

ACCOMMODATIONS

Roads—Refuge visitors must travel over 23 to 35 miles of gravel road to reach the refuge. Harrison Pass, although along the shortest route from Elko, is a steep, winding and often rough road. This Pass is not maintained during the winter. Visitors are encouraged to check with Refuge Headquarters about road conditions, especially during winter and spring months (November-May).

Gas—and limited supplies are available at Shanty Town, seasonally.

Licenses—Fishing and hunting licenses and state and federal "Duck Stamps" are **not available at Refuge Headquarters or Shanty Town**. The nearest license and stamp vendors are in Elko, Wells, and Ely.

Lodging—Besides camping, accommodations are available in Elko (65 to 90 miles), Wells (90 miles) and Ely (90 miles).

Camping—is not permitted on the refuge, but camp sites are available at the Forest Service campground south of Refuge Headquarters (1.5 miles). Primitive camping is allowed on all public land 300 feet west of County Road 767 unless otherwise posted.

Telephone—A public telephone is located at Shanty Town.

Restrooms—are located at the Main Boat Landing, Narciss Boat Landing, on the Brown Dike and at Refuge Headquarters. Those at the Main Boat Landing and Refuge Headquarters are easily accessible to mobility impaired visitors.

For More Information Contact:

Refuge Manager
Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge
Box 60-860
Ruby Valley, NV 89833
Telephone (702) 779-2237



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

FOR YOUR SAFETY AND ENJOYMENT

To help you have a safe and enjoyable visit, you may wish to consider these helpful hints in planning your trip into the marsh:

- Tell someone on land what area you plan to go to and the approximate time you plan to return.
- Weather can be very unpredictable on the marsh, especially in early summer. Sudden rain or snow storms are common. One hint is to watch the clouds in the west. If clouds begin to creep down the slopes of the Ruby Mountains rather than simply passing over horizontally, head for shore. Be prepared for strong gusty winds and rain or snow.
- The marsh is a maze of channels, islands, bulrush and open water and even the most experienced visitors can become lost. If you are new to the area, try to plan your first few trips with people familiar with navigating the marsh or do not get too adventurous. Markers are only in the main channel winding between the Main Boat Landing and "Old Ski Ponds." (See map.)
- If you plan an evening trip, try to return to the landing or at least the main channel before dark. This may take a great deal of restraint since the day's best fishing is often between sundown and dark. Consider the weather, your clothing and physical condition in timing your return. Also, it is always wise to take a light blanket and warm clothes for everyone when you enter the marsh. Carry a flashlight.
- If you become lost, try yelling for directions from nearby fishermen. Sound travels for a long distance in the marsh, especially at night. It may be a long night so stay dry and put on your warmest clothes. Beach on an island and wait for help. Use your overturned boat for shelter. Often brush is on the islands to start a small signal fire that can be seen easily from shore. If you know a party is in need of help in the marsh, you are welcome to contact Refuge Headquarters for assistance.



PROTECT YOURSELF FROM LIGHTNING

If outside, with no time to reach a safe building or an automobile, follow these rules:

- Do not stand underneath a natural lightning rod such as a tall, isolated tree in an open area.
- Avoid projecting above the surrounding landscape, as you would do if you were standing on a hilltop, in an open field, on the beach or fishing from a small boat.
- Get out of and away from open water.
- Stay away from wire fences, clotheslines, metal pipes, rails and other metallic paths which could carry lightning to you from some distance away.
- If you are hopelessly isolated in a level field or prairie and you feel your hair stand on end—indicating lightning is about to strike—drop to your knees and bend forward putting your hands on your knees. Do not lie flat on the ground.

FIRST AID FOR LIGHTNING VICTIMS

Many people apparently "killed" by lightning can be revived if quick action is taken. When a group is affected, the apparently dead should be treated first; those unconscious but breathing will probably recover spontaneously.

First aid should be rendered to those not breathing within 4 to 6 minutes or less to prevent irrevocable damage to the brain. Mouth-to-mouth resuscitation should be administered once every 5 seconds to adults and once every 3 seconds to infants and small children.

