

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Red Rock Lakes

National Wildlife Refuge

*Hunting, Fishing, and
Public Use Regulations*



Welcome

Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge was established April 22, 1935 to protect trumpeter swans and other migratory birds. Today, the Refuge encompasses 53,468 acres of forest, sage-steppe, grasslands, lakes, and wetlands of which 32,350 acres are designated wilderness. It is an important part of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and protects habitat for many wildlife species.

General Information



The Refuge Visitor Center and Headquarters are open from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday except Federal holidays. We welcome visitors to enjoy wildlife-oriented recreational opportunities at the Refuge, including hunting, fishing, wildlife watching, and photography. This brochure provides information and regulations to both protect resources at the Refuge and help ensure that you have a safe and enjoyable visit.

Activities not described in this brochure are prohibited on the Refuge. If you have questions, contact Refuge staff.

Safety



BE BEAR AWARE.

Grizzly bears are present on all areas of the Refuge. Carrying bear spray where it is readily accessible is strongly recommended.

Food storage requirements are in effect. All bear attractants, including, but not limited to, food and garbage, must be properly stored in either bear-proof storage or in a locked vehicle, unless in immediate use. Bear-proof storage boxes are provided in both campgrounds.

Hunters should use the storage trailer provided in the Upper Lake Campground marked for storing big game carcasses when hunting.

Do not clean fish or big game carcasses in the campgrounds.

General Regulations



Firearms

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).

Title 18, U.S.C., Section 930 prohibits possession of firearms and dangerous weapons inside Federal facilities.

Campfires

Fires are allowed in the fire rings provided in the Upper Lake and River Marsh campgrounds. Fires are not allowed in/on any other areas of the Refuge.

Under certain weather conditions, the Refuge may prohibit all fires in campgrounds.

Prohibited Activities



For the protection of people, wildlife, and wildlife habitat, the following activities are prohibited.

- Discharging a firearm on the Refuge outside of actively participating in a legal hunt for which the hunter is licensed.
- Hunting or shooting within 50 yards of the centerline of any Refuge or public road, camping areas, dwellings, or parking areas.
- Driving off-road or on dirt two-tracks for any reason, including retrieving downed game. Culver Road may be driven on when open.
- Driving on closed roads or going around gates.
- Dispersed and/or backcountry camping outside of the designated campgrounds.
- Outfitted or guided hunting.
- Trapping and baiting.

Prohibited Activities (con't)



- Trail cameras and the use of artificial lights to attract, search for, view, or spot wildlife. (Flashlights/headlamps may be used to search for and retrieve downed game).
- Driving or screwing any metal objects into a tree or hunting from a tree in which a metal object has been driven or screwed.
- Searching for or removal of objects of antiquity, animals, animal nests, rocks, antlers, bones, skulls, flowers, berries, or mushrooms.
- Cutting, removing, or damaging any vegetation, standing or down, live or dead.
- The use of paint, flagging, reflectors, tacks, or other manmade material for any purpose.
- Wheeled game carts or other mechanical transportation/retrieval devices in wilderness areas (see map).
- Possession or use of fireworks or explosives.
- Possession or use of alcohol or controlled substances.
- Swimming.
- Use of drones.
- Geocaching.

Camping



Camping is allowed only in the two established campgrounds – River Marsh Campground and Upper Lake Campground.

Fees for camping are: \$7 per site per night; \$5 per site per night with a Federal Interagency Annual, Senior, Access, or Volunteer pass; and \$4 for extra vehicle per site per night.

Pets



For the protection of wildlife and people, pets must be leashed at all times. Hunting dogs being used during the appropriate waterfowl hunting seasons in the Waterfowl Hunting Area must be under the owner's immediate control.

Fishing



Fishing is allowed in designated areas of the Refuge with a Montana State fishing license and in accordance with Montana State fishing regulations subject to the following conditions:

All Arctic Grayling must be immediately released.

The limit on brook trout is 20. See State regulations for the limits on cutthroat trout.

All Refuge streams and creeks are open to fishing in accordance with Montana State fishing regulations. See State regulations for seasonal closures of Elk Springs Creek and Red Rock Creek to protect spawning Arctic Grayling restoration efforts.

