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

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

National Elk Refuge

2014 Bison Hunting

Information and Regulations

Background

Bison hunt management on the National Elk Refuge is designed to achieve optimum herd size as determined through a cooperative effort between National Elk Refuge, Grand Teton National Park, and Wyoming Game & Fish Department managers.

General Hunting Information

Hunting of bison on the National Elk Refuge is permitted from August 15, 2014, through January 18, 2015. Individuals who have not already applied and been selected for a 2014 Wyoming bison license are not eligible to hunt bison this year.

Twenty-five hunt periods will be available to hunters. Hunt periods vary in length and may have overlapping dates:

- *Period 1: August 15 – 24*
- *Period 2: August 25 – September 7*
- *Period 3: September 8 – 21*
- *Period 4: September 22 – October 5*
- *Period 5: October 6 – 19*
- *Period 6: October 20 – November 3*
- *Period 7: November 4 – 14*
- *Period 8: November 15 – 18*
- *Period 9: November 18 – 21*
- *Period 10: November 22 –25*
- *Period 11: November 25 – 28*
- *Period 12: November 29 – December 2*
- *Period 13: December 2 – 5*
- *Period 14: December 6 – 9*
- *Period 15: December 9 – 12*
- *Period 16: December 13 – 16*
- *Period 17: December 16 – 19*
- *Period 18: December 20 – 23*
- *Period 19: December 23 – 26*
- *Period 20: December 27 – 30*
- *Period 21: December 30 – January 2*
- *Period 22: January 3 – 6*
- *Period 23: January 6 – 9*
- *Period 24: January 10 – 13*
- *Period 25: January 13 – 18*

Online Permit Application Process

The application process for National Elk Refuge bison hunting permits is conducted in cooperation with the Wyoming Game & Fish Department's Private Lands Public Wildlife Access Program. You must already have a Wyoming state bison license to apply for a Refuge bison permit. Applications are available at http://bit.ly/1jjpFQL.

A direct link to the permit application web site is also provided on the bison hunting page of the National Elk Refuge's web site at http://1.usa.gov/1gnsi21

Application Information

There are three options for obtaining a Refuge bison hunting permit. Each of the options is described below.

Initial Draw: Option 1

To apply for a bison hunting permit to hunt on the National Elk Refuge, hunters must complete an application online (see Online Permit Application Process) between July 14 – July 31, initially applying for only one hunt period. The results of the computerized random draw will be posted on the application web site by 11:00 am on August 4.

Leftover Permits: Option 2

After 11:00 am on August 4, the online system will continue to be active to allow access to any permits that were not issued during the initial random draw. Any unissued (leftover) permits will be available on a first-come, first-served basis, limited to one leftover permit per person regardless of whether or not they were successful in the initial August 4 drawing.

Alternate Permits: Option 3

Alternate permits differ from leftover permits; alternate permits do not become available until after the season has begun. Alternate permits will be issued each Monday from November 10, 2014 – January 12, 2015. To disperse hunters over the hunt period, half of the alternate permits issued will be valid for Tuesday through Friday of the upcoming hunt period, and the remaining half will be valid for Saturday through Tuesday.

Alternate permits will be issued online each week through a lottery system that uses a computerized random draw. Applicants will use the same online system outlined above (see Online Permit Application Process). Hunters must apply for an alternate permit between Friday at 9:00 am and Sunday at 11:59 pm MST for the upcoming hunt period. Hunters will designate during the application process if they want to be considered for a Tuesday through Friday or a Saturday - Tuesday alternate permit for the upcoming hunt period. The results of the weekly computerized random draw for alternate permits will be posted on the application web site by 11:00 am each Monday morning.

The number of alternate permits issued will vary, depending on hunter harvest rates and participation. Alternate permits will be issued on:

- November 10, 2014
- November 17, 2014
- November 24, 2014
- December 1, 2014
- December 8, 2014
- December 15, 2014
- December 22, 2014
- December 29, 2014
- January 5, 2015
- January 12, 2015

Individuals who were already successful in obtaining any bison permit for another hunt period may still apply for an alternate permit.

Special Regulations

All State of Wyoming hunting regulations (available online at http://bit.ly/RUJbqf) are in effect and will be enforced. Hunters must review all regulations and maps prior to hunting on the Refuge. Refuge hunting permits may be revoked in the event of improper hunter conduct or violation of regulations, and future Refuge hunting privileges could be denied.

Bison hunting is allowed in both the North and South Units of the Refuge, but each unit has distinct weapons restrictions. Hunters are responsible for knowing which weapons can be used in the hunt unit they are accessing.