If the victim is not breathing and has no pulse, cardiopulmonary resuscitation is necessary. This is a combination of mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and external cardiac compression. It should be administered by persons with proper training.

Medical attention also should be given to victims who appear only temporarily stunned or otherwise unhurt, since there may be hidden effects.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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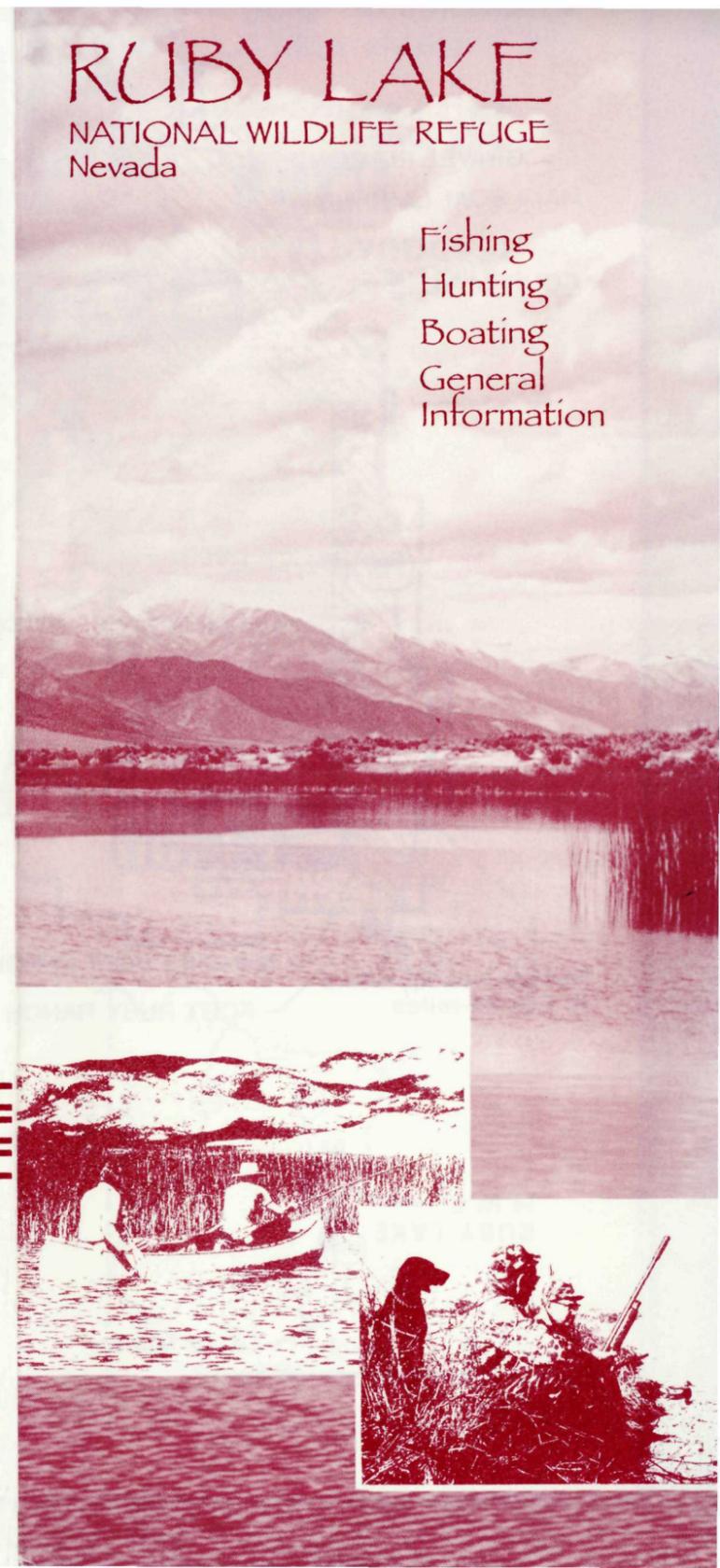
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RUBY LAKE

NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
Nevada

Fishing
Hunting
Boating
General
Information



RUBY LAKE

Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge lies within a closed drainage basin in Ruby Valley of northeastern Nevada. The refuge is 65 miles southeast of the town of Elko and lies along the eastern flank of the rugged and scenic Ruby Mountains at an elevation of 6,000 feet above sea level.

