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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
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For Refuge Information
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May 2021



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Seedskadee

*National Wildlife
Refuge*



Seedskadee National Wildlife Refuge is located in the high desert of southwestern Wyoming. A ribbon of life-sustaining water, the Green River runs through this 26,210-acre Refuge. Refuge habitats include wetlands, river, cottonwood-willow riparian areas, and sagebrush uplands. These diverse habitats support the life needs of the wide variety of wildlife species that spend all or part of their year here.

Welcome to Seedskadee National Wildlife Refuge



This blue goose, designed by J.N. "Ding" Darling, is the symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

What does "Seedskadee" mean? Local tribes named the river "Sisk-a-dee-agie" or "river of the prairie hen." Through the fur trappers, the Native's name was later changed to "Seedskadee." The prairie hen, or sage grouse as it is now known, is still common here, but the river is now called the Green River because of its color.

Seedskadee National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) was established in 1965 through the Colorado River Storage Project Act of 1956. This Act provided for the development of wildlife habitat to offset the loss of wildlife habitat that resulted when the Flaming Gorge and Fontenelle Dams were built.

Seedskadee NWR is one of over 565 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, conserving wildlife and habitat for people today and generations to come.

Historical Perspective

The first recorded humans in this area arrived when continental ice sheets receded to the north. They were followed by the Shoshone Indians who began arriving in this area approximately 700 years ago. Both groups were nomadic, largely dependent on buffalo and antelope herds that migrated through the area.

The early 1800s marked the arrival of the first European trappers to this area in search of beaver to trap. These early mountain men, including Jedediah Smith, Jim Bridger, and William Sublette, crossed the Green River where Seedskadee NWR is located. Beginning in 1841, many emigrants followed in these trappers' footsteps. The much traveled Oregon, Mormon, California, and Pony Express trails all cross the Refuge. Segments of these trails can still be seen on and adjacent to the Refuge.



© Glen Thoreson

Barnhardt cabin

With the arrival of the railroad in 1868, stockmen began to settle in the basin. The Seedskaadee and Little Colorado Desert areas were important wintering areas for large bands of sheep and cattle due to the generally lighter amount of snow the area received. As the new century began, homesteaders also made their mark on the land. Some of the structures they built, can still be seen on the Refuge. For more in-depth historical information, pick up our brochure titled [“A Historical Perspective”](#) at the Refuge headquarters.

Managing Habitat for a Diversity of Wildlife

One of the original goals of the Refuge was to provide suitable nesting and rearing habitat for waterfowl. Refuge management today is focused on maintaining a variety of native habitats and wildlife, with emphasis on migratory birds, threatened and endangered species, and species of special concern (Federal or State listed species that are declining in numbers or their habitat is threatened). Refuge habitats support a rich diversity of wildlife species including 50 species of mammals, 11 species of reptiles and amphibians, and over 200 species of birds. For a complete species list, pick up our brochure titled “Wildlife List” at the Refuge headquarters.

Riparian Habitat

The riparian habitat (the greenbelt along the river) is made up of cottonwoods, willows, and many other plants that are restricted to flood plains or areas of permanent subsurface water supplies. These plants are dependent on water from the Green River for their survival.

Similarly, many species of wildlife depend on riparian plants to fulfill their life needs.

Thousands of migrating songbirds, like the rufous hummingbird and Wilson’s warbler, rely on riparian habitat for refueling when traveling further north to their breeding grounds. Other songbirds, such as the yellow warbler and northern (Bullock’s) oriole, stop to nest. Bald eagles, several hawk species, great blue herons, moose, mule deer, beaver, and porcupine also raise their young in the riparian area.

Fontenelle Dam has created major challenges concerning the health of the riparian habitat. Before construction of the dam, the Green River water levels responded solely to the uncertainties of nature. Flooding usually occurred in the spring, tapering off to reduced flows in summer. Natural marshlands bordered the river and spring flooding was their primary source of water.

After construction of the dam in 1965, river flows below the dam have changed. Flows below the dam have decreased the spring floods and reduced the amount of sediment carried by the river. Fresh sediment deposits from flooding are often prime places for woody species’ seeds to germinate. The lack of sediment load coming from the dam could also be causing the channel to deepen, further complicating the re-generation of woody species. Field research has confirmed that cottonwood forests are aging and not being replaced.

