

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

J. Clark Salyer

*National Wildlife
Refuge*

*Souris River Canoe
Trail*



Welcome to J. Clark Salyer National Wildlife Refuge



*This goose,
designed by J.N.
“Ding” Darling,
has become the
symbol of the
National Wildlife
Refuge System.*

Welcome to J. Clark Salyer National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). The Refuge was established in 1935 “as a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife.” J. Clark Salyer NWR is one of over 540 refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System – a network of lands set aside specifically for wildlife. Managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Refuge System is a living heritage, preserving wildlife and habitat for people today and for generations to come.

J. Clark Salyer NWR is located along the Souris River in Bottineau and McHenry counties in north-central North Dakota. The 58,715-acre Refuge extends from the Manitoba, Canada, border southward for approximately 45 miles in an area which was once glacial Lake Souris. This former lake bed is very flat with a high density of prairie wetlands.

The Souris River originates in southern Saskatchewan, flows southeast to Velva, North Dakota, then turns north to join the Assiniboine River in southern Manitoba. Approximately 75 miles

of the Souris River are within the boundaries of the Refuge.

The name “Souris” is French for “mouse.” French explorers learned that local tribes called it the “Mouse River” due to the large numbers of mice found in the meadows along the river.

Souris River Canoe Trail

Designated as a National Recreation Trail, the Souris River Canoe Trail provides wonderful opportunities for wildlife viewing, passing through unique bottomland hardwood forests rich in beauty, woodlands, and wildlife.

The canoe trail can be paddled as a 5½ or 13 mile trip. The 5½-mile route travels from Johnson Bridge to Thompson Well and takes 2-3 hours. The 13-mile route travels from Johnson Bridge to Dam 1 and takes 5-7 hours. Numbered markers are located at each mile along the river if you want to track your travel.

The canoe route starts at Johnson Bridge where a trail used by Native Americans crosses the river. The river flows northwest toward Canada, meandering in great bends across its flood plain, leaving numerous oxbows along the way. Oxbows are created as the course of a river changes and erodes new channels. Eventually, the former channel is cut off from the main flow and becomes standing water. Oxbows offer good opportunities to view waterfowl and wildlife. The river corridor is lined with willow, elm, ash, box elder, and cattails.

Sandhills Slough, located between river mile markers 3 and 4, is a river oxbow and a favorite spot for tree nesting ducks such as wood ducks and hooded mergansers. Feel free to explore this oxbow and its wildlife.

Thompson Well is located at river mile marker 5½, and is a former homestead site. A boat ramp, rest room, hand water pump, tables, and parking area are available here.



USFWS / Tom Kelley

Wood duck



Great blue heron

Near river mile marker 6, Willow Creek enters the Souris River. This tree-lined corridor is a good place to view porcupine, deer, and moose.

Two more unnamed oxbows are located between river mile marker 12 and Dam 1, offering more waterfowl and wildlife viewing opportunities.

The canoe trail ends at Dam 1, and a boat ramp and a parking area are located here.

Birds

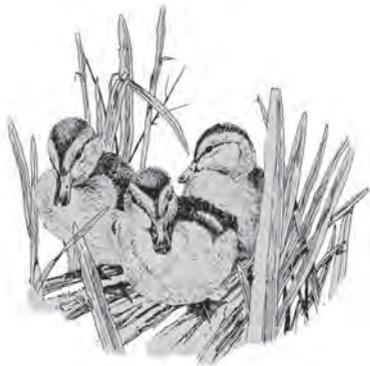
This Refuge provides important feeding and resting areas for thousands of waterfowl migrating through the Central Flyway each year. The Refuge has been designated as a Globally Important Bird Area by the American Birding Association and is a regional site in the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network. Over 250 bird species are found here, including waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors, and migratory and resident songbirds.

Look for nest cavities in trees favored by wood ducks and hooded mergansers.

Watch for broods of young ducks in June and July. Gadwalls, blue-winged teal, mallards, and Canada geese nest here. Other water-dependent birds such as American white pelicans, sandhill cranes, great blue herons, and eared grebes can often be seen along the river.

Sprague's pipits, and Baird's and LeConte's sparrows, are summer residents, while sharp-tailed grouse, ring-necked pheasants, gray partridge, ruffed grouse, and wild turkeys can be seen year-round in Refuge uplands.

The Souris River Loop Bird List is available at the Refuge headquarters.



Mallard ducklings

Mammals

A number of beaver lodges consisting of large mounds of sticks and mud are visible along the river bank. These lodges have underwater entrances and contain stores of food for the winter. Look for gnaw marks at the bases of trees along the river, and watch for the beavers themselves swimming in the river.



USFWS / Tom Kelley

Beaver

Muskrats also live along the river. They are smaller than beavers, have narrow tails, and build small houses of cattails and small sticks. Minks, weasels, porcupines, and raccoons may also be seen along the river banks.

White-tailed deer and moose frequent the uplands and may be seen browsing along the river. The upland and sandhill areas provide habitat for coyotes, badgers, red foxes, porcupines, and rabbits.

