

Bayou Cocodrie

National Wildlife Refuge

Public Use Regulations

2012-2013



Hunting, Fishing, Observation, Photography and Hiking

legal weapon to harvest deer. Applicants must specify their current contact information along with the unit (Refuge Headquarters or Cross Bayou Station) for which they are applying to hunt on. Two deer harvested per day (1 buck and 1 doe) is allowed. Wheelchair accessible hunting blinds will be provided to participants.

Youth Lottery Hunts

Youth ages 10–15 that have completed a hunter education course are allowed to participate in this hunt. The eligibility of the youth is determined by his/her age on the day of the hunt. Each youth must be accompanied by an adult 21 years of age or older. Both a lottery issued permit and a Refuge Annual Use Permit must be in the Hunter's possession during this hunt. All legal firearms may be used to harvest deer. Adults may not carry a weapon during the hunt. Two deer harvested per day (1 buck and 1 doe) is allowed. All hunters are required to remove the lower jaw bone, measure antlers, weigh each harvested deer, record the information on the data card attached to the jawbone, and deposit it at the mandatory check station.

Applicants must submit a copy of their hunter's safety card, specify their preferred season (Youth Lottery I, II, or III) and unit (Refuge Headquarters or Cross Bayou).

Lottery General Gun Hunt

One deer harvested per day is allowed. All hunters are required to remove the lower jaw bone, measure antlers, weigh each harvested deer, record the information on the data card attached to the jawbone, and deposit it at the mandatory check station. Duplicate or incomplete lottery hunt applications will be discarded.

No faxed entries will be accepted. Applicants will be selected by random drawing and notified by mail if selected. No lottery hunt selection information will be given over the phone. Only those persons with valid hunt permits are allowed to use the refuge during the hunt. Lottery permits are nontransferable and they must be in the hunter's possession at all times during the scheduled hunt. Successful applicants will also need a Refuge Annual Public Use Permit to participate in the hunt.

Big Game Regulations

Archery Season

Archery hunting for deer is allowed on the refuge during the specified season in this brochure. One deer harvested per day is allowed. All hunters are required to remove the lower jaw bone, measure antlers, weigh each harvested deer, record the information on the data card attached to the jawbone, and deposit it at the mandatory check station.

Archery is closed during Lottery Deer Hunt and Open Youth Hunt, Closed on Cross Bayou Unit and that portion of the Brooks Brake Unit that lies north and west of the Brooks Brake ATV Trail (Pinto Brake area) during the Youth Lottery Hunts and the Special Access Hunt.

Refuge Wide Open Youth

Youth ages 7–17 that have completed a hunter education course are allowed to participate in this hunt. The eligibility of the youth is determined by his/her age on the day of the hunt. Each youth must be accompanied by a licensed adult 21 years of age or older. Youth hunters must obtain a free refuge permit to hunt during this season. All legal weapons may be used to harvest deer. Adults may not carry a weapon during the hunt. Two deer harvested per day (1 buck and 1 doe) is allowed. All hunters are required to remove the lower jaw bone, measure antlers, weigh each harvested deer, record the information on the data card attached to the jawbone, and deposit it at the mandatory check station.

Primitive Weapon Hunt

Only muzzleloading rifles (as defined by the state) and compound, recurve, or longbows may be used during the refuge primitive weapon season. Hunter orange requirements apply to all hunters. One deer harvested per day is allowed. All hunters are required to remove the lower jaw bone, measure antlers, weigh each harvested deer, record the information on the data card attached to the jawbone, and deposit it at the mandatory check station.

Limited Access Hunts

These hunts may be canceled by the Refuge Manager due to inclement weather, unsafe road or trail conditions, staff shortages, government closures, etc.

Lottery Hunt Permits are non-transferrable.