Flooded riparian habitat



USFWS



© Mark Goeke

Trumpeter swans with young

The dam’s affect on the river and riparian habitat is complex and may be compounded by factors other than flooding, such as long-term climate changes and heavy pressure from animals feeding on woody vegetation. Research is ongoing to help determine how to increase the production of new cottonwoods and willows in the riparian areas.

Wetland Habitat

Wetlands along the Green River are created when water is diverted into natural and man-made basins. Refuge staff manage water levels to provide a variety of water depths. Birds, such as trumpeter swans and ruddy ducks, prefer deep water wetlands for nesting and feeding, while migrating shorebirds, such as American avocets, long-billed dowitchers, and a variety of sandpipers, are attracted to shallow, flooded mud flats to look for food. White-faced ibis, redheads, cinnamon teal, pied-billed grebes, sora rails, marsh wrens, yellow-headed blackbirds, and muskrats are all common in the wetlands.

Upland Habitat

Sagebrush uplands dominate the landscape away from the river. The Refuge is fenced to ensure that forage and nesting cover remain available for wildlife like pronghorns, mule deer, sage grouse, waterfowl, and small mammals. Fenced water access lanes are provided so that livestock on adjacent grazing allotments can reach the river water without disturbing much Refuge habitat.

Species that depend on large expanses of healthy sagebrush grassland communities include the sage grouse, sage sparrow, sage thrasher, Brewer's sparrow, ferruginous hawk, pygmy rabbit, and pronghorn.

Habitat Management Tools

In their continuing efforts to enhance Refuge habitats, Refuge staff also use other management tools such as prescribed grazing, prescribed burning, native plant seeding, hunting, and control of invasive weeds. On many acres, invasive plant species, such as perennial pepperweed, gained a foothold and reduced the value of the habitat for certain target species. Biological, mechanical, and chemical controls are used to manage these invasive plants.



Pronghorn fawn

Enjoying Your Visit

Recreational activities abound at Seedskafee NWR. While you are here, take advantage of opportunities to fish, hunt, canoe, observe and photograph wildlife, or go for a hike or bicycle ride.

Hunting and fishing on the Refuge are permitted in accordance with Federal and State regulations. Fishing for whitefish and cutthroat, brown, and rainbow trout is allowed throughout the Refuge, but special State regulations apply. Several areas on the Refuge are closed to hunting.

Become familiar with all special Refuge hunting regulations and the boundaries of hunt units before going

afield. Contact Refuge headquarters or consult the "Refuge Hunting and Fishing Regulations" brochure, or our website for further information.

An auto tour route takes you near a variety of Refuge habitats and can provide opportunities for viewing wildlife. The route is generally passable by passenger vehicles; however, caution is recommended after rain and snow. All other dirt roads are only seasonally passable and are not maintained. These roads may be hazardous due to erosion and changing weather conditions. Four-wheel drive or high-clearance vehicles are recommended for these roads. Seasonal closures may also be in effect.

Hiking is permitted throughout the Refuge, so park your car, and do some exploring on foot. Please avoid disturbing animals by getting too close to them. You will know you are approaching too close when animals stop feeding, stand up if they've been resting, change their direction of travel, or turn and start moving away. Trumpeter swans are very sensitive to disturbance; please remain at least try to 400 yards away from swans.

Enjoy the fun and exciting exhibits in the Environmental Education Center. The exhibits are interactive and opportunities to see, hear, touch, and even smell some aspect of the Refuge habitats and wildlife. You are also encouraged to go out on the attached deck where spotting scopes allow an up-close view of nearby wetlands. See if you can spot some interesting birds or even a moose!

Seedskafee National Wildlife Refuge is located at 244 Seedskafee Road, which is 37 miles north of Green River, Wyoming. Follow I-80 west out of Green River to exit 83, La Barge Road / Highway 372. Drive 27 miles north on Highway 372 to



Fishing on the Green River

Seedskafee National Wildlife Refuge Regulations

Vehicles

Camping and Fires

the Refuge headquarters turnoff. Visitors should bring sufficient water, food, and fuel for their visit. The Refuge is in a remote area, and visitor services are not available nearby.