Hunters are responsible for knowing and observing hunt boundaries *(see map)*. Much of the North and South Unit hunt boundaries are identified on the ground by signs and posts. The North Unit hunt area is bounded on the west by the Highway 26/89 fence line and on the north by the south bank of the Gros Ventre River main channel.

The following items must be in the hunter's possession while bison hunting on the Refuge:

- Refuge bison hunting permit
- Valid State of Wyoming bison hunting license
- Hunter Safety Card if required by State law.
- Wyoming Conservation Stamp

The Wyoming Hunter Mentor Program is valid on the National Elk Refuge. Contact the Wyoming Game & Fish Department for further information on the program or apply at http://bit.ly/1jjE4M1

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).

South Unit

- Hunters present in the South Unit limited range weapons area must carry and are restricted to limited range weapons, including handguns, muzzleloading rifles, shotguns with slugs, and archery equipment as defined by the Wyoming Game & Fish Department.
- All handguns must meet the Wyoming Game & Fish Department's definition of a legal firearm for the taking of bison, and must use straight-walled cartridges with a barrel length no longer than 12 inches.

North Unit

North Unit bison hunters may hunt with any legal weapon as defined by the Wyoming Game & Fish Department for the taking of wild bison, including rifles, handguns, black powder firearms, and archery equipment.

Prohibited activities while bison hunting on the Refuge include:

- Parking along Refuge roads.
- Pursuing or following bison by vehicle, including between parking areas.
- Intentional herding, harassment, or moving of animals.
- Overnight camping or parking, including in the parking lots or hunt areas.
- Shooting from parking areas or Refuge roads.
- Shooting wildlife other than bison.
- Target or practice shooting.
- Use or possession of alcoholic beverages while hunting.
- Collection of specimens, including but not limited to antlers, skulls, and artifacts.

A fluorescent orange exterior garment as defined by State regulations must be worn by anyone in a hunt area. Hunters need to ensure anyone accompanying them is compliant with this regulation.

Any person(s) accompanying a bison hunter must stay within 50 yards of the permitted hunter at all times except during retrieval activities.

Certified weed-free livestock feed is required on the Refuge.

Regulations for Archery Hunting on the Refuge

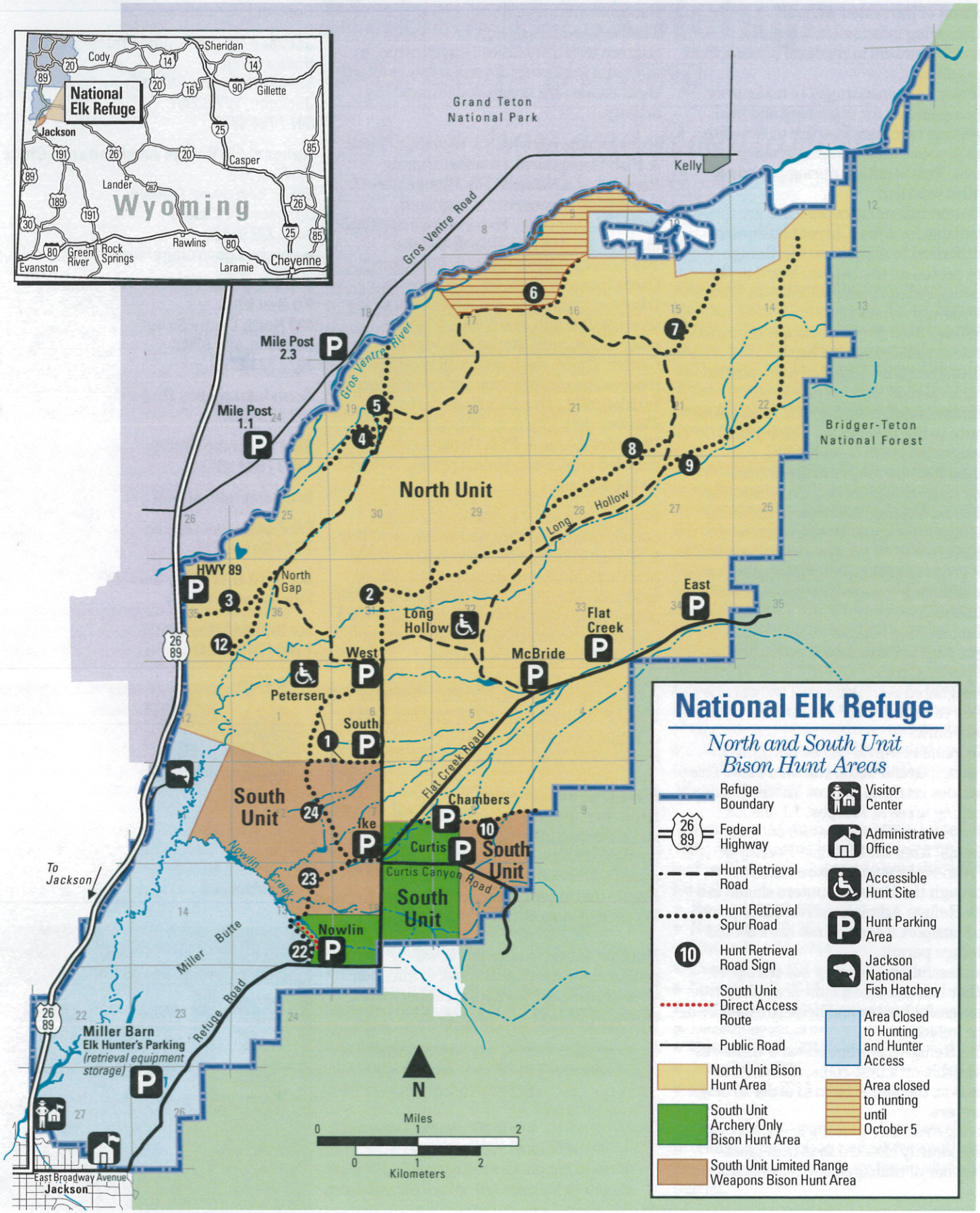
- Archery hunters on the Refuge must wear a fluorescent orange exterior garment as defined by State regulations.
- Archery hunters are exempt from the hunter safety certificate requirement.
- Hunters within the archery only hunt area *(see map)* must maintain a minimum distance of 200 yards from residences.

