

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Hatchie

*National Wildlife
Refuge*



Hatchie National Wildlife Refuge is one of over 500 federal refuges scattered across more than 92 million acres of the most productive wildlife habitat in the country. Hatchie is operated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and is part of a unique system of refuges designed to manage and protect this country's most complete array of wildlife.



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

Hatchie National Wildlife Refuge includes 11,556 acres along the Hatchie Scenic River and is located three miles south of Brownsville, Tennessee. The refuge was established in 1964, primarily to provide habitat (food, water and shelter) for migrating and wintering waterfowl.

Habitat

When the first settlers arrived in the Mississippi River Delta, over 25 million acres of swamp forest habitat, dominated by water-tolerant oaks, stretched before them. This habitat provided them with many of the necessities needed in their daily lives. Generations have lived to the rhythm of the river—transporting, logging, farming, hunting and fishing.



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Today, over 95% of this wetland habitat has been cleared for agriculture and other purposes. Only about one million acres of good quality swamp forest now remains for the fish, wildlife and people so dependent on this type of habitat.

Over 9,400 acres of bottomland forest remain at Hatchie National Wildlife Refuge and still function as a natural forested woodland, much as it did during Pioneer times. The bottomland forest still slows ravaging flood waters, filters sediment to improve water quality, and produces immense amounts of timber.

It also provides a winter home for migrating waterfowl and a place for people to appreciate and enjoy a part of our great natural heritage. This seasonally flooded, lowland forest ecosystem with its abundant fish and wildlife is one of the many features that makes Hatchie such a special place for wildlife and people.



Wildlife

Over 200 species of birds, 50 species of mammals and an amazing assortment of reptiles, amphibians, fish and invertebrates can be found in the varied habitats of Hatchie National Wildlife Refuge. The bottomland forests and meandering sloughs provide breeding habitat for numerous wood ducks and hooded mergansers. Mallards, black ducks and other migratory waterfowl that brighten the gray winter skies, also are attracted to the refuge's extensive feeding areas and resting areas.



During the spring and summer the woods literally swarm with songbirds of every color. Scarlet tanagers, ruby-crowned kinglets, yellow warblers, goldfinches, green-backed herons, blue jays, red-headed woodpeckers and indigo buntings paint the woods with all of the colors of the rainbow. Bald eagles and ospreys are rare winter visitors, but red-shouldered hawks, barred owls and wild turkeys thrive in the area and can be seen year-round.