Special regulations are in place to protect wildlife and habitat. Please familiarize yourself with the Refuge regulations and respect other recreationists on the Refuge. Your understanding of Refuge regulations will help make your visit safe and enjoyable.

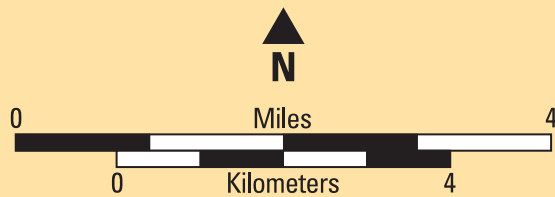
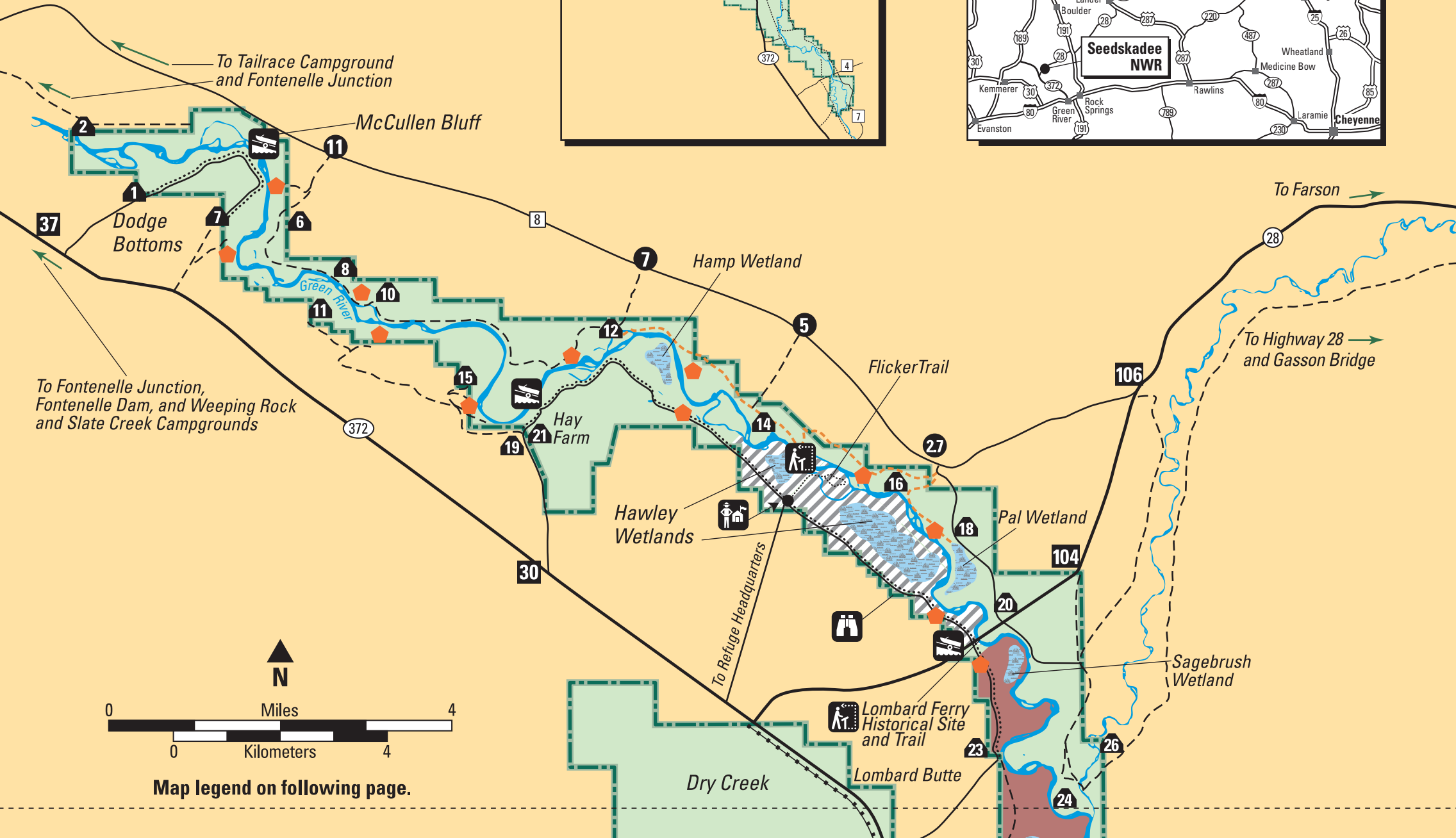
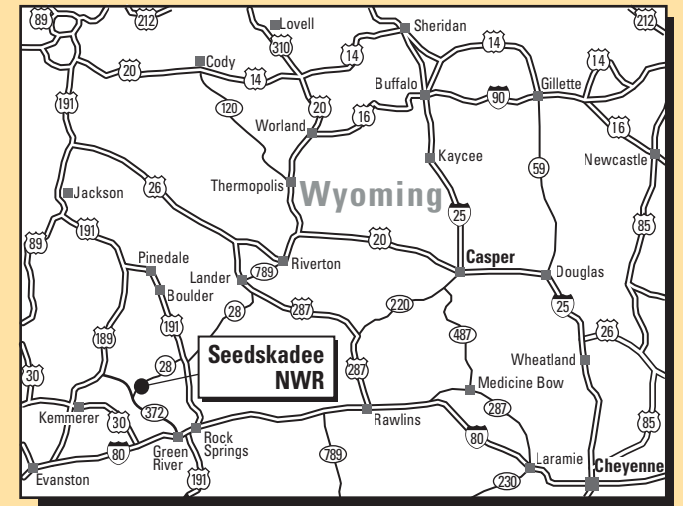
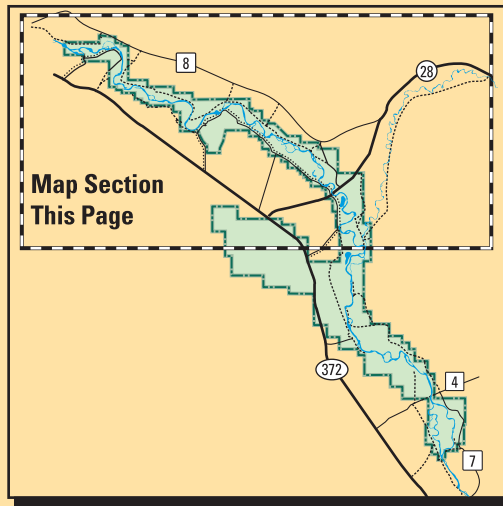
To protect habitat, all vehicles, including bicycles, must stay on designated roads as shown on the map. All motorized vehicles, including ATV's and motorcycles, and all operators, must be licensed and insured for highway driving. Snowmobiles are prohibited. Vehicles must be parked in designated parking areas or pullouts, or within 10 feet of designated roads. The speed limit is 25 miles per hour unless posted otherwise. Please avoid driving on wet unimproved roads as road and habitat damage may occur. Drivers damaging Refuge roads may be fined.