Bank fishing is allowed only on Widgeon Pond and Culver Pond in accordance with Montana State regulations and when not frozen. Widgeon Pond is closed October 1 - July 14, to protect nesting trumpeter swans and migratory waterfowl from disturbance. Float tubes and boats of any kind are not allowed on either of the ponds.

To protect migratory birds and other wildlife, fishing is prohibited on all other Refuge waters.

To prevent the introduction of whirling disease and other aquatic invasive species into Refuge waters, felt-soled wading boots are not allowed. Please clean and thoroughly dry your fishing gear and waders before entering Refuge waters to prevent the spread of invasive species.

Fishing is only allowed with rod and reel.

The use of bait for fishing is prohibited; only artificial lures or flies are allowed.

The use or possession of any lead fishing product while fishing is prohibited.

Hiking



Hikers exploring the Refuge along the easy 1-mile (round trip) Sparrow Pond Trail will traverse through willows and tall grassy areas. You may see moose, waterfowl, and sandhill cranes near the wetlands that make up sparrow ponds. This trail is largely in an open area with full exposure to the sun. Trail use allowed year-round.

On the easy 1½-mile (round trip) Odell Creek Trail, hikers traverse through a grove of aspen trees giving way to open old growth Douglas fir. This trail continues beyond Refuge boundaries and provides access to the Continental Divide Trail. Hikers may see black or grizzly bear, deer, elk, or moose, particularly if continuing the trail beyond the Refuge.

Photography



We welcome you to observe and photograph wildlife on the Refuge, except within areas designated as closed for the protection of swans or other sensitive wildlife. Please do not disturb, approach, or follow wildlife when observing or photographing them. Trumpeter swans are extremely sensitive to disturbance and may abandon nests or young.

Boating



Non-motorized boats are allowed on the Refuge. Boating is limited to canoes, kayaks, rowboats, rafts, and paddleboards, in designated areas during certain times of the year (see map). Sailboating and windsurfing are not allowed.

Motorized boats 10 HP or less are allowed west of Lower Red Rock Lake dam.

Bicycling



Visitors may bike on Refuge roads open to motorized vehicles. Bicycles are not allowed on hiking trails.

Vehicles, Off Road Utility Vehicles (ORUVs), and Snowmobiles



The speed limit within Lakeview is 20 mph. Speeds over 35 mph are not recommended on any other roads due to sharp rocks that can cause flat tires.

Only legally licensed street-legal ORUVs being operated in accordance with Montana State law are allowed on Refuge roads. Operators must have a valid driver's license. If you cannot license an ORUV in your state, contact Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks for a temporary permit.

Motorized vehicles are allowed only on designated public roads and Refuge roads open to travel.

Snowmobiles are only allowed to travel through the Refuge on unplowed county roads (South Valley, North Valley, and Elk Lake Roads) identified by adjacent fences or fence posts. Snowmobiles must possess a valid registration decal as required by Montana State Law.

Cross-country Skiing and Snowshoeing



Visitors are welcome to cross-country ski and snowshoe on the Refuge. To preserve the wilderness setting, there are no trails for these activities. Visitors should stay at least $\frac{1}{4}$ mile away from animals when skiing or snowshoeing to avoid causing stress to wintering wildlife.

Horses



- Horses are not allowed in areas north of the South Valley Road, except to retrieve big game in areas open to hunting.
- Horses may be ridden up Odell Creek Trail to access mountainous areas beyond where the trail ends on Refuge property.
- Horses may be used for backcountry access to the Centennial Mountains south of the South Valley Road.
- Horses are not permitted in campgrounds.
- Horse feed must be certified weed-free.

Hunting



Hunting is allowed on the Refuge in open areas only during designated times and in designated areas for deer, elk, moose, pronghorn antelope, and waterfowl (coot, ducks, geese). Hunting is closed to all other species. Areas open and closed to hunting are indicated on the map. See the Hunting Regulations Table for additional regulations.

