NER PERMIT APPLICATION PROCESS

YOU MUST APPLY FOR BISON PERMISSION SLIPS ONLINE FOR ACCESS TO THE NATIONAL ELK REFUGE.

(SEE SCREENSHOTS BELOW FOR INSTRUCTIONS)

For bison hunters wanting access to hunt on the National Elk Refuge, there are 2 application periods as shown below. Any leftover permits for Hunt Period A will be available first-come, first-served starting at 8:00 a.m. on July 31st. Leftover permits for Hunt Periods B - P will be available first-come, first-served at 8:00 a.m. on September 25th. You may apply for and receive a permit for Hunt Period A *and* apply for and receive a second permit for one of the Hunt Periods B - P in the initial draw *and* choose one additional leftover permit for another available Hunt Period.

APPLICATION PERIODS FOR 2020:

Hunt Period A only: Hunt dates: Aug. 15 - Nov. 2 Application Period is: July 13 - July 29 Results Available: July 31
Hunt Periods B - P: Hunt dates: Nov. 3 - Jan. 1 Application Period is: Aug. 1 - Sept. 23 Results Available: Sept. 25

Last Hunt Period : Hunt dates: January 2 - 31, 2021 – handwritten permits from Wyoming Game and Fish Jackson Regional Office only, no application period