The 37,632-acre refuge consists of marshes, open ponds and islands, bordered by wet meadows and grass/sagebrush-covered uplands. Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge is an important waterfowl nesting area. It is also strategically located along migration corridors serving both the Pacific and Central Flyways. The refuge is a meeting place for birds traveling several routes—west along the Humboldt River and to Owens Valley, east to the Great Salt Lake, northwest to the Klamath Basin, and south to the Colorado River.

HISTORY

During the Pleistocene Epoch, the Ruby Marshes were part of a much larger body of water known as Franklin Lake. This ancient lake covered about 470 square miles and was over 200 feet deep. As conditions became drier, the lake level began to drop. Today, a balance has been reached and only the Ruby and Franklin Lake marshes remain.

In 1938, the importance of the Ruby Marshes to nesting and migratory waterfowl and water birds was recognized, and the Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge was established.

DEVELOPMENT

A collection ditch and a system of dikes have been constructed along the west central portion of the marsh to collect waters from over 200 springs along the base of the Ruby Mountains. Water reaching the end of the collection ditch flows into the 7,000-acre South Sump, a natural depression. Water can also be diverted to the North Sump to maintain 3,000 acres of wetlands that are especially attractive to puddle ducks and shorebirds.

Water is managed to provide optimum nesting and feeding habitat for migratory waterfowl and water-dependent birds. By careful manipulation of water levels and flows, 12,000 acres of marshlands can be maintained. Periodically, individual habitat units are rejuvenated by drying them up. As a result, the food resources and productivity of the aquatic environment are greatly enhanced. Management tries to imitate the processes of naturally occurring wetland ecosystems as much as possible to maintain the vitality and productivity of the marshes.



Trumpeter Swan family

BIRDS

Over 200 species of birds regularly use the refuge.

Waterfowl are the most conspicuous and most important to the primary objectives of the refuge. Nesting canvasbacks and redhead ducks are particularly important. Most of this nesting occurs on the South Sump, where the refuge supplies some of the finest nesting habitat in Western America for these species. In good years the refuge has produced 3,500 canvasbacks and 2,500 redheads.



Canvasback Ducks



Redhead Ducks

The trumpeter swan, originally a transplant from the Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge in Montana, is also found on the refuge. Several pairs nest each year. In all, 15 different species of waterfowl nest on the refuge as well as a variety of other water-dependent birds such as coots, grebes, sandhill cranes, great blue herons, black-crowned night herons, white-faced ibis, and snowy egrets.

Bald and golden eagles and several other raptors including the endangered peregrine falcon are present at various times of the year. Numerous songbirds make use of the riparian habitat along Cave Creek, and several first records of occurrence for Nevada have been made in this area.

MAMMALS

Mountain lions and bobcats are regularly found in the foothills and mountains bordering the refuge on the west. Although present throughout the year, mule deer are most frequently observed in winter as they move from the foothills to feed and water on the refuge. Coyotes are common residents throughout the year. In the marsh, muskrats are abundant and they help keep dense stands of bulrush open and more attractive to waterfowl. Also, their houses and feeding platforms provide resting and nesting platforms for waterfowl and other marsh-dwelling birds.



Mule Deer

REPTILES

Great Basin rattlesnakes and gopher snakes are often seen crossing the roads during the summer months. Garter snakes are most often found near the marsh.

FISH

Eight species of fish are present in the refuge waters. The relict dace is the only species that is native to the marsh. This species is present in only a few other basins in northeastern Nevada. Largemouth black bass were stocked around 1932 and have successfully reproduced. Rainbow, Eastern brook and brown trout are stocked annually with occasional stocking of cutthroat and tiger trout (German brown trout, Eastern brook trout hybrid). A small population of Lahontan speckle dace has maintained itself from a 1950 stocking.

OPPORTUNITIES

Refuge roads are open, unless otherwise posted, to visitors who enjoy wildlife observation, photography, sightseeing, fishing and migratory bird hunting.

