



Nebraska Wildlife Management Area (WMA) - Regulations

Nebraska's state wildlife areas are managed by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission's Wildlife Division for the enhancement of wildlife habitat and for public hunting and fishing. However, Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) are open to many other activities, such as hiking, bird watching, nature study, horseback riding and primitive camping.

Generally speaking, hunters and anglers pay the entire bill for the acquisition, development and maintenance of these areas through the purchase of hunting and fishing permits, Habitat and Aquatic Habitat stamps, and excise taxes on hunting and fishing equipment.

Access to these areas is free, and no entry permit is necessary. However, to protect these areas and their many assets, there are certain rules that all must abide by. This document lists most general regulations that apply to public use of these wildlife areas, but special regulations may apply on some areas. For answers to specific questions, please contact your local Game and Parks Commission office or conservation officer.

Camping

Camping is permitted unless otherwise posted or restricted by special area regulations. Camping is truly primitive, for generally there are not facilities on these areas.

Camping on WMAs is permitted for a maximum of 14 consecutive days within any 30 day period, unless otherwise posted.

Camping equipment may not exceed 8ft width and 40ft in length.

Special permission is required for group camping on any state wildlife area by any type of group, such as 4-H, Scouts, civic clubs or other organizations. To obtain a "Special Occasion Permit," contact the area manager, district wildlife manager or the Game and Parks Commission in Lincoln.

House Pets/Horses/Livestock

House pets (dogs, cats, etc.) are allowed when camping or on other outings, unless otherwise posted or prohibited by special area regulations. However, they must be kept on a leash or physically restrained by cage, crate or other such device.

Horseback riding is permitted, except where posted otherwise.

Grazing or ranging of domestic livestock or poultry is not permitted, except by written permission of the NGPC.

Dog Training/Running

Wildlife areas are open to dog training, exercise, running and hunting (in season) except from May 1 through July 31 of each year. However, some areas may be posted as closed or special area regulations may apply. Professional dog trainers are prohibited from using these areas for training.

Where an area is posted as an "Authorized Dog Training Area," training is permitted year-round. Lands Posted as "Dog Trial Areas," are closed to dog training activities.

Fires/Fireworks

Open fires are permitted only in fireplaces, grills, or fire rings where provided by the Commission. Visitors may also use their personal gas/propane stoves, charcoal grills and the like. All other fires are prohibited. Cutting of firewood is prohibited, except under written authorization from the area manager, district manager or the Commission.

The use of any kind of fireworks is unlawful at all times.

Motor Vehicles

All motorized vehicles are restricted to roadways, parking areas or trails specifically designated for vehicle use. No off-road vehicles are permitted. Traffic signs are posted on some areas, but regardless of whether signed or not, all vehicles must be operated at a speed and manner that is reasonable and prudent under prevailing conditions.

All-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles may be operated on the frozen lake surface of WMAs except where prohibited by signing

Swimming/Wading/Boating

Swimming is prohibited in waters on state wildlife areas, except where swimming facilities are specifically provided and the area is posted to allow swimming. Where swimming is permitted, all floatation devices are prohibited except for U.S. Coast Guard-approved life preserves. Float tubes designed for the purpose of fishing are permitted.

Wading is allowed when fishing, hunting or trapping, although some areas may be posted against wading due to hazardous conditions.

Boating is permitted as posted on each area or as specified in the current Nebraska Boating Guide.

Vending

The sale of goods, services, products or commodities along with filming for commercial purposes is prohibited on state WMAs, except under written authorization of the Game and Parks Commission.

Fishing/Hunting/Trapping/Target Shooting

State Wildlife Areas are open to fishing, hunting, and trapping, in season, except where closed (or restricted) by signing or special area regulations. Please check the current Hunting and/or Fishing Guides for specific regulations.

Target shooting and/or the shooting of blue rock is permitted on most areas, although there are some areas where this activity is prohibited by signs. Some areas have additional Range Regulations posted by signs.

The use and/or possession of explosive or incendiary targets is prohibited.

The use and/or possession of paint ball weapons of any type is prohibited.

Waterfowl Blinds

Seasonal blinds may be installed on wildlife areas and the following reservoir areas: Calamus, Elwood, Enders, Lewis & Clark, McConaughy, Medicine Creek, Merritt, Red Willow, Sherman, Swanson & Whitetail WMA.

These seasonal blinds are subject to the following provisions and regulations:

- May not be erected before Sept. 1.
- The owner's name and address must be displayed on the door of the blind.
- The door must be constructed so it can be opened from the outside whenever the blind is unoccupied.
- Blinds must remain unlocked when not in use.
- The first person to occupy a seasonal blind each day shall be entitled to the use of the blind for that day.
- Seasonal blinds may not be installed on areas that are signed to prohibit their use.
- The person who installs such a blind is responsible for its removal before May 1 following the close of the waterfowl seasons.

Portable blinds for hunting waterfowl may be used on WMAs unless otherwise posted or restricted by area regulations. Portable blinds must be removed at the close of each hunting day.

Ice Fishing Shelters

Seasonal ice fishing shelters are allowed on WMAs, provided the owner has an Ice Fishing Shelter Permit and complies with the special regulations that govern their use. No permit is required for the use of temporary, portable shelters that are removed from the ice each day. Portable

shelters are not subject to the regulations that apply to seasonal ice fishing shelters.

Tree Stands

It is unlawful to build or use any permanent or semi-permanent tree stand or steps that attach to any tree with nails, screws, bolts or wire, except that screw-in steps may be used.

Portable tree-stands shall NOT be installed, utilized or left in place from Feb 1 through Aug 15.

Special Occasion Permits

"Special Occasion Permits" are required to conduct any group activity on a state wildlife area. This includes such things as group camping, sports events, public meetings, assemblies, gatherings, demonstrations, parades, religious services and similar activities or events.

To inquire about such permit, contact the area manager or the district manager in the district where the area is located.

Areas Protected

It is unlawful to injure, deface, destroy, remove or disturb any building, sign, equipment, monument, statue, marker or other structure.

It is further unlawful to possess, destroy, injure, deface, remove, or disturb any animal or plant material and the direct or indirect products thereof, including but not limited to flower, cane or fruit, nest, egg, den or any soil, rock, mineral formation, petrified wood, artifact, relic, historic or prehistoric feature, or any other public property of any kind.

This does not apply to any animal or fish legally taken during the open seasons for hunting, trapping or fishing.

Consumption of Alcohol

Consumption of alcoholic beverages on WMAs is permitted with the following exceptions:

- Consumption is prohibited on all roadways and parking areas.
- Alcohol may be prohibited on any WMA or portions thereof with the use of appropriate signage.
- Consumption is prohibited between the hours of 10PM and 6AM.
- Containers of alcohol whose single liquid capacity is greater than one gallon are prohibited.

Northwest District Office- 299 Husker Rd., Alliance, NE 69301-0725 308-763-2940

Southwest District Office- 301 E. State Farm Rd., North Platte, NE 69101-0430 308-535-8025

Northeast District Office- 2201 N. 13th St., Norfolk, NE 68701-2267 402-370-3374

Southeast District Office/Headquarters- 2200 N. 33rd St., Lincoln, NE 68503-0370 402-471-0641

Bassett Service Center- 524 Panzer St., Bassett, NE 68714-0508 402-684-2921

Kearney Service Center- 1617 First Ave., Kearney, NE 68847-6057 308-865-5310

Omaha Service Center- 8495 Frederick St., Omaha NE 68124 402-595-2144