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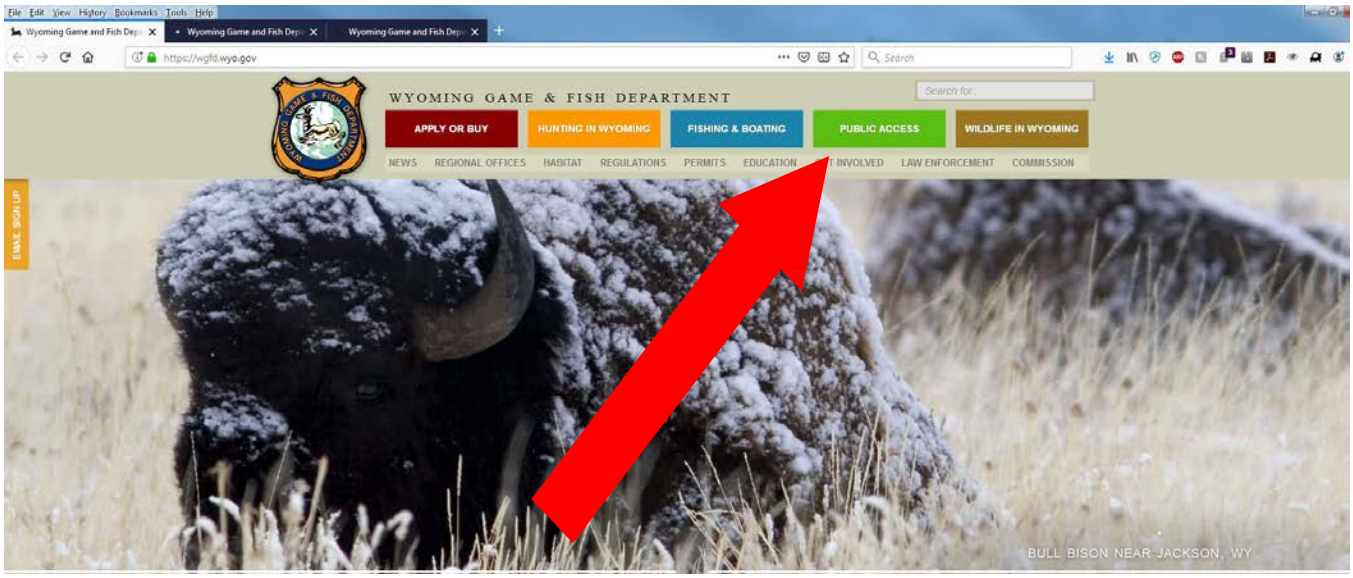
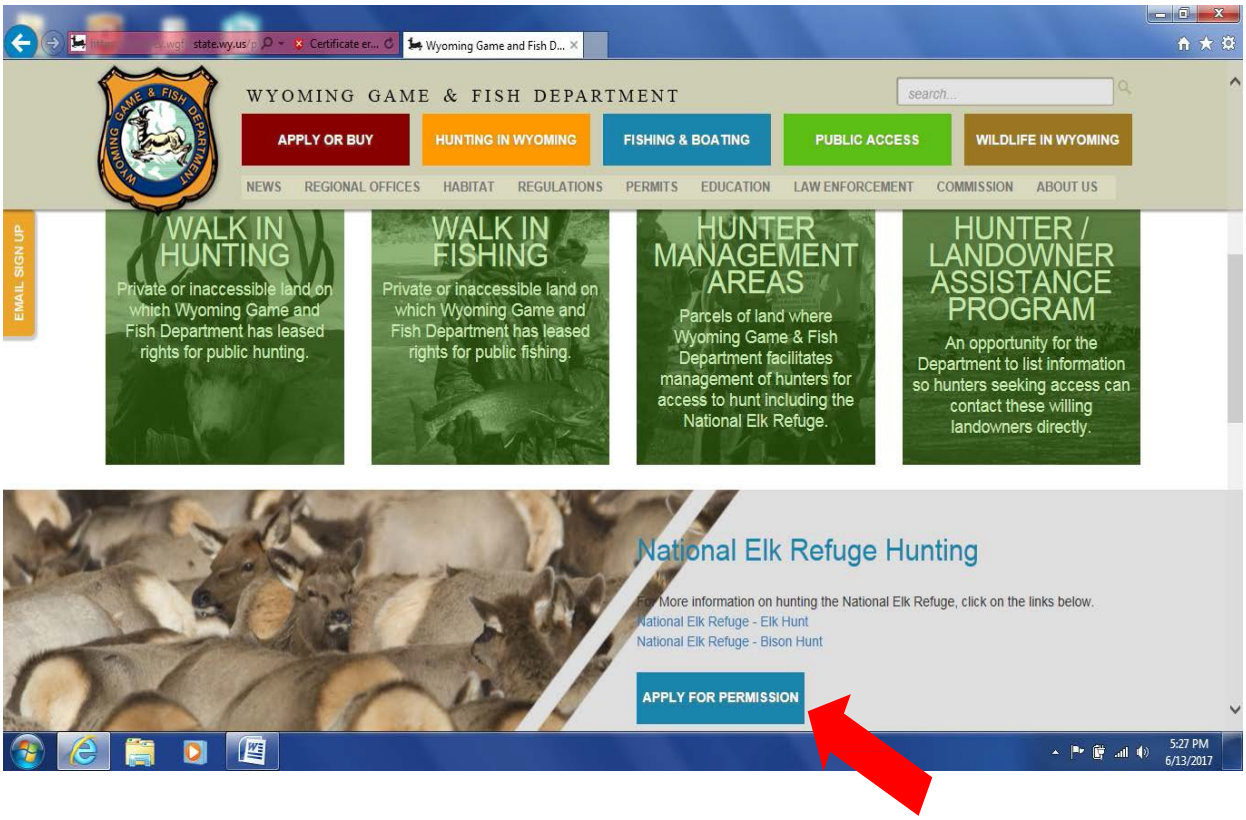
2020 HUNT PERIOD DATES:

- Period A: August 15 - November 2
- Period B: November 3 - November 9
- Period C: November 10 - November 16
- Period D: November 17 - November 20
- Period E: November 21 - November 24
- Period F: November 24 - November 27
- Period G: November 28 - December 1
- Period H: December 1 - December 4
- Period I: December 5 - December 8
- Period J: December 8 - December 11
- Period K: December 12 - December 15
- Period L: December 15 - December 18
- Period M: December 19 - December 22
- Period N: December 22 - December 25
- Period O: December 26 - December 29
- Period P: December 29 - January 1
- Last Period: January 2 - January 31 (Subject to administrative closure prior to January 31 with 48 hours notice)

GO TO THE WYOMING GAME & FISH DEPARTMENT WEBSITE: https://wgfd.wyo.gov/



Click on the green PUBLIC ACCESS link on the top of the Wyoming Game and Fish Homepage.



