunting license. Youths ages 16 and 17 must also have hunter education certification in accordance with state regulations. Youths under the age of 16 may hunt with or without hunter education.

Direct supervision means that the person being supervised is within a normal audible voice contact and in direct line of sight of the supervising person at all times while hunting. The supervising adult is responsible for ensuring that youth hunters do not engage in conduct that would constitute a violation of refuge regulations. Persons supervising youth hunters are responsible for violations of laws and regulations committed by the youth hunter(s) they are supervising while on the Refuge. Please see hunting season tables for specific supervision requirements.

Physically Challenged Hunters

Hunters under 60 years of age who wish to use the Refuge's Physically Challenged ATV trails must possess LDWF's Physically Challenged Hunter Permit. More information about this program can be found at <http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/permit/physically-challenged-hunter-permit>. Hunters 60 years of age and older may use the trails without LDWF's Physically Challenged Hunter Permit. Physically challenged users may carry one person on their ATV to assist them. Physically challenged users are encouraged to consult with Refuge staff for available options and alternatives that may make their visit more enjoyable.

Firearms and Ammunition

Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on Refuge must comply with all provisions of state and local laws. Refuge users may only possess approved nontoxic shot while on the Refuge, with the exception that lead shot is allowed during turkey hunting season only. Use and/or possession of buckshot is prohibited.

Treestands and Ground Blinds

Deer hunters may not leave deer stands unattended before the first day of archery season and must remove stands by the last day of the Refuge archery season. Each hunter can only bring one stand. If left unattended, the stand must be clearly marked with the name and address of the owner. Portable stands must be removed from trees daily and free-standing stands must be placed in a non-hunting position when unattended.

Climbing trees by driving nails, spikes, or other metal objects; using a tree that has existing nails, spikes or metal objects; or using climbing spikes; or screw-in accessories; or possession of such items is prohibited. Hunting from deer stands left attached to trees (climbing, loc on, leaning) or in free-standing stands left in hunting position overnight is prohibited.

Ground blinds must be placed in non-hunting position when unattended. If left unattended, the blind must be clearly marked with the name and address of the owner. Deer hunters hunting from concealed ground blinds must display a minimum of 400 square inches of solid hunter orange above or around their blinds that is visible from 360 degrees.

2016-2017 Hunting Seasons

State tagging system, bag limits, and regulations apply unless otherwise specified. All deer and turkey harvested on the Refuge must be validated according to state regulations by calling 866/484 4805 or going online (www.la.wildlifelicense.com), even if checked at a manned check station.