Special Access Hunt

Only wheelchair dependent hunters are allowed to apply and participate in this hunt. All hunters must submit a copy of a valid Disabled Hunter Card issued by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and a doctor's certification stating the nature of the wheel chair dependency with their application. Hunters may use any

2) single shot, breech loading rifles, .38 caliber or larger of any kind or type manufactured prior to 1900 and replicas, reproductions, or reintroductions of that type of rifle having an exposed hammer that uses metallic cartridges loaded with black powder or modern smokeless powder. All of the above may be fitted with magnified scopes.

Ammunition

The possession of slugs or rifle ammunition larger than .22 caliber rim-fire is prohibited during the refuge small game seasons. Possession of lead shot, buckshot, or any shotgun ammunition other than approved, non-toxic shot is prohibited on the refuge. Lead center-fire bullets and lead rifled slugs are permitted during lottery deer hunts. Lead bullets may also be used during the muzzleloader hunt.

Small Game Regulations

Waterfowl

Waterfowl hunting is open refuge wide on Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday until noon during the state season. Blinds and decoys used for waterfowl hunting must be removed daily by 1 pm. Waterfowl hunting is closed during all lottery deer hunts. Hunting with dogs for waterfowl is allowed during the waterfowl season.

Woodcock

Woodcock hunting is open on the refuge during the state season except during lottery deer hunts when it will be closed. Hunting with dogs for woodcock is allowed during the woodcock season.

Rabbit and Squirrel

Rabbit and squirrel hunting is allowed on the refuge except during refuge lottery, primitive weapon, and open youth deer gun hunts when the season is closed. The use of dogs for rabbit and squirrel hunting is only allowed during a specific portion of the season. Hunters must verify season dates in this brochure regarding the use dogs on the refuge.

Incidental Species

Beaver, nutria, armadillo, coyote, raccoon, and feral hogs may be taken with a legal firearm or archery equipment during any open hunting season. Hunters must have a valid refuge permit and any state required licenses to harvest incidental species. There is no bag limit on coyotes, beaver, or feral hogs. State regulations apply to all other incidental species.

Hunters hunting from concealed ground blinds (excluding waterfowl hunters) must meet refuge hunter orange requirements (listed above). Only temporary blinds are allowed for waterfowl hunting. Blinds and decoys used for waterfowl hunting must be removed daily by 1 pm. The use of old structures/camps for hunting is prohibited.

Hunting with Dogs

Hunting with dogs for migratory birds is permitted during migratory bird seasons. Dogs are only allowed to locate, point, flush, and retrieve migratory game birds. Hunting with dogs is permitted during special rabbit and squirrel season listed in this brochure. Up to two dogs per hunting party are permitted for small game hunting. All dogs must be collared and labeled with owner's name and phone number. Hunting any wildlife other than migratory birds, squirrel, and rabbit with dogs is prohibited. Use of dogs to trail wounded deer is not allowed.

Weapons and Ammunition

Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on National Wildlife Refuges must comply with all provisions of state and local law. Persons may only use (discharge) firearms in accordance with refuge regulations (50 CFR 27.42 and specific regulations in 50 CFR Part 32).

Archery

Longbow, compound bow, and crossbow or any bow drawn, held, or released by mechanical means are considered legal for hunting on the refuge. Archery equipment is only allowed on the refuge during the refuge deer hunting season. All state laws regulating archery equipment requirements apply on the refuge.

Rifles

Center-fire rifles are allowed during the general firearms, special access, and youth lottery deer hunts. State restrictions apply to all center-fire rifle equipment. It is illegal to shoot a deer with a center-fire rifle smaller than a .22 caliber or a shotgun loaded with anything other than rifled slugs. Rifles .22 caliber rim-fire or smaller may be used to hunt small game. Mobility-impaired and disabled hunters are encouraged to consult refuge staff about available legal firearm options for the Special Access Deer Hunt.

Primitive Firearms

Legal primitive firearms must meet the following requirements:

1) rifles that load exclusively from the muzzle or cap and ball cylinder, .44 caliber minimum, use black powder or approved substitute only, take ball or bullet projectile only, including sabot bullets, and in-line muzzleloaders.