Under 'National Elk Refuge Hunting', click on <u>Apply for Permission</u>

Make sure when you are logging in that your First & Last names match the name on your Bison License (do not include middle initial)

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BISON HUNT or APPLYING FOR PERMITS, PLEASE CALL THE JACKSON REGIONAL OFFICE AT 307-733-2321

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

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

National Elk Refuge

Bison Hunting

Information and Regulations

1. Who manages hunting on the National Elk Refuge?

Hunting on the National Elk Refuge (NER, Refuge) is managed through a cooperative effort between NER, Grand Teton National Park, and Wyoming Game & Fish Department (WGFD), with the goal of achieving optimum herd size. The NER staff posts information and updates related to the Refuge and Refuge hunting programs on its website: http://www.fws.gov/refuge/National_Elk_Refuge.

2. What must I have while hunting bison on the Refuge?

- NER permit for bison hunting
- WGFD bison hunting license
- WGFD Conservation Stamp (if required by WGFD)
- Hunter Safety Certificate (if required by WGFD)

3. How do I get a permit for bison hunting on the Refuge?

The application process for the NER permit for bison hunting is done online via the WGFD Access Yes, Hunter Management Area Program.

4. What Refuge-specific laws regulate hunting on the Refuge?

In addition to all Federal and WGFD requirements, the following Refuge specific regulations are enforced. Hunters should be knowledgeable of all regulations prior to hunting. Violations may result in forfeiture of the animal, criminal penalties, and permit revocation.

Hunting activities illegal on the Refuge:

- Intentional herding or harassment of wildlife.
- Discharging firearms other than for lawful hunting (i.e. target shooting and sighting in).
- Indiscriminate shooting, shooting multiple times into a running herd, or injuring multiple animals.

USFWS

The National Elk Refuge provides winter habitat for elk and bison herds.

- Shooting from parking areas or public roads.
- Interfering with or harassing other hunters.
- Using decoys outside of the Archery Only Area or using blinds that completely obstruct hunter's fluorescent orange or pink garment.

Transportation activities illegal on the Refuge:

- Driving off designated roads.
- Stopping or unloading hunters along Refuge roads.
- Parking outside of designated hunt parking lots.
- Overnight camping or parking.
- Using bicycles off designated roads.
- ATVs are allowed on public roads, but they must be registered, insured, and operated by a licensed driver. ATVs and snowmobiles are not allowed on Refuge retrieval roads.
- Horses may be used for hunting but are restricted to the Any Weapon Area north of Flat Creek (including West Hunt Lot) as shown on the hunt map. Horses may be used Refuge-wide for retrieval purposes.

Other activities illegal on the Refuge:

- Collecting natural or cultural resources, including but not limited to antlers, skulls, and artifacts.
- Possession or use of alcoholic beverages.
- Possession of non-certified weed-free hay.
- Starting or maintaining any fires.