Hunt	Season Dates	Bag Limit	Regulations
Small Game-Squirrel and Rabbit (without dogs)	October 1 – December 31, 2016	State bag limits apply	No squirrel hunting in reforested areas or closed areas. Each adult may supervise no more than 2 youth hunters. Closed during Refuge-wide open youth, antlerless, quota modern firearm, and primitive weapon deer hunts.
Small Game-Squirrel and Rabbit (with or without dogs)	January 1, 2017 – February 28, 2017	State bag limits apply	Solid hunter orange cap required. No more than 3 dogs per hunting party. No squirrel hunting in reforested areas or closed areas. Each adult may supervise no more than 2 youth hunters. No incidental species (including feral hogs) may be harvested during the month of February.
Night Raccoon	December 17, 2016 – January 15, 2017	No bag limit	Use of dogs and lights is approved. Horses and mules allowed from legal sunset to legal sunrise. Hunters must attempt to take treed raccoons. No more than 3 dogs per hunting party.
Woodcock	State season	State bag limits apply	No more than 3 dogs per hunting party. Each adult may supervise no more than 2 youth hunters.
Waterfowl (Ducks and Coots)	Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays, and Sundays of regular State Season until 2 pm	State bag limits apply	No hunting in closed areas or areas designated as no waterfowl hunting areas (see map). Constructing and/or hunting from permanent or pit blinds is prohibited. Portable blinds and decoys must be removed daily by 3 pm. No more than 3 dogs per hunting party. Each adult may supervise no more than 2 youth hunters. Closed during Refuge-wide open youth, antlerless, quota modern firearm, and primitive weapon deer hunts.
Waterfowl-Youth	State Youth Waterfowl Weekend(s)	State bag limits apply	Each youth must be 8-17 years old before the 1st day of the hunt. All youths must be supervised by an adult 18 years or older. Each adult may supervise no more than 2 youth hunters.
Turkey	TBA; first 16 days of State season	Limit 1 gobbler per day, 2 gobblers per season	Adult may supervise no more than 1 youth hunter. Use and/or possession of male turkey decoys is prohibited. Use of lead shot is allowed.
Turkey-Youth	TBA; Saturday and Sunday prior to State season	Limit 1 gobbler per day, 2 gobblers per season	Each youth must be 8-17 years old before the 1st day of the hunt. All youths must be supervised by an adult 18 years or older. See youth definition under Special Hunting Regulations. Adult may supervise no more than 1 youth hunter.
Incidental Species (coyote, beaver, raccoon, skunk, opossum, feral hog)	October 1, 2016 – January 31, 2017 and during Refuge Turkey season	No bag limit	Incidental species may be harvested with weapons legal for the day. No incidental species may be harvested during nighttime raccoon hunts or during the month of February. No feral hogs may be harvested during February squirrel season.
Deer-Archery	November 5, 2016 – January 31, 2017	Limit 1 deer per day, antlered or antlerless	Closed during Refuge-Wide Youth and Quota Modern Firearm deer hunts. Use and/or possession of pods, chemical drugs, explosive tips, or firearms is prohibited. Hunters using archery equipment during the Antlerless Gun hunt must follow additional regulations. See below Longbow, compound bow, and crossbow or any bow drawn, held, or released by mechanical means are legal means of take.
Deer-Youth (Refuge-Wide, Open Youth)	October 29-30, 2016	Limit 1 deer per day, antlered or antlerless	See youth definition under Specific Hunting Regulations. Adult may supervise no more than 1 youth. Primitive weapon, muzzleloader, or modern firearms are authorized methods of take. Scouting in, hunting in and/or shooting into or across reforested or closed areas is prohibited. All hunters must wear and display 400 square inches of solid hunter orange vest and a solid hunter orange cap when in the field. All other public use is prohibited.

Hunt	Season Dates	Bag Limit	Regulations
Deer- Antlerless (General Gun)	Nov 19, 2016	Limit 1 deer per day, antlerless only	<p>Archery equipment, primitive weapon, muzzleloader, or modern firearm are authorized methods of take.</p> <p>Scouting in, hunting in and/or shooting into or across reforested or closed areas is prohibited.</p> <p>Hunters using primitive weapons or muzzleloaders must follow all modern firearms regulations (no hunting in reforested areas).</p> <p>Hunters using archery equipment must follow all modern firearm regulations (including all hunter orange requirements and no hunting in reforested areas). All hunters must wear and display 400 square inches of solid hunter orange vest and a solid hunter orange cap when in the field.</p> <p>Deer harvested during this hunt must be self-cleared using the orange Self-Clearing permit (See Self-Clearing Permit section).</p> <p>Adult may supervise no more than 1 youth.</p> <p>All other public use is prohibited.</p>
Deer- Quota Modern Firearm	Nov 25-26, 2016 Dec 10-11, 2016	Limit 1 deer per day, antlered or antlerless	<p>A valid permit is required for the Deer Quota Hunt in addition to an Annual Public Use Permit, a Self-Clearing Permit, and valid state license and tags. Please see application instructions below.</p> <p>Only those persons with valid Quota Modern Firearm permits may be present on the Refuge during the Quota Modern Firearm hunts.</p> <p>Youths ages 8-17 may apply but MUST be grouped with a person 18 years of age or older who will supervise and be responsible for any violations of laws and regulations committed by the youth.</p> <p>Each adult may only supervise one youth.</p> <p>Primitive weapon, muzzleloader, or modern firearms are the only authorized methods of take.</p> <p>Scouting in, hunting in and/or shooting into or across reforested or closed areas is prohibited.</p> <p>Hunters using primitive weapons or muzzleloaders must follow all modern firearms regulations (no hunting in reforested areas).</p> <p>All hunters must wear and display 400 square inches of solid hunter orange vest and a solid hunter orange cap when in the field.</p> <p>Deer harvested during these Quota hunts must be checked at a manned check station on the first day (7 am-7 pm) and second morning (7 am-12 pm) of both Quota hunts.</p> <p>Manned check stations include: Tendal, Crossroads, Red Barn, Sharkey, McLemore, New Bridge, and Fina. Outside of these hours, deer must be self-cleared using the orange Self-Clearing Permit (See Self-Clearing Permit section).</p> <p>How to Apply</p> <p>All Deer Quota Hunts require an application to be completed and processed online through iSportsman.</p> <p>Online: Hunters may apply online from July 4, 2016 through September 2, 2016 at www.tensas.isportsman.net.</p> <p>Every applicant must register for an account which will enable them to check on their status and receive notifications.</p> <p>Please provide an email address when signing up.</p> <p>Additional instructions can be found on the website.</p> <p>Hunters will be notified of their drawing status no later than 11:59 pm on Wednesday, September 21, 2016.</p> <p>Payment: If drawn for the hunt, there is no additional fee.</p> <p>However, hunters MUST purchase a \$20.00 Annual Public Use Permit (see required permit section) to obtain their Quota Hunt Permit.</p> <p>Further instructions can be found online at the website.</p> <p>Permits are non-transferable and non-refundable.</p> <p>2-5 individuals may apply and be processed as a group or hunt party.</p> <p>Please see instructions on the website.</p> <p>Each hunter may only apply one time for one hunt.</p> <p>Submission of any person's name more than once for the deer quota hunts will result in disqualification.</p>