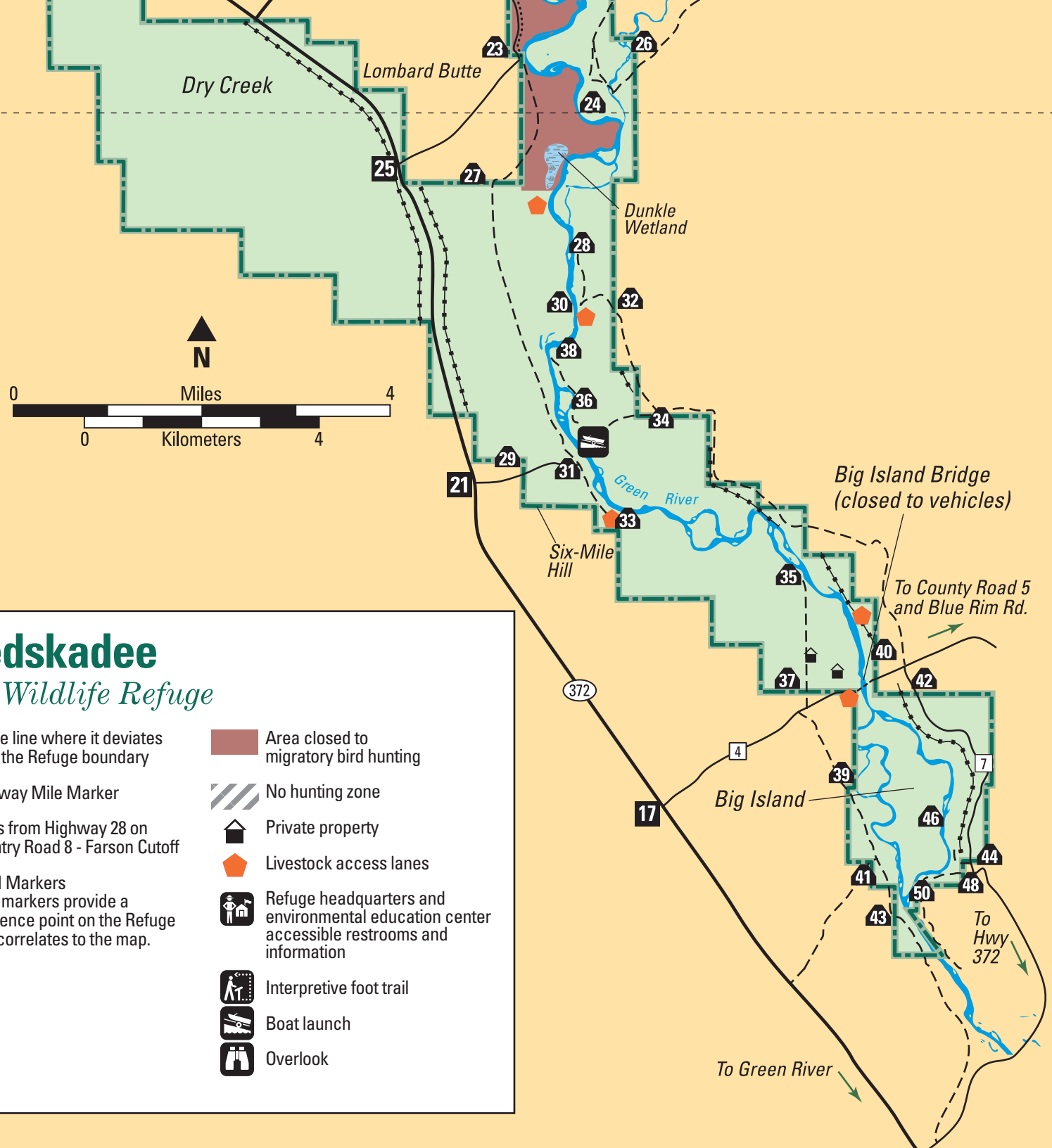
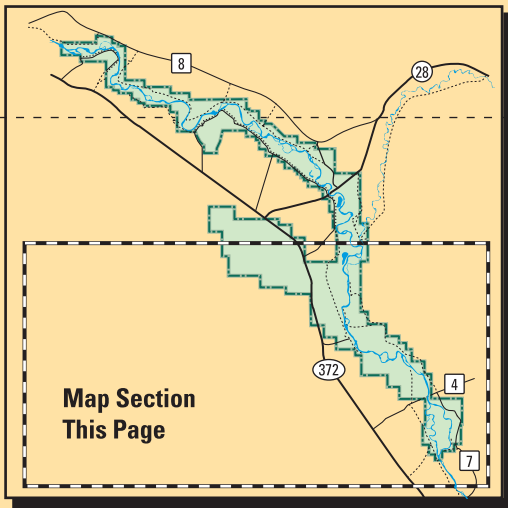
Camping, open fires, and wood cutting or gathering are prohibited on all Refuge lands. Camping opportunities are offered at Bureau of Land Management (BLM) operated campgrounds located along the river just above and below Fontenelle Dam (Slate Creek, Tailrace, Weeping Rock, and Fontenelle campgrounds).

