

“The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans” (National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997).

Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee NWR is an important component in the conservation and enhancement of fish, wildlife, and plant resources within the National Wildlife Refuge System. Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee NWR was established on June 14, 1940, by Executive Order 8444 under the authority of 16 U.S.C. Sec. 715 (Migratory Bird Conservation Act).

The provisions listed within this publication supplement the general regulations that govern public use on National Wildlife Refuges as set forth in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) (<http://www.ecfr.gov/>). The public is encouraged to use Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge for wildlife observation, photography, hunting, fishing, interpretation, and environmental education.

All other uses are prohibited unless specifically listed within this brochure or by posted regulatory sign. Additional information can be obtained by visiting the refuge’s visitor center.

General Regulations

Entrance Pass Fee

The refuge requires all visitors of age 16 or older to be covered by an Entrance Pass when visiting the refuge. The refuge offers a \$5 daily or \$25 refuge specific annual Entrance Pass. The Service participates in the Federal Recreational Lands Pass program. A current signed Federal duck stamp (when displayed) also serves as an entrance pass to the refuge. Information on the purchase of passes can be found on the refuge’s website (www.fws.gov/refuge/noxubee) and at the Visitor Center.

When arriving by vehicle, entrance passes must be clearly displayed within a vehicle’s front windshield (preferably hanging from rear-view mirror.) For those entering by foot or bike, the permit should be kept in the visitor’s possession. One entrance pass is valid for one vehicle and up to five (5) passengers or the individual if entering by foot or bike. Additional fees apply for deer and waterfowl hunting. The majority (80%) of funding from entrance passes returns back to the refuge and is used for maintaining and improving the refuge’s public use amenities.

Fee free days will be September 30, October 8, and November 11-12, 2017.

Hours of Operation

General refuge hours are sunrise to sunset. During hunting seasons, hunters may enter the refuge at 4:00 a.m. and must exit one hour after sunset. The Visitor Center is open 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday. Sunday hours will vary with the season. Common activities allowed are listed on the enclosed map. In addition to federal regulations, all applicable state regulations apply unless otherwise stated.

Public Entry

Motor vehicles and bicycles are allowed only on improved and unimproved roads. Unless indicated, bicycles are not allowed on walking trails. No vehicles or bicycles are allowed to travel off-road. Parked vehicles may not block access to closed gates. Unless otherwise posted, refuge speed limits are 25 MPH. Use of personal UTVs and ATVs is not allowed on the refuge.

Collection, damage or harassment of any natural or historical items and the release of plants or wildlife is prohibited.

Dogs are allowed for hunting migratory birds, squirrels, rabbits, quail, and raccoon during designated seasons only. When not actively hunting, dogs must be on a leash and under control of owner. All other domestic animals are prohibited.

All personal property must be removed from the refuge each day.

Boating

All refuge waters are open for general public use from March 1 through October 31. Outboard motorboats and paddlecraft are allowed except in areas near the spillway

pools and water control structures. There are no HP restrictions but all motorboats must travel at no-wake speed.

Motorboats and trailered craft can only be launched from designated boat ramps.

Safety Items

Possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on the refuge must comply with all provisions of federal, state and local laws. Persons may only use (discharge) firearms in accordance with refuge regulations.

During refuge deer firearm and primitive weapon seasons, all hunters and visitors, except waterfowl and nighttime coon hunters, using areas outside the Connecting People with Nature area, must wear in full view a minimum of 500 square inches of solid unbroken fluorescent orange. This regulation applies to hunters that are elevated 12 feet or more above the ground; or hunting in a fully enclosed blind.

For emergencies dial 911 or 662/323 5548.

Tree Stands and Ground Blinds

It is illegal to construct or to hunt from any permanent stands or blinds. Valid permit holders are allowed to possess and hunt from one portable stand or blind on the refuge. All stands on the refuge must be identified with hunter’s name and phone number permanently and legibly written on or attached to the stand. Stands left on the refuge do not reserve the hunting locations. Stands may be placed two days prior to hunt and must be removed two days after the season closes. Stands not in compliance with these regulations may be confiscated and disposed of by the refuge.

Users of tree stands must use a full body safety harness at all times. Stands in the Noxubee Wilderness area must be removed daily. It is unlawful to drive a nail, spike, or other metal object into a tree or to set a stand on any tree in which such an object has been driven. Cutting or trimming branches or brush is prohibited.

Ground blinds, when occupied, must display a minimum of 400 square inches of solid unbroken fluorescent orange visible from all sides during deer firearm and primitive weapon hunts.

Hunting Fee

Waterfowl and deer hunters age 16 years or older are required to purchase and possess an additional quota fee

permit. Information on the purchase of these permits can be found on the refuge’s website (<http://www.fws.gov/refuge/noxubee>)

Hunting

The refuge has designated seasons for a variety of small game, waterfowl, turkey and deer including special opportunities for youth and disabled hunters. A table summarizing season dates appears on the map page. CFR Title 50 Chapter 1 Part 32 applies. The Connecting People with Nature area is closed to all hunting and hunting access unless part of a planned environmental education program. Areas of the refuge open to waterfowl hunting are closed to all other uses while the hunt is actively occurring.

Baiting on the refuge is prohibited.