Bayou Cocodrie
National Wildlife Refuge
P.O. Box 1772
Ferriday, LA 71334
318/336 7119
<http://southeast.fws.gov>

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD

May 2012



Bayou Cocodrie National Wildlife Refuge

Bayou Cocodrie National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) was established in 1992 to protect some of the last remaining, least disturbed bottomland hardwoods in the Lower Mississippi Valley. The 14,668 acre refuge located near Ferriday, Louisiana provides critical habitat for over 150 species of birds, threatened Louisiana black bear, and waterfowl during their annual migration. The ridge and swale topography throughout most of the refuge creates a diverse array of habitat types including: cypress-tupelo brakes, cypress swamps, old growth bottomland hardwood forest, and floodplain woods in addition to reforested areas and shallow-water impoundments.

The refuge has an integral role within the National Wildlife Refuge System by sustaining migration corridors and nesting habitat for bottomland hardwood forest dependent wildlife species, maintaining high terrestrial biodiversity, and by contributing to the overall function of the Lower Mississippi Valley ecosystem. Visitors to the refuge can partake in activities that benefit the conservation of fish and wildlife resources including: wildlife observation, wildlife photography, hunting, fishing, environmental education, and interpretation. The refuge contains several areas that are open year round for the enjoyment of the public. However, hunting is only permitted on the refuge during specific times of the year.

General Regulations

Individuals utilizing the refuge are subject to inspections of permits, licenses, hunting equipment, bag limits, boats, vehicles, and their contents by refuge officers. To ensure your safety and enjoyment while visiting Bayou Cocodrie NWR, please take the time to become familiar with the refuge regulations. Hunting and fishing regulations are designed to provide safe recreational opportunities through wise use of renewable wildlife resources. Hunting is permitted in accordance with Federal regulations governing public use on National Wildlife Refuges as set forth in Title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations. State hunting and fishing regulations will be applicable to all game species on the refuge unless otherwise listed in this brochure.

Required Permits

A \$15.00 Annual Public Use Permit is required for all hunters and fisherman. Permits are free but required for adults age 65 and older and children age 8-15 that are hunting and fishing on the refuge. Permits must be signed and in your possession while hunting or fishing, and this acknowledges your understanding of refuge regulations. In addition to your refuge permit, you must carry all applicable state licenses and a government issued picture

identification card while on refuge property. Annual Public Use Permits authorize participation in all refuge hunting and fishing, except for lottery deer hunts including: Lottery General Gun, Youth Lottery, and Special Access. The Refuge Manager may revoke any Annual Public Use Permit for violations of refuge rules and regulations.

Permits are available by mail. Each applicant must send a \$15.00 money order payable to: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with his/her full name, address, and phone number to Bayou Cocodrie NWR, PO Box 1772, Ferriday LA 71334. Permits are non-transferable and non-refundable. To purchase a permit in person, contact the Refuge headquarters at 318/3367119 for the name and location of sales outlets.

Access

The refuge is open to public access from sunrise to sunset except for hunting and fishing activities which are designated under those sections of this brochure. Fishing, waterfowl hunting, small game and archery deer hunting are not allowed during the special deer gun hunts. The Refuge Manager may close the refuge at their discretion due to inclement weather, road conditions, or excessive flooding. Each refuge user must obtain a Daily Visitor Use Reporting Card (one per person) and fill out all of the requested information prior to each entry to the refuge. The Daily Use Report card must be placed in clear view on your vehicle dashboard or in your boat to display your name, signature, and date that you entered the refuge. Prior to leaving the refuge, the back portion of the Daily Use Reporting Card must be completed and returned to the refuge kiosk/check station. Accessing the refuge from private land is allowed; however, each visitor is required to register via the Daily Use Reporting Card at a refuge kiosk/check station prior to entering and departure from the refuge.