The refuge provides good opportunities to view wildlife. The best time to observe and photograph waterfowl and their young occurs from late May through July. Canada geese hatch first, followed by mallards and canvasbacks. September and October bring concentrations of up to 25,000 ducks and as many coots. These concentrations are best observed from the dikes. A separate leaflet is available and includes a checklist of refuge birds and other wildlife.

Because the refuge covers a variety of habitats including rough, uneven terrain, deep water, dense stands of bulrush (tules), wet meadows and ditches, the ease of access varies by area. Also, rainfall can make roads and fields muddy and slippery. Everyone should know their own abilities and limitations before using the refuge.

 Disabled individuals are encouraged to consult the refuge manager for suggestions on visiting the refuge safely or for further assistance.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

Day Use Only—Camping and overnight parking are not permitted on the refuge (see Accommodations).

Pets—are allowed if on a leash or under close control.

Dirt Bikes and ATCs—may be operated on refuge roads if licensed and the operator possesses a valid driver's license and proof of insurance.

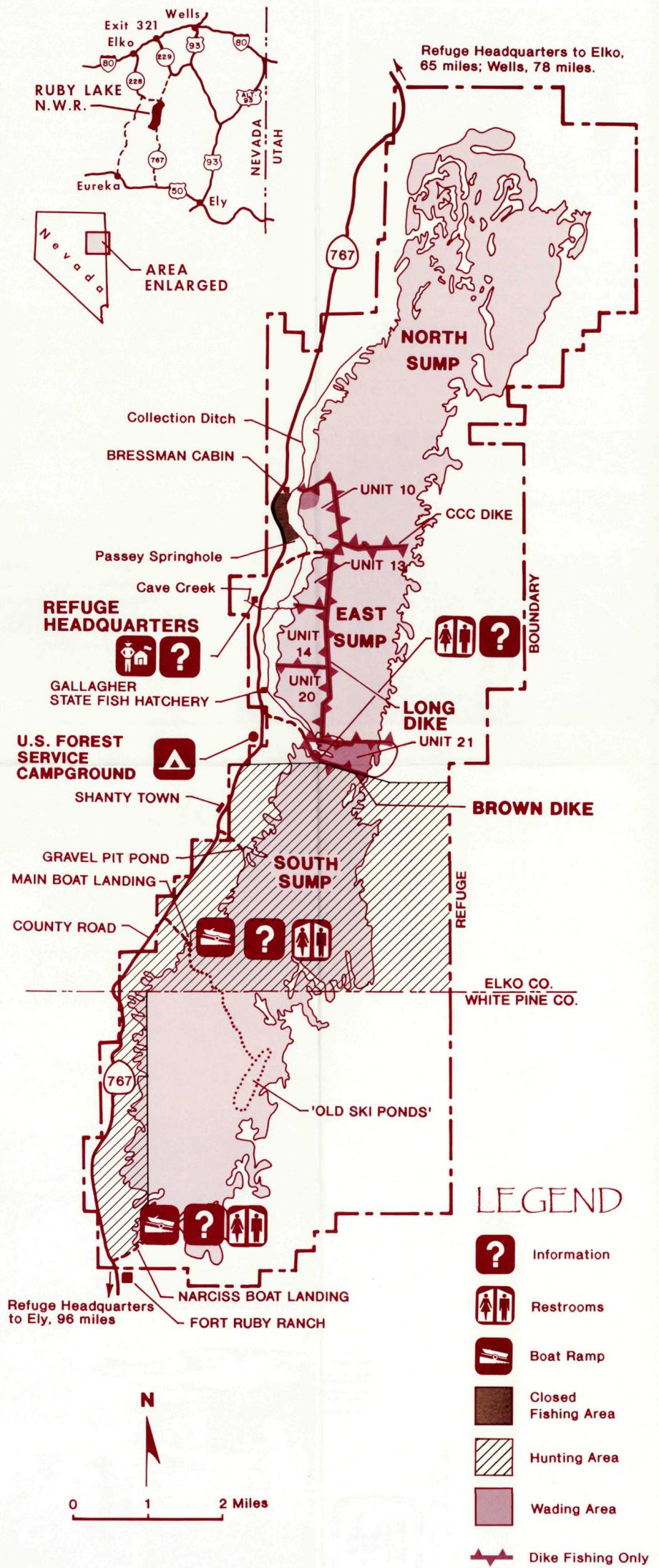
Weapons—Unloaded weapons that are dismantled, cased or otherwise out of immediate reach may be transported by vehicle on refuge roads. Use of weapons is permitted only in the designated hunting areas during authorized refuge hunts.