Refuge Access and Travel

The main access to and from Refuge bison hunt areas is through the main Refuge entrance at the end of East Broadway Avenue in Jackson.

- Vehicles parked on the Refuge must be in a designated hunt parking area.
- One bison hunt parking area and access point is available on North Highway 89. Off-Refuge parking and access is also allowed on the Gros Ventre Road at Mile Post 1.1 and 2.3. The Gros Ventre Road parking and access areas are for use by both permitted elk and bison hunters. Retrieval of bison and elk will not be permitted back to the Gros Ventre Road parking areas.
- The West and South parking lots may be occasionally closed during December in order to prevent early morning bison disturbance and improve harvest opportunities. Closure dates will be posted on the Refuge web page and marked near the intersection of the Refuge Road and Flat Creek Road.
- Hunters may not exit vehicles or be dropped off on roads between hunt parking areas.
- Motorized vehicle travel in a hunt area is prohibited, except as noted in the section entitled "Retrieval of Harvested Animals."
- Horses and bicycles are permitted in a hunt area, but bicycles must remain on designated retrieval roads.
- ATVs must be registered, insured, and operated by a licensed driver. ATVs may only be driven on Refuge roads to one of the hunter parking areas. They are not allowed on Refuge retrieval roads.
- Prior to the start date of the hunt, hunters may only access Refuge areas open to the general public. Hunters are only allowed into hunt areas on the dates listed on their valid permit.
- During periods of very high or extreme fire danger, a water source or fire extinguisher combined with a shovel is recommended for each vehicle.
- Bear spray is recommended for all persons participating in the Refuge hunt program.

A temporary no-hunting safety zone exists in the area around Grand Teton National Park's Gros Ventre Campground. This area is closed to hunting and hunter entry until October 6, 2014.


National Elk Refuge
Wyoming
Cody
Sheridan
Gillette
Jackson
Casper
Lander
Rawlins
Rock Springs
Green River
Evanston
Laramie
Cheyenne
Grand Teton National Park
Kelly
Gros Ventre Road
Gros Ventre River
Mile Post 2.3
Mile Post 1.1
HWY 89
North Gap
North Unit
Long Hollow
Bridger-Teton National Forest
East
Flat Creek
McBride
West
Petersen
South
Long Hollow
Flat Creek Road
Chambers
Ike
Curtis
South Unit
Curtis Canyon Road
Nowlin Creek
Nowlin
Miller Butte
Refuge Road
To Jackson
Miller Barn
Elk Hunter's Parking
(retrieval equipment storage)
East Broadway Avenue
Jackson
N
Miles
Kilometers
National Elk Refuge
North and South Unit Bison Hunt Areas
Refuge Boundary
Federal Highway
Hunt Retrieval Road
Hunt Retrieval Spur Road
Hunt Retrieval Road Sign
South Unit Direct Access Route
Public Road
North Unit Bison Hunt Area
South Unit Archery Only Bison Hunt Area
South Unit Limited Range Weapons Bison Hunt Area
Visitor Center
Administrative Office
Accessible Hunt Site
Hunt Parking Area
Jackson National Fish Hatchery
Area Closed to Hunting and Hunter Access
Area closed to hunting until October 5