All hunters are required to check in prior to hunting and out before leaving the refuge (regardless of whether any game was taken) by completing a Daily Visitor Information Card (OMB Control No. 1018-0153) located at the refuge’s check stations (see map for locations).

Small Game and Turkey

All persons hunting small game and turkey are required to use nontoxic shot within all green-tree reservoirs (GTRs) and nontoxic shot is recommended specifically in wetland areas throughout the refuge. Small game may also be hunted with .22 magnum, .17 and .22 caliber rimfire rifles. Archery equipment using arrows with points other than broadheads may be used. Small game hunters must comply with hunter orange requirements during refuge firearm deer seasons. State bag and harvest restrictions apply.

When hunting quail or rabbit on a refuge outside deer firearm and primitive weapons seasons, hunters must wear a hunter orange vest or cap.

Deer

All deer hunters age 16 years or older are required to purchase a refuge quota deer permit. Information on the purchase of these permits can be found on the refuge’s website (<http://www.fws.gov/refuge/noxubee>). Deer hunters may use those weapons defined by state regulation. During any deer firearm season, hunter orange must be worn at all times when actively hunting; hunters are not allowed to remove hunter orange when in tree stands.

State limits apply. The refuge is within the State East Central Zone. Driving deer is prohibited.

Cleaning of harvested deer is prohibited within the Connecting People with Nature area and any remains cleaned outside this area must be dispersed within the forest and left no closer than 300 feet to any road or trail. Deer can be field-dressed where harvested.

Incidental Species

Hunters may take incidental species (coyote, beaver, nutria, and feral hog) during any hunt with those weapons legal during those hunts.

Disabled Hunters

A special deer hunt for disabled (as defined by Mississippi Admin Code Title 40 Part 2 Chapter 2 Rule 1.4 Special Use Regulations for Individuals with Disabilities) hunters will be held December 16-23, 2017. A special turkey hunt for disabled hunters will be held from April 17-24. During these two periods only disabled hunters may hunt on the refuge.

Disabled hunters must have a current Entrance Pass, and when applicable, a quota deer permit. Contact the refuge office for more information or check the website: <http://www.fws.gov/refuge/noxubee>.

Youth Hunters

All persons under 16 years of age, while hunting on the refuge, must be in the presence and under direct supervision of a licensed or exempt hunter at least twenty-one years of age, when hunting. A licensed hunter supervising a youth as provided in this section must hold all required licenses and permits. One adult may supervise no more than two youth hunters. Only the youth may handle, carry, transport, or discharge firearms. Refuge quota deer or waterfowl permits are not required for youth hunters or non-hunting adults, however Entrance Pass requirements apply.

Waterfowl

All waterfowl hunters age 16 years or older are required to purchase a refuge waterfowl permit. Information on the purchase of these permits can be found on the refuge's website: <http://www.fws.gov/refuge/noxubee>.

Waterfowl hunting occurs on each Wednesday and Saturday morning of the state waterfowl season, excluding federal holidays. Hunters possessing a valid refuge waterfowl permit are allowed to fill blinds on the morning of the hunt. These hunters will be randomly drawn among those present the morning of the hunt. Hunters are required to check in and out of the refuge's staffed waterfowl check station located on River Road.

Waterfowl hunters are allowed no more than 25 shotshells per person. All hunters must return to the check station by 1 pm. CFR Title 50 Chapter 1 Part 20 applies along with state limits and regulations.

Decoys, duck blinds and spent shells must be removed from the hunting area following each day's hunt.

Fishing

Sport fishing is permitted on all waters of the refuge from March 1-October 31. The Noxubee River, the borrow pits along Highway 25, the Bluff Lake Spillway Pool, and the shore of Bluff Lake located between the Bluff Lake Boardwalk and the Cypress Cove Boardwalk are open year-round to bank fishing.

State limits and regulations apply. No commercial or tournament fishing activities are allowed on the refuge. Snagging and cast netting is prohibited.

Sport fishing gear (rod/reel and cane poles) is allowed in all water bodies when open. No cast netting.

Set hooks, limb lines and hand grappling are only allowed in the Noxubee River. Anglers must tag pole and set hooks with their name and address. Lines must be tended every 24 hours and removed when not in use.

Trotlines are allowed in Bluff Lake, Loakfoma Lake, and the Noxubee River; they must have floats and cotton string leaders attached to each end. Lines must be labeled with owner's name and address. Only one line is allowed per person with no more than two lines allowed per boat. Lines must be tended every 24 hours and removed when not in use.

Jug fishing is allowed in Bluff Lake and Loakfoma Lake only. Each jug must be labeled with owner's name and address. Jug lines must be tended every 24 hours and removed when not in use.

Bowfishing is allowed in all water bodies during daylight hours only. Nighttime bowfishing is prohibited.

The taking of amphibians and reptiles including frogs and turtles is prohibited (see §27.21).

Cleaning and disposal of harvested fish is prohibited within the Connecting People with Nature area.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee

National Wildlife Refuge Public Use Regulations 2017-2018

Sam D. Hamilton
Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge
13723 Bluff Lake Rd
Brooksville, MS 39739
662/323 5548
<http://www.fws.gov/refuge/noxubee>
Or Facebook at:
<https://www.facebook.com/NoxubeeNWR>
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD

August 2017



Expires 8/31/2018