Prohibited Activities—no littering, fires, fireworks or collecting objects of antiquity, including Native American artifacts.

Accidents—All accidents and injuries occurring on the refuge must be reported immediately to the refuge headquarters.

Phone: (702) 779-2237.





BOATING

January 1-June 14

Float tubes are permitted in Unit 21 and a small portion of Unit 10. No boats are permitted to be operated on the refuge.

June 15-July 31

South of Brown Dike (South Sump) ONLY, motorless boats, float tubes and boats propelled with battery powered electric motors are permitted. Float tubes are also permitted in Unit 21 and a small portion of Unit 10.

August 1-December 31

In the South Sump, motorless boats, float tubes and boats propelled by motors with a total of 10 hp or less are permitted. Float tubes are also permitted in Unit 21 and a small portion of Unit 10.

Water skis and jet skis are not permitted at any time.

Boat Launching

Boats on trailers can be launched ONLY at the Main Boat Landing and Narciss Boat Landing. Canoes or cartop boats can be launched ONLY at Main Boat Landing, Narciss Boat Landing, Gravel Pit Pond and Brown Dike. When parking at these landings, please park so that your vehicle does not obstruct traffic or the launching area.

Boat Storage

Boats may be stored at Main Boat Landing, Narciss Boat Landing, Gravel Pit Pond and Brown Dike from **April 1 through December 31**. The marsh usually freezes over by November 15 each year. Because boats can be trapped in deep snow or ice and travel to the refuge can be hazardous during winter, it is recommended that boats be removed from the refuge at the earliest time. Boats must be removed by January 1.

State regulations including those related to flotation devices, fire extinguishers and lights must be complied with.



FISHING

Fishing for largemouth black bass and trout attracts thousands of visitors each year. The trout are raised at the Gallagher Fish Hatchery which is located on the refuge and operated by the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

Season

The refuge is open year-round to fishing except in those areas posted as closed. Dike fishing ONLY is permitted on the area north of Brown Dike, except in Unit 21 and a small portion of Unit 10, where wading and personal flotation devices (float tubes) are permitted.

Fishing is allowed from 1 hour before sunrise until 2 hours after sunset.



Licenses

A Nevada State fishing license or permit is required of all persons 12 years of age and older before they fish. A Nevada Trout Stamp is also required to take or possess trout. **Licenses and stamps are not sold in Ruby Valley. Nearest vendors are in Elko, Wells, and Ely.**

Size

A 10-inch mandatory size limit for bass has been established on the refuge to improve the bass fishery. This allows bass to reach spawning size before they are subjected to angler harvest.

Limits

The State of Nevada fishing limits apply to the refuge.

Black (Largemouth) Bass—From January 1 through June 14, the daily and possession limits are 5 fish. From June 15 through December 31, after the bass nesting season concludes, the daily and possession limits are raised to 10 fish.

Trout—The daily and possession limits are 3 fish. Rainbow, brook and brown trout provide most of the angler harvest. Most trout are raised at Gallagher Fish Hatchery.

Closed Waters

Fishing is prohibited from the west bank of the Collection Ditch between Bressman Cabin and Passey Springhole, in the hatchery rearing and brooding ponds, Cave Creek west of County Road 767 and from the dike between Units 14 and 20 during the bass nesting season as posted.

Artificial Lures and Bait

Those portions of the Collection Ditch and associated springs which are open to fishing may be fished ONLY WITH ARTIFICIAL LURES. Possession or use of live or dead bait fish is prohibited anywhere on the refuge.