Vehicle

All motor vehicles are restricted to refuge parking areas or parish roads. Refuge roads, parking areas and/or trails may be closed at times due to flooding or adverse weather conditions. All travel on refuge roads is at your own risk. Hunters are prohibited from parking in the closed hunting area (asphalt road and parking lot) on Hoover Slough. Visitors must not block any gate, road, entrance, or trail with their vehicle. Bicycles are allowed to access the refuge for wildlife oriented activities year round and are restricted to designated hiking and ATV trails. Horses and mules are not allowed.

All Terrain Vehicles

The use of all terrain vehicles (ATV or UTV) are only allowed on designated ATV trails from September 1

through February 28 for scouting and hunting activities.

Use of an ATV to travel off a designated ATV trail for any reason is strictly prohibited. Causing ruts and road degradation during wet conditions with an ATV is strictly prohibited. ATV trails may be closed by the Refuge Manager during times of inclement weather and/or when the trails become unsafe to access. Hunters must be 16 years of age or older to operate an ATV/UTV on the refuge. ATV's and UTV's must not exceed 25 mph when driven on the refuge. All ATV's and UTV's used on the refuge must meet the state size requirements for use on Louisiana Wildlife Management Areas.

Boats

Boats may be used to access the refuge from Bayou Cocodrie or Cross Bayou. Entering the refuge from U.S. Highway 84 is prohibited. All state boating regulations apply including, but not limited to, running lights, registration, and personal floatation devices.

Prohibited Activities

The following activities are prohibited on the refuge:

- Commercial fishing including use or possession of trot lines, limb lines, jug lines, can lines, slat traps, hoop nets and yo-yos
- Use or possession of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs
- Possession of open alcoholic beverages
- Baiting, hunting over bait, possession of bait, or any non-natural attractant
- Possession of a limb saw or tree cutting saw
- Possession of any type of shot other than approved nontoxic shot
- Unauthorized take of wildlife or plants
- Target shooting
- Using a tree that has existing nails, spikes or metal objects or using climbing spikes
- Hunting within 150 feet of a designated refuge road or ATV trail
- Hunting in designated “No Hunting Zones” and/or entering into designated “Closed Areas”
- Use or possession of any trail marking material
- Use of horses or mules
- Camping/overnight parking
- Man-drives for deer
- Climbing and/or hunting from electrical power-line poles

■ Open fires and campfires

■ Littering

■ Operating a vehicle or ATV on a flooded road or trail

■ Trapping

■ Unconfined pets

■ Geocaching

■ Hunting within 100 yards of any refuge building

■ Hunters parking on the asphalt parking area on Hoover Slough

■ Use or possession of any drug or device for employing such drug for hunting

■ Operating an ATV off of a designated ATV trail

■ Operating an ATV through mud holes causing ruts or degradation to the road

■ Crawfishing or frogging

■ Use of trail cameras

■ Searching for or removing any object of antiquity, including arrowheads, pottery, or artifacts

■ Field dressing game within 150 feet of any designated road, parking area, or ATV trail

Fishing Regulations

Fishing is allowed during daylight hours on the refuge throughout the year except during the lottery, primitive weapon and open youth deer gun hunts when it is closed. Fishing is permitted on the Cross Bayou Cut and all tributaries that fill with water from Bayou Cocodrie during high water stages. Fisherman must have a valid Refuge Annual Public Use Permit and any applicable state licenses in their possession. Fish species allowed for harvest under state regulations may be included in the daily state creel limit. The refuge boat ramp is open from 4 am until two hours after sunset.

Commercial fishing activities, harvest of frogs or turtles, harassment of alligator snapping turtles, and possession of cleaned or processed fish are all prohibited on refuge. The use of gear or equipment other than hook and line to catch fish is prohibited on the refuge except that cast nets are allowed to catch bait fish only. A Special Use Permit issued by the Refuge Manager is required for any commercial fisherman to access Bayou Cocodrie from the refuge boat launch.