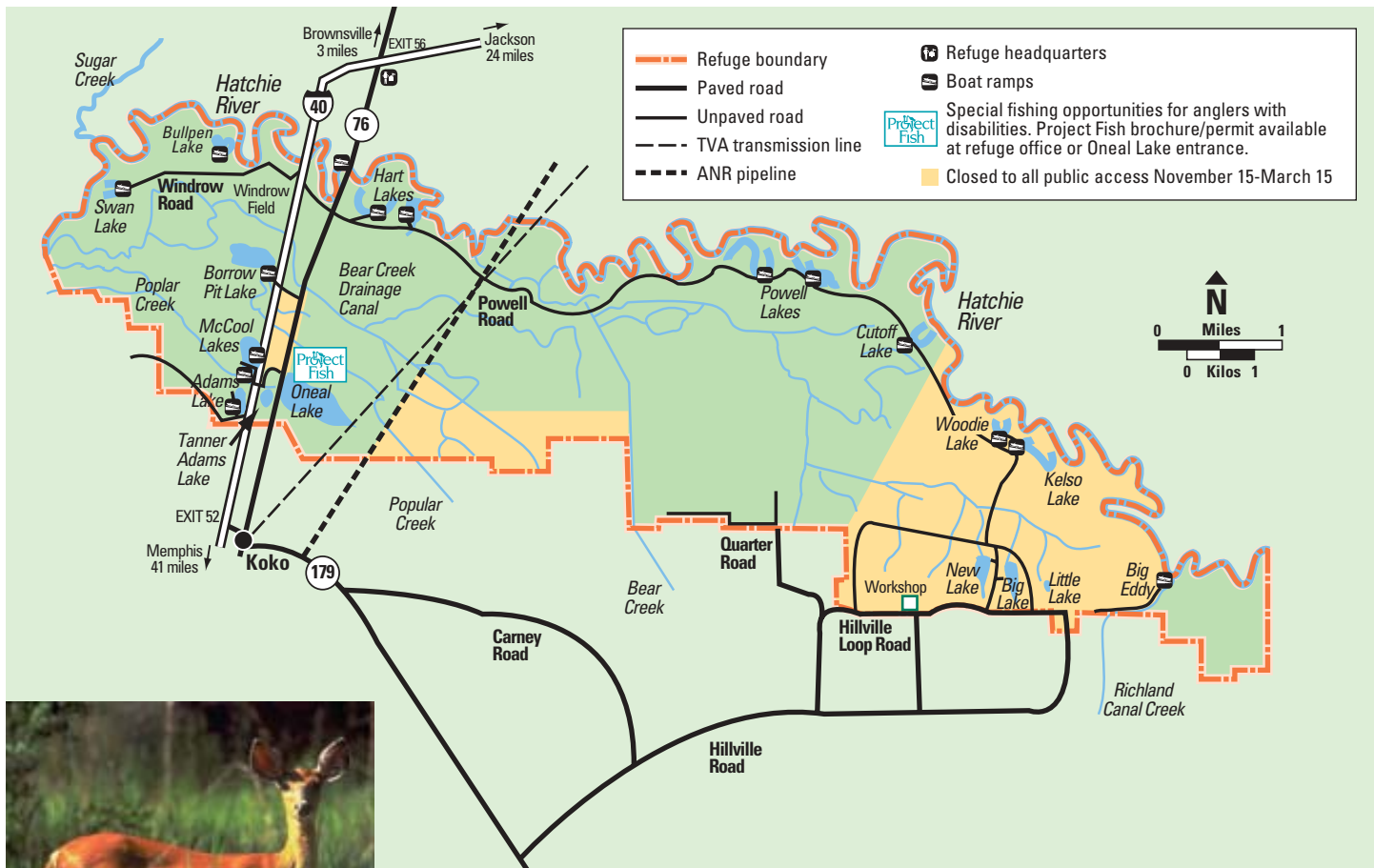
Some of the more numerous resident mammals include white-tailed deer, beaver and squirrels. While river otters have disappeared from most parts of Tennessee,

they still are found in good numbers at Hatchie. When seen, they delight visitors and refuge staff as well, with their playful antics.

Recreational Opportunities

Hatchie National Wildlife Refuge is not only for wildlife, it is also for people. However, on Hatchie, just





Fred Youngblood



like on all National Wildlife Refuges, wildlife comes first. What this simply means is we will

provide all of the wildlife-dependent recreational activities our budget will allow, but if ever there is a conflict between wildlife and people, wildlife will be our first consideration.

Recreational activities include hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, nature study, environmental education and interpretive opportunities. Contact the refuge office for information on tours for school and other organized groups.

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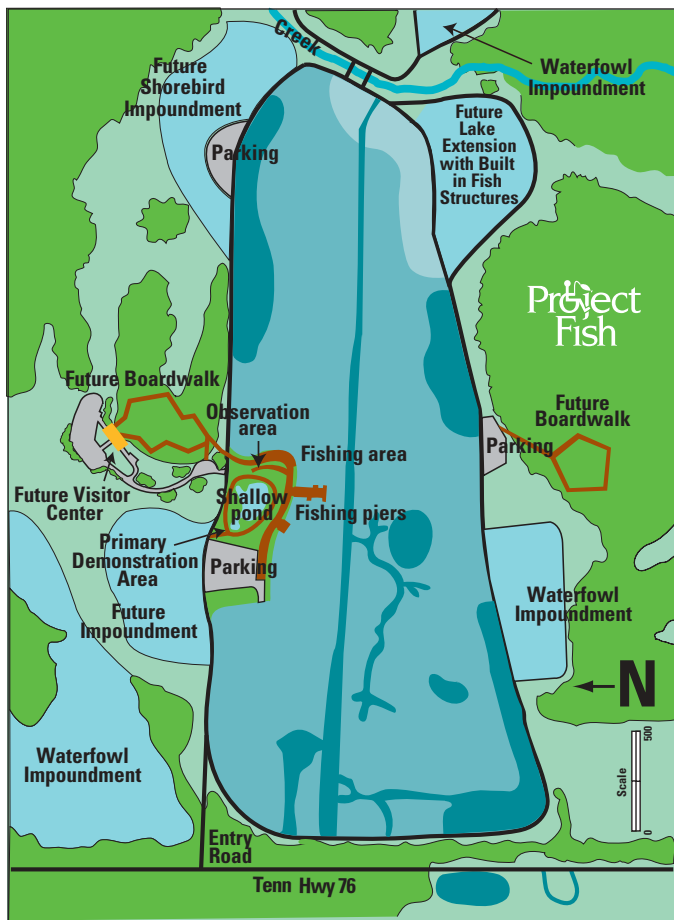


