

## **HUNTING REGULATIONS**

### **BITTER LAKE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**

Public hunting on Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge is allowed in those areas designated as open to hunting by field signs and as indicated on the accompanying map. The following terms and conditions supplement the regulations which govern hunting on National Wildlife Refuges, as set forth in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, part 32 and in current Federal Migratory Bird and State Hunting Regulations.

#### **SPECIES ALLOWED TO BE TAKEN:**

North Tract: Deer, feral hog, rabbit, duck, goose, coot, sandhill crane, dove, quail and pheasant.  
Middle Tract: Duck, goose, coot, sandhill crane and pheasant.

#### **HUNTING DAYS AND HOURS: (Refer also to supplemental "Hunting Seasons" leaflet)**

North Tract: Hunting is allowed generally on all days within the State authorized seasons during legal hunting hours. (no extended Eurasian-collared dove, early teal or late light goose conservation order seasons).  
Middle Tract: Hunting is allowed on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays generally within the State authorized seasons from legal morning shooting time to 1:00 p.m. (no early teal or late light goose conservation order seasons).

#### **PERMITS AND LICENSES REQUIRED:**

A valid State hunting license is required. A Federal Migratory Bird Permit is required for anyone hunting migratory birds. Persons 16 years of age and older must also have a validated Federal Waterfowl Hunting and Conservation Permit (Duck Stamp) while hunting waterfowl. All crane hunters must have a free Federal Sandhill Crane Permit (available at all New Mexico Department of Game and Fish Offices). Deer hunters must have both a State license and State permit.

#### **CHECK STATION PROCEDURE:**

All hunters using the Middle Tract must complete survey cards at the check station after each hunt, regardless of success.

#### **FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION:**

Refuge hunters must follow State mandated regulations pertaining to legal sporting arms and ammunition. However, rifles, handguns and archery equipment are not permitted at any time on the refuge except when legally hunting deer and hogs. Shotguns capable of holding no more than three shells are permitted while legally hunting ducks, geese, coots, sandhill cranes, doves, quail, pheasants, and rabbits on the above designated areas of the refuge. Loaded weapons are prohibited outside of hunt zones. Only U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service approved nontoxic shot may be used in shotguns when hunting on any part of Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Possession of lead shot is illegal on the refuge.

#### **DOGS:**

Hunting dogs may be used for hunting waterfowl and upland game. They are required to be under close control of their handlers at all times.

#### **HUNT SITES AND BLINDS:**

All hunting sites are considered available to hunters on a first come, first served basis. No pit blinds or permanent blinds are allowed. Portable blinds are allowed but must be removed each day.

#### **ROADS, PARKING AND TRAILS:**

Vehicle travel is allowed only upon established public use roads. The Hunter Access Trail is available for walk-in travel only. Hunters must stay on the Hunter Access Trail until inside the hunt area. Parking is allowed in designated parking areas only. Do not block roads or intersections.

#### **OTHER:**

Disturbing wildlife, such as "rallying" or stirring up birds so that they fly over the hunt areas, is prohibited. Neither hunters nor their dogs may exit hunt areas to retrieve game. All personal property, including decoys and portable blinds, must be directly tended at all times. Access to the North Tract is restricted to walk-in or via horseback, except non-motorized bicycles may be used on established roads only east of the Salt Creek Wilderness. Feral hogs may be taken (no bag limit) from the North Tract only while legally hunting deer and only with the weapon legal for deer on that day. All litter, including spent ammunition casings, must be removed and disposed of properly. Please help us sustain the refuge hunt by removing any litter that you see, even if you did not put it there. Hunts are subject to closure if problems with litter persist. Hunters are expected to exercise reasonable care when attempting water crossings as unpredictable conditions may exist. Please only attempt to shoot at game from within a reasonable range. "Sky busting" (shooting out of range) only promotes instances of wounded and lost game and reduces the quality and success of the hunt for everyone.