Hunt	Season Dates	Bag Limit	Regulations
Deer-Primitive Weapon	Dec 3-4, 2016	Limit 1 deer per day, antlered or antlerless	<p>State primitive weapon and muzzleloader regulations apply unless otherwise stated. Archery equipment, primitive weapon, and muzzleloader are authorized methods of take.</p> <p>Primitive Weapon Definition</p> <p>1. Rifles or pistols, .44 caliber minimum, or shotguns 10 gauge or smaller; all of which must load exclusively from the muzzle or cap and ball cylinder; use black powder or approved substitute only, take ball or bullet projectile only, including sabot bullets, including primitive firearms known as “in-line” primitive firearms.</p> <p>2. Single shot, breech loading rifles, .35 caliber or larger; having an exposed hammer that use metallic cartridges loaded either with black powder or modern smokeless powder. All of the above may be fitted with magnified scopes.</p> <p>3. Single shot, breech loading shotguns, 10 gauge or smaller; having an exposed hammer; loaded with rifled slug. USE AND/OR POSSESSION OF BUCKSHOT IS PROHIBITED.</p> <p>Hunters using breech-loading primitive weapons (Parts 2 and 3 of definition) will only be allowed in areas where modern gun hunters can legally hunt (not in reforested areas).</p> <p>Hunters using primitive weapons described as muzzleloaders (including in-line) in Part 1 of definition will be allowed in reforested areas.</p> <p>Hunting in and shooting into or across a closed area is prohibited.</p> <p>All hunters must wear and display 400 square inches of solid hunter orange vest and a solid hunter orange cap when in the field.</p> <p>Deer harvested during this hunt must be self-cleared using the orange Self-Clearing permit (See Self-Clearing Permit section).</p> <p>Adult may supervise no more than 1 youth.</p> <p>All other public use is prohibited.</p>
Deer-Staff Guided Youth Lottery	December 22, 2016 December 29, 2016	Limit 2 deer per day, 1 antlered and 1 antlerless	<p>Each youth must be 8-15 years old at the time of the hunt.</p> <p>Lottery drawing will be held during the Annual Hunting and Fishing Day celebration on September 17, 2016 at the Refuge Visitor Center. Youths must be present to win. Contact the Refuge for more information 318/574 2664.</p> <p>Primitive weapon, muzzleloader, or modern firearms are authorized methods of take.</p> <p>Areas within 200 yards of the Closed Area boundary are closed to all public access and hunting on the days of these hunts.</p>
Deer-Full-Time Wheelchair User	January 7, 2017	Limit 2 deer per day, 1 antlered and 1 antlerless	<p>This hunt is held in conjunction with the Tensas River Refuge Association and the NWTf Wheelin’ Sportsmen program and requires an application to be submitted to the Refuge for the lottery drawing.</p> <p>Contact the Refuge for more information 318/574 2664.</p> <p>Areas within 200 yards of the Closed Area boundary are closed to all public access and hunting on the days of these hunts.</p>

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