Hunting is permitted for big game, small game and migratory birds within established seasons.

Sport fishing is allowed on all refuge waters year-round,

except for Oneal Lake and a few other waters noted on the leaflet map. Make sure you obtain a copy of the refuge hunting and fishing leaflet for additional information and for the appropriate permit.

Other recreational opportunities mentioned above are available on all of the public areas of the refuge with



a prime area being Whistling Wings Wildlife Drive located at Oneal Lake. Whistling Wings Wildlife Drive is a perfect place to watch and photograph wildlife, and learn something about it, all while watching the sun set over Oneal Lake.

Special Projects

Project Fish began in 1992 as a model demonstration project designed to create and develop fishing facilities for people with disabilities. While many people with disabilities already enjoy or would enjoy a peaceful day of fishing, all too many times they are limited in where they can fish because of inadequate facilities.



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At Oneal lake, Project Fish develops innovative facility designs for meeting the needs of anglers with disabilities. Once facilities are constructed, they are used and evaluated by fishermen with a variety of disabilities and then modified. The results are well designed, state of the art fishing facilities, that meet the needs of the majority of anglers with disabilities.

Project Fish not only provides specialized fishing structures for people with disabilities, but also serves as a training facility for federal, state and local agency personnel. Designs are shared with all of those interested in making the world of fishing reachable to people with various abilities and disabilities.

Hatchie Pride

The Hatchie Scenic River is the last unchannelized river of its type in the Lower Mississippi Valley and it supports a rich bottomland-hardwoods ecosystem. Sadly, this unique river like many others in the country is in trouble. The Hatchie River is currently experiencing one of the highest sedimentation rates of any river in the world! Nineteen million tons of sediment per year is being deposited into the 1,400,000 acre Hatchie River drainage system. That is comparable to a dump truck dumping 8 tons of dirt into the water, every 13 seconds, day and night, every day, all year long, each and every year.

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David McEwen



An alliance of government agencies, conservation groups and landowners have formed an organization called Hatchie Pride with the goals of Protection, Restoration, Information and Education, Development and Evaluation of the Hatchie River's two-million acre watershed. They are working together to reduce the sedimentation rate of the Hatchie river by 50%. This will help prevent devastation of the forests located in this watershed.



Gary Henry



Refuge Regulations

While everyone is encouraged to visit Hatchie National Wildlife Refuge, there are regulations in effect to protect not only the wildlife, but also the visitor. Use common sense and treat the refuge like it belongs to you, because it does!

If you have any questions as to what you can do on the refuge or where you can do it, it is best to check with the refuge office located on Highway 76 just south of I-40. Some, but not all of our regulations are listed below and are also indicated on signs with international symbols at various locations throughout the refuge. Remember, this is not the total list of regulations in effect but these are the major regulations.

The public is allowed on the refuge only during daylight hours, from one hour before sunrise until one hour after sunset. Certain areas are closed to all public access from November 15 through March 15 to provide sanctuary to waterfowl. (See map for areas.) Only legally licensed vehicles are allowed on the refuge. ATV's and ATC's are prohibited. All vehicles are required to stay on established roads.

Hunting and fishing are allowed only in season and only by a permit that is part of the regulations leaflet and is available at the refuge office and at major entrances to the refuge. Firearms are allowed only during legal hunting seasons.

Camping and fires are not allowed.

Pets must be on a leash or confined.

For more information

Further information may be obtained at the Refuge Office, located three miles south of Brownsville, Tennessee at the intersection of Highway 76 and Interstate 40.

Hatchie National Wildlife Refuge
4172 Highway 76 South
Brownsville, Tennessee 38012
901/772 0501

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD
<http://www.fws.gov/~r4eao>

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