Ice Fishing

Refuge waters are open to ice fishing; however, access to the Refuge is more difficult during the winter (see Accommodations).



HUNTING

The 4,400-acre portion of the South Sump, north of the White Pine County Line is open to limited waterfowl hunting. Because of the abundance of small, shallow bays in this area, dabbling ducks such as gadwalls, mallards, shovelers, pintails and teal are common.

Also, the springheads along the entire west side of the South Sump are open to waterfowl hunting. This area generally provides excellent late season jump shooting for dabblers.

The 4,300 acres of South Sump in White Pine County is closed to hunting. The closure protects the local nesting population of canvasbacks and redheads which concentrate on the south end of the South Sump in late summer and fall. It also protects the few hens and young which are still flightless at the beginning of the hunting season.



Season

Hunting on the refuge is open daily during the waterfowl season as established by the State of Nevada.

Species

Ducks (including mergansers), dark geese (including White-fronted and Canada geese), coots, common moorhens and snipe ONLY may be hunted. ALL OTHER SPECIES OF WILDLIFE ARE PROTECTED.

Licenses

All hunters 12 years of age or older must possess a valid Nevada hunting license. Children under 14 years of age must be accompanied by an adult licensed to hunt. Waterfowl hunters 12 to 65 years of age must possess a signed State Duck Stamp. Waterfowl hunters 16 years of age or older must also possess a signed Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (Duck Stamp). Because these **licenses and hunting stamps are not available in Ruby Valley**, be sure to buy them in advance.



Reservations

No reservations or special refuge permits are needed.

Steel Shot

The use of nontoxic (steel) shot is required when hunting waterfowl, coots, common moorhens and snipe on the refuge. Hunters may not have lead shot in their possession while hunting. We recommend that hunters practice on trap or skeet ranges to become familiar with ballistic differences between steel and lead shot.

Hunt Boundaries

No dike hunting is permitted. The open hunting area includes the area as posted from 50 feet south of the Brown Dike south to the White Pine County Line. In White Pine County, the springhead area from the County Road to the marsh edge is open as posted. For public safety, a no hunting zone is posted in the immediate vicinity of the Main Boat Landing. Refer to map.

Access

Boat access to the marsh hunting area is provided from the Brown Dike, Gravel Pit Pond and Main Boat Landings (see Boating). The east side of the hunting area is accessible by boat from one of the three landings or by walking south from the Brown Dike. Caution is necessary if attempting to cross the borrow ditch along Brown Dike. There are only a few places shallow enough to cross with chest waders. Walk-in access only is permitted to the springhead areas in White Pine County.

Blinds and Personal Property

Hunters may use portable hunting blinds and temporary blinds constructed of natural vegetation. All decoys and other personal property must be removed from the refuge and temporary blinds destroyed at the close of each day.

Helpful Hunting Hints

The use of dogs is not mandatory, but highly encouraged. Successful hunters usually have a dog to retrieve downed birds that otherwise might not be found.

"Skybusting" or shooting at birds over 50 yards from you results in excessive crippling losses of waterfowl and reduced opportunity for good shots by you and other hunters.

Decoys and calls should be used to bring birds into ideal shooting range. When setting out decoys, place the outer decoy at 40 yards from the blind. This will help you judge when to shoot and result in fewer cripples and more birds in your bag.

Be a sportsman and respect the rights of other hunters afield. When entering or leaving the field try to avoid flaring birds which are working another hunter's setup.

Swans Need Your Help

The once endangered trumpeter swan, originally a transplant from Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge in Montana, is found on the refuge. Several pairs nest each summer and 15 or more birds may winter here.

Tundra swans also use the marsh in fall and winter. These birds feed in the hunting area as well as in other areas of Ruby Valley. To protect swans from being shot by mistake, the entire valley is closed to the hunting of the much smaller snow and Ross' geese. Only Canada and white-fronted geese may be hunted.

As in all hunting, learn to identify your target. The popular waterfowl identification guide, "Ducks at a Distance," is available, free-of-charge, from the refuge. Request a copy by writing to the refuge or stop by the office and pick one up.

