

White River

National Wildlife Refuge



photo: USFWS



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Refuge Facts

- Established: 1935.
- Acres: 160,000 (Arkansas) 90 miles of the White River lies within the boundaries of the refuge.
- Located in Desha, Monroe, and Phillips counties, AR and Arkansas county.

Natural History

- Refuge occupies 90 of the lower 100 miles of the White River; also 3 miles of the McClellan Kerr Arkansas Post Canal Corp's of Engineers Project.
- Largest concentration of wintering mallard ducks in the Mississippi Flyway, other large concentrations of birds include snow and canada geese.
- Numerous species of wading birds, shorebirds, and raptors.
- Four active bald eagle nests, and a healthy population of native black bears.
- Total of 356 natural and man made lakes encompassing 4,000 acres; forestland of 154,000 acres; cropland 900 acres; and grassland 1,000 acres.

Financial Impact of Refuge

- 12-person staff.
- 150,000 visitors annually.
- Current budget (FY 00) \$1,000,000.
- Resident and non-resident visitors generated \$3.75 million in expenditures.

Refuge Objectives

- To provide optimum habitat for migratory birds consistent with the overall objectives of the Mississippi Flyway.
- To provide habitat and protection for endangered species occurring on the refuge.

- To provide for a natural diversity of wildlife common to the White River bottoms.
- To provide opportunities and facilities for wildlife oriented recreation and environmental education in the highest possible degree compatible with other refuge objectives.
- To cooperate with other water and land managing agencies and private interests to foster proper management of the total water and land resources of the White River Basin.
- To preserve appropriate wooded areas in their natural condition for scientific study and for public enjoyment.

Management Tools

- Forest management to promote quality habitats for migratory birds and other wildlife.
- Water management for waterfowl and wading birds.
- Cooperative farming for waterfowl food production.
- Mechanical/ chemical control of noxious plants.
- Big and small game management with public hunting.
- Education/interpretation.
- Law enforcement.
- Partnerships.

Public Use Opportunities

- Trails.
- Fishing.
- Observation tower.
- Wildlife observation.
- Photography.
- Hunting.
- Boating.

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Calendar of Events

January: waterfowl hunting.

March: fishing season opens.

April: turkey hunting.

May: Migratory Bird Day.

September: squirrel/rabbit hunting.

October: archery/muzzleloader deer hunting.

November: modern gun deer hunting, waterfowl hunting.

December: waterfowl hunting, furbearer hunting.

Questions and Answers

When will refuge gravel or dirt roads open to access fishing lakes?

As soon as receding floodwater and drying weather conditions allow.

When can I apply for the quota deer hunt permit drawing?

During the month of August.

What roads can I drive on?

Established roads only, including gravel and dirt, when not blocked by gate or other means due to flooding or resource protection.

Where can I get detailed maps of the refuge?

The refuge brochure is mailed by request. Detailed maps are available for purchase from Arkansas Geological Commission in Little Rock, Corps of Engineers in Memphis. Some privately made detailed maps are available at some bookstores, sporting goods stores and blueprint shop.