USFWS

Seedskaadee

National Wildlife Refuge





Seeds Skadee National Wildlife Refuge

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|--|---|--|--|--|---|
| | Refuge boundary | | Fence line where it deviates from the Refuge boundary | | Area closed to migratory bird hunting |
| | Paved state highway | | Highway Mile Marker | | No hunting zone |
| | County road / gravel road passable year-round | | Miles from Highway 28 on Country Road 8 - Farson Cutoff | | Private property |
| | Gravel road passable year-round | | Road Markers
road markers provide a reference point on the Refuge that correlates to the map. | | Livestock access lanes |
| | Unimproved road may not be passable year-round (use caution after rain or snow) | | | | Refuge headquarters and environmental education center accessible restrooms and information |
| | Unimproved road seasonal closure November 15 - March 15 | | | | Interpretive foot trail |
| | Auto tour route - gravel road passable year-round | | | | Boat launch |
| | | | | | Overlook |

*Firearms,
Explosives, and
Other Weapons*

Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on National Wildlife Refuge System lands 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 refuge regulations in 50 CFR Part 32).

Target shooting and carrying, possessing, or discharging fireworks, or explosives on national wildlife refuges are prohibited activities.

*Animal and
Plant Life*

Collecting, possessing, disturbing, injuring, poisoning, or destroying any plant or animal or part thereof (alive or dead) is prohibited (except legally taken game). Collecting shed antlers or horns is not allowed.

*Introduction
of Plants and
Animals*

Plants and animals or their parts may not be introduced or placed on the Refuge.

*Historical
Artifacts and
Other Valued
Objects*

Searching for, removing, or damaging historic items, Native American artifacts, or fossils is prohibited. No person shall search for or remove rocks, stones, or mineral specimens.

Pets

Pets are permitted only if they are confined or leashed (except hunting dogs when participating in a legal hunt).

Boating

The Green River is a shallow, swift river with many rocks hidden beneath the surface. It is best suited for canoes, drift boats, and rafts. Motors are not recommended. Personal water craft, air boats, and jet boats are prohibited. Boats must be equipped and operated in accordance with Wyoming boating laws which can be obtained through the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

Fishing

The Green River is open to fishing throughout the Refuge in accordance with Wyoming Game and Fish Department Regulations. Commercial guiding for fishing requires a special use permit. Contact the Refuge Manager or visit our website for further information.

Hunting

Limited hunting is available on the Refuge. Commercial guiding for hunting is prohibited. Contact the Refuge Manager or consult "Refuge Hunting and Fishing Regulations," available at the Refuge headquarters, for further information.

Refuge Hours

The Refuge headquarters and the Environmental Education Center are open from 7:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday. The Refuge is open to the public from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset year-round.

Closed Areas

Specific areas may be closed to hunting, fishing, and all other public access to provide for resource protection or public safety. Contact the Refuge Manager or consult the "Refuge Hunting and Fishing Regulations" for further information.

*Disposal of
Waste*

Dumping of litter, sewage, liquid wastes, or any other material on the Refuge is prohibited.

*Government
Property*

Destruction, injury, defacement, disturbance, or removal of any government or private property or natural objects is prohibited.

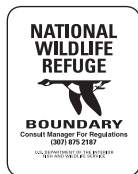
When in doubt about any regulation, contact the Refuge staff.

*Livestock
Access Lanes*

There are 17 livestock water access lanes on the Refuge. These fenced lanes were created to allow livestock access to water on the river. The Refuge owns and manages the lands located within the livestock access lanes. All Refuge regulations apply to these access lanes. Vehicles parked within these lanes must be parked in designated parking areas or along the fence line at least 100 yards from the river. Responsible parking will permit livestock unobstructed access to water.

Refuge Signs And Their Meaning

The following information is provided to help you understand the meaning of regulatory signs that you will see on the Refuge.



These signs indicate the boundary of lands administered by Seedskadee NWR. The fence line is not always the boundary line.



Areas behind these signs are closed to all hunting.



Areas behind these signs are closed to migratory bird hunting.



To protect habitat and minimize wildlife disturbance, roads behind these signs are closed to all vehicle travel, including bicycles.



Seedskadee NWR is closed to all forms of camping, including overnight parking.



Areas behind these signs are closed to all public entry.

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. For more information please contact the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Equal Opportunity, www.doi.gov/accessibility.