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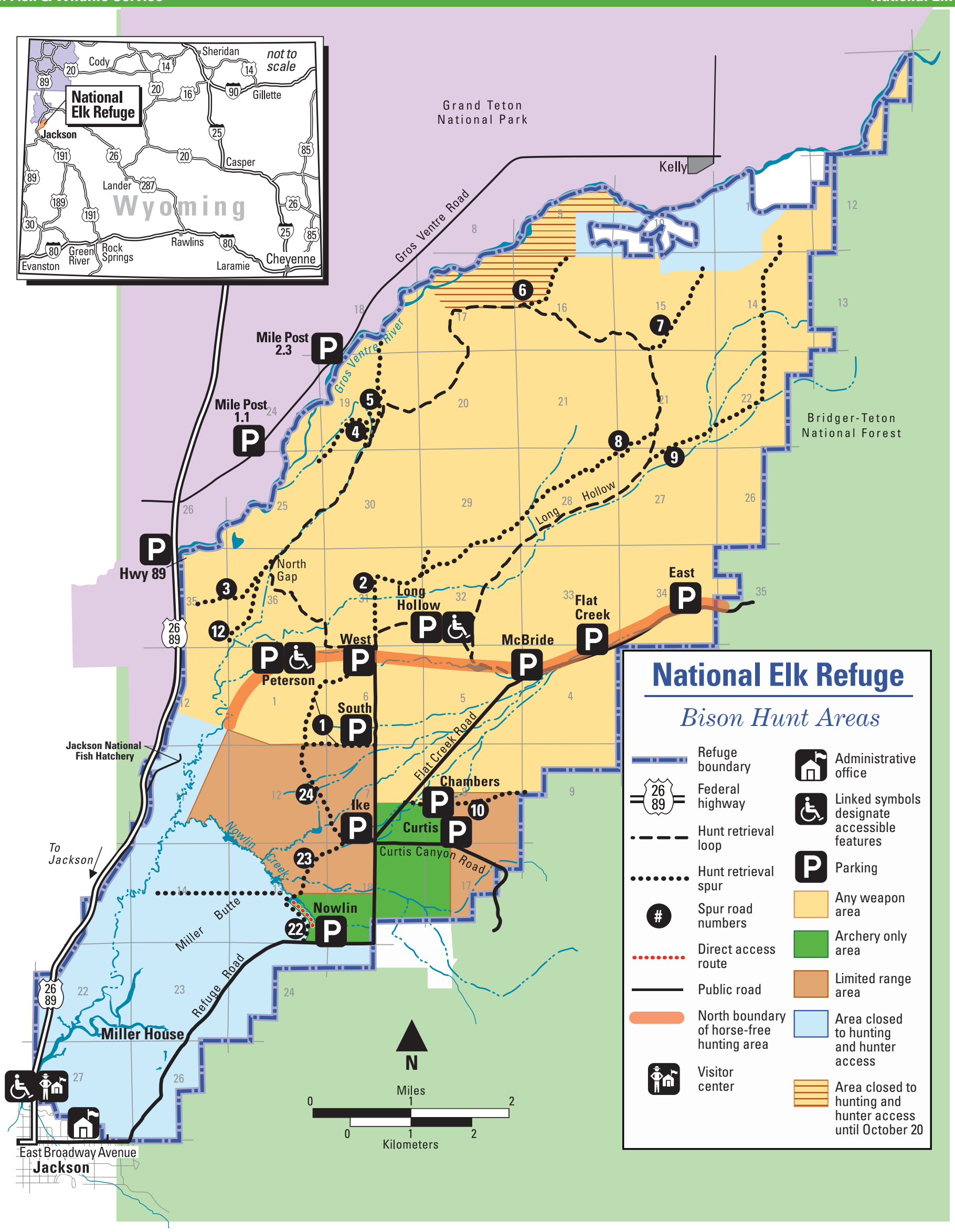
USFWS

Young adult bison have yet to develop obvious horn shapes that help identify gender.



What hunting areas can I hunt and what are their restrictions?

Bison hunting is allowed in three hunting areas (see map). All hunt areas must be accessed from designated parking lots or direct access routes that correspond to the legal hunting method allowed in that area. All Refuge hunting areas have specific restrictions.

Archery Only Area (Green on map)
Hunters must carry and are restricted to possessing only a bow or crossbow legal for taking wild bison as defined by the WGFD. Hunters must be at least 200 yards from all residences.

Limited Range Area (Brown on map)
Hunters must carry and are restricted to possessing only limited range weapons, including handguns, muzzle loading rifles, shotguns with slugs, or archery equipment legal for taking wild bison as defined by the WGFD. Handguns are further restricted to straight-walled cartridges with a barrel length no longer than 12 inches.

Any Weapon Area (Yellow on map)
Hunters may hunt with any weapon legal for taking wild bison as defined by the WGFD.