Hunting Regulations General Information

Hunter Access

Hunters may enter the refuge no earlier than 4 am and must exit the refuge no later than two hours after legal sunset. Raccoon and opossum hunters may access the refuge at night during the month of February. Hunting is only allowed in designated areas during the season dates listed on this brochure.

Bag limits

The refuge observes state harvest regulations unless otherwise specified in the season restrictions portion of this brochure. State tagging applies to game harvested on the refuge. Please thoroughly read this brochure to determine appropriate refuge hunting season dates and allowable refuge harvest regulations.

Shooting Hours

Shooting hours during all hunting seasons are one-half hour before legal sunrise to one-half hour after legal sunset (excluding waterfowl hunting when hunting must cease at noon).

Check Stations

All game taken on the refuge must be checked at one of the self-clearing check stations identified on the map of this brochure prior to leaving the refuge. Each visitor is responsible for reporting harvest information on the Daily Use Reporting Card located at the check station at the completion of each visit. Deer hunters are required to remove the lower jaw bone from any harvested deer and leave it in the hanging basket at the check station closest to where it was harvested. Harvest information gathered at these stations is critical for management of wildlife resources on the refuge.

To Remove Lower Jaw Bone on a Harvested Deer:

- Use knife to cut the skin along the mouth extending to the back of jaw
- Cut flesh away from jaw bone
- Use lopping shears to make one cut in front of molars
- Use lopping shears to make second cut behind molars
- Pull jawbone out and clean remaining skin away from jaw bone
- Label jawbone tag with requested information, tie wire around bone, place in basket

Tagging and Transportation of Harvested Game

All game harvested on the refuge must have appropriate state-issued tags attached to animals before it is moved from the kill-site. Please check state regulations regarding game that require additional tagging prior to transport.

Hunter Orange Requirements

All hunters are required to wear a hunters orange cap and 400 square inches of hunter orange garments during refuge deer lottery gun seasons to ensure their safety. Hunter orange garments must be unbroken and worn on the outermost layer of clothing at all times while hunting on refuge property. Hunters who use backpacks or carry deer stands on their backs should display additional hunter orange over their equipment for personal safety. Hunters hunting from concealed ground blinds must display a minimum of 400 square inches of hunter orange above or around their blind that is visible from all sides. Hunters using dogs during the rabbit season are required to wear a hunters orange cap. Hunters are encouraged to wear an orange cap during small game, archery, and woodcock hunts. Waterfowl hunters are not required to wear hunters orange.

Hunters Safety Certification Requirements

Hunters ages 17 and younger must possess proof of a completed Hunter Safety Course to hunt or apply for special lottery hunts on the refuge. An adult 21 years of age or older must accompany all hunters under 18 years of age. Adults must remain within plain sight or normal voice contact distance when accompanying youth. Each adult must have a refuge permit to supervise a youth which is hunting. Each adult may only supervise one youth during big game hunts or two youths during small game hunts and migratory bird hunts.

Disabled and Physically Challenged Hunters

Physically challenged or disabled hunters are encouraged to consult refuge staff for available options and alternatives to make their visit more enjoyable. Special access ATV trails are available for mobility-impaired hunters and hunters 60 years of age and older with proper state permits. ATV's must be equipped with a red flag at least 6 inches wide and 12 inches long on a pole or staff extending at least 36 inches above the level of the ATV seat.

Hunting Blinds or Stands

Only portable deer stands may be used on the refuge. Deer stands may be placed in a non-hunting position on the opening day of archery season and must be removed within one day after the archery season closes. Stands must be placed in a non-hunting position when not in use. Hunters may only place one stand on the refuge. Deer stands must have each hunters full name, address, and phone number clearly printed on the stand. Any stand left on the refuge past the end of the archery season will be considered abandoned and therefore property of the U.S. Government.