Reptiles and Amphibians

Painted and snapping turtles, garter snakes, tiger salamanders, and wood frogs can be seen along the river corridor.

Fish

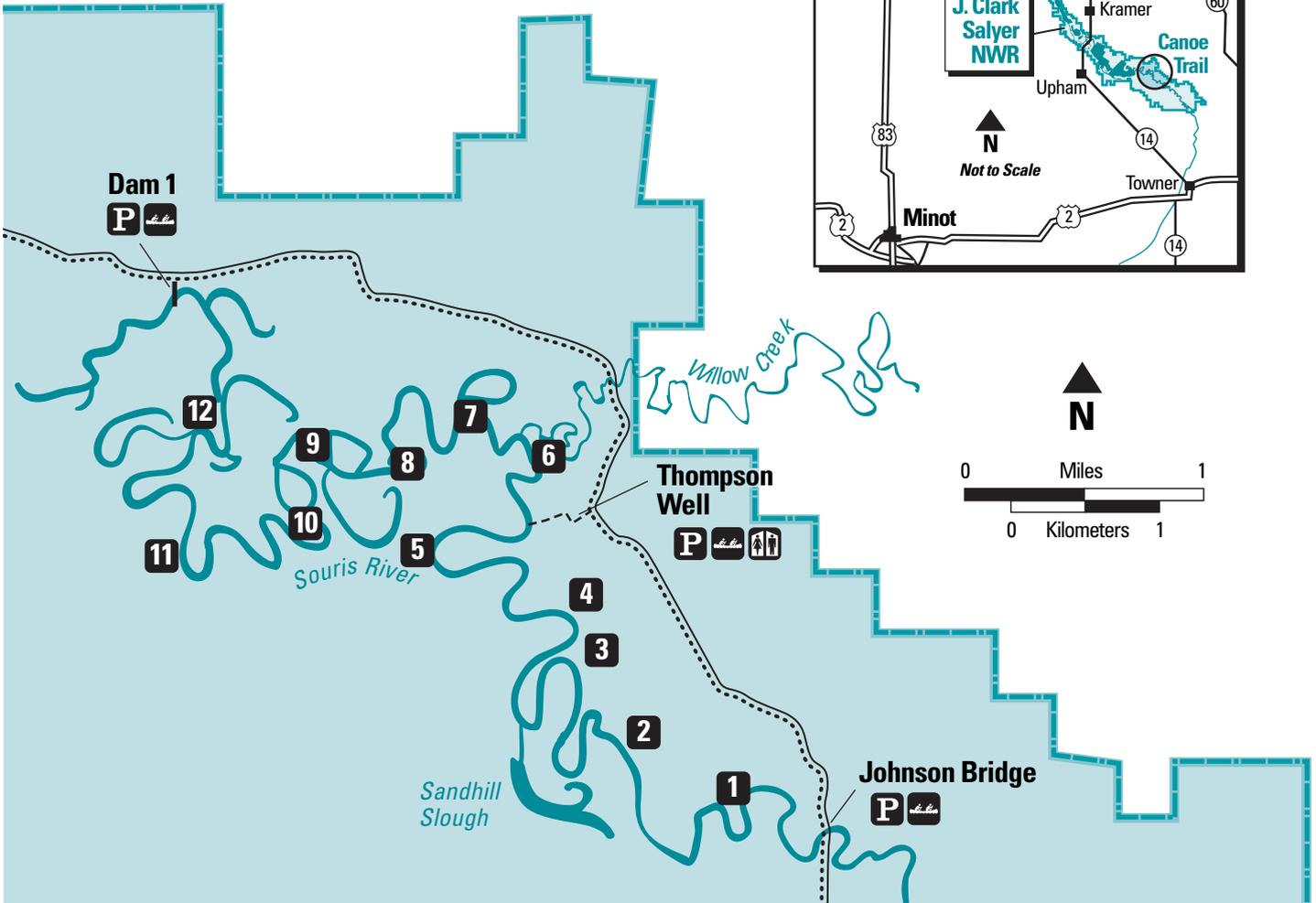
Northern pike, walleye, yellow perch, bullhead, and white sucker are commonly found in the Souris River. Fishing is permitted along the canoe trail according to State regulations.

Accessibility Information

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs and activities of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is available to all individuals regardless of physical or mental ability. Dial 7-1-1 for a free connection to the State transfer relay service for TTY and voice calls to and from the speech and hearing impaired. For more information or to address accessibility needs, please contact the Refuge staff at 701/ 768 2548 or the U.S. Department of Interior, Office of Equal Opportunity, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.

J. Clark Salyer National Wildlife Refuge

	Refuge Boundary		Parking
	Scenic Trail		Rest Rooms
	Gravel Road		Canoe Access
	River Mile Marker		



J. Clark Salyer National Wildlife Refuge
681 Salyer Road
Upham, ND 58789
701 / 768 2548
701 / 768 2834 fax
jclarksalyer@fws.gov
<http://jclarksalyer.fws.gov>

For State transfer relay service
TTY / Voice: 711

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
<http://www.fws.gov>

For Refuge Information
1 800 / 344 WILD

June 2006