Contact Information

National Elk Refuge (NER)
Hunt Information Line
307 / 201 5437

National Elk Refuge
Administrative Office
(PO Box 510) 675 E. Broadway Avenue
Jackson, WY 83001
307 / 733 9212
www.fws.gov/refuge/national_elk_refuge/

Wyoming Game & Fish Department
Jackson Office
(PO Box 67) 420 North Cache Street
Jackson, WY 83001
307 / 733 2321

Jackson Hole & Greater Yellowstone Visitor Center
532 North Cache Street
Jackson, WY 83001

Teton Interagency Dispatch
307 / 739 3301
In an emergency, dial 911
For State relay service
TTY / Voice: 711

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

For Refuge Information
1 800 / 344 WILD

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5. What are the requirements for animal retrieval?

- Following harvest, bison hunters may use retrieval roads immediately. If retrieving after dark, hunters should notify Refuge staff by leaving a message on the NER Hunt Information Line at 307 / 201 5437.
- Hunters may not leave animal parts, including gut piles and carcasses, within 100 feet of parking areas.
- No game retrieval is allowed through Grand Teton National Park. This includes retrieval to Gros Ventre parking areas at Milepost 1.1 and 2.3. If retrieving to Highway 89 lot, hunters must bring their vehicle inside the gate to load the animal at the Highway 89 lot.

6. What should I do before I pursue an injured animal off of or onto the Refuge?

Prior to December 1, if an injured animal crosses from the National Forest onto the Refuge, or if retrieval would be more efficient through the Refuge, hunters should call the NER Hunt Information Line and leave a message describing their situation and plan for recovery.

Following this notice, the hunter may pursue or retrieve the animal as planned, giving consideration to limiting any resource damage. Beginning December 1, Forest Service lands adjacent to the Refuge are closed to all human presence per winter travel restrictions.

If the injured animal crosses into Grand Teton National Park, the hunter must immediately notify Teton Interagency Dispatch at 307 / 739 3301.

7. What regulations apply to the non-hunting assistants?

- Bison hunters are allowed multiple assistants and must ensure their entire hunt party is compliant with all Refuge regulations.
- Assistants must stay within 50 yards of the permitted hunter, unless retrieving.
- Assistants must wear a florescent orange or pink garment that is visible from 360 degrees, the same as required for the hunter, by state law.

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Bull bison on National Elk Refuge.

8. What else do I need to know?

- Prior to the start date of their hunt period, hunters may only access Refuge areas open to the general public.
- Hunters are allowed into hunt areas only when they have a Refuge permit and a valid matching license.
- Refuge roads or parking areas may be closed or inaccessible due to inclement weather or management decisions.
- Use of non-lead ammunition is encouraged.
- During high fire danger, a fire extinguisher and shovel are recommended.
- Grizzly bears frequent the Refuge. Carrying bear spray is recommended.

9. How can I tell the difference between a cow and bull bison?

It can be difficult to distinguish between a one to two year-old bull and a mature cow. It is recommended that hunters become proficient with the bison identification exam available on the WGFD website. Misidentification of sex or age when killing a bison will result in the seizure of the animal in addition to a fine.

10. What guide and retrieval companies are permitted to operate on the National Elk Refuge?

Commercial guiding and retrieval services may be available. The company currently authorized to operate on the Refuge is Double Diamond Tag-n-Drag 307 / 248-1490.

USFWS

Mature cow with calf. Calves of the year have short straight horns.

11. Does the Refuge allow Wyoming hunter assistance programs for hunters with disabilities?

Hunters enrolled in the WGFD Hunter Mentor Program may receive a Refuge permit.

The Refuge encourages hunters with disabilities to participate in the hunt program and offers reasonable accommodation for the activity. Hunters who have both a WGFD Disabled Hunter Permit and a Refuge hunting permit are eligible to reserve one of two designated hunt sites. Reservations must be made at the Refuge Administrative Offices at 675 E. Broadway in Jackson, WY. The reservation is limited to a 4-day period. The WGFD Disabled Hunter Companion Permit is also valid on the Refuge. Contact the WGFD for further information on these programs.

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 711 for a free connection to the State relay service for TTY and voice calls to and from people with hearing and speech disabilities. For more information or to address accessibility needs, please contact the Refuge staff at 307 / 733 9212, or the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Equal Opportunity, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.