Hunting is allowed in accordance with Federal and State regulations. The following Refuge-specific regulations must be followed and are listed in the Hunting Regulations Table.

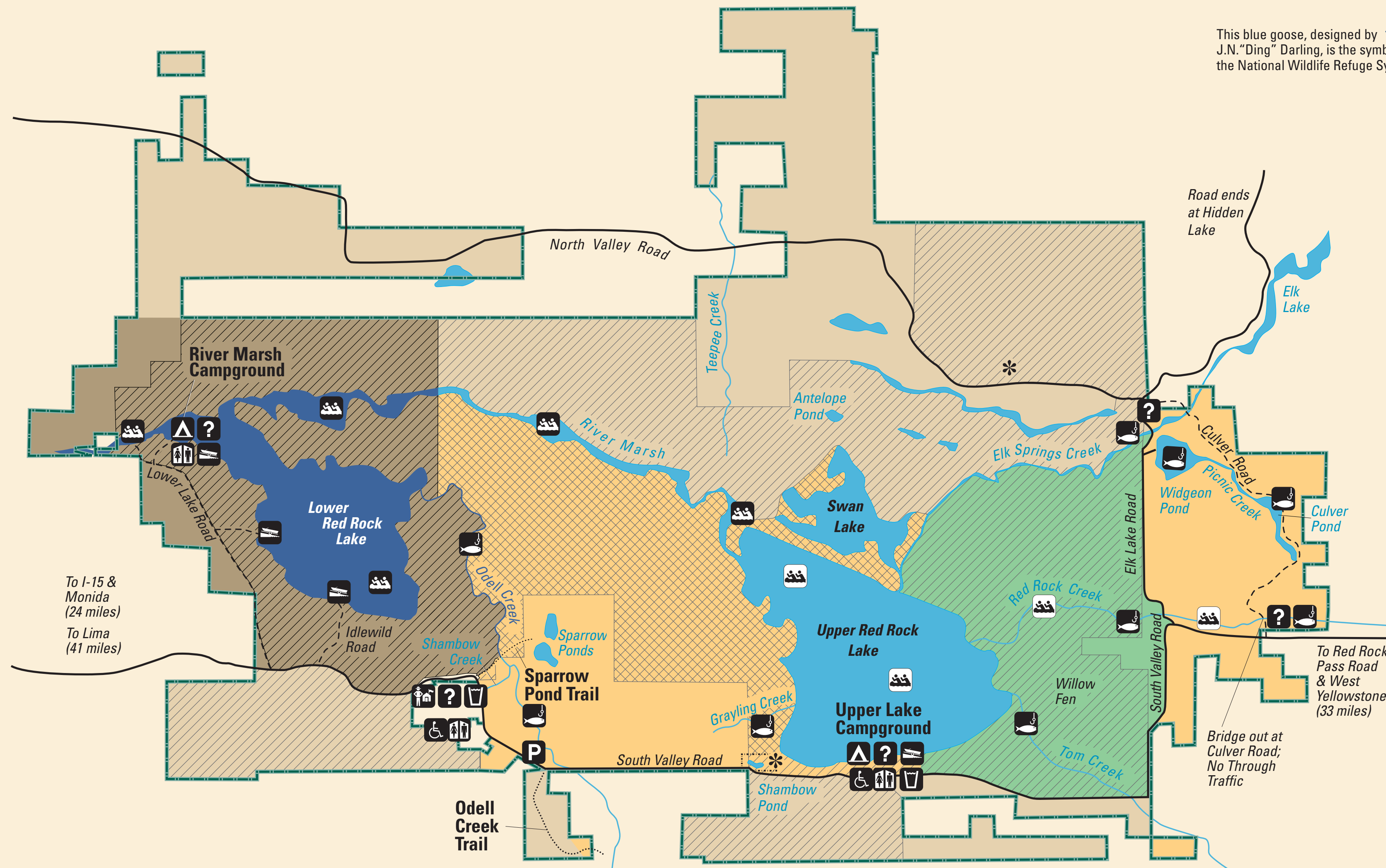
Accessibility



Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs and activities of the U.S. Fish & 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.

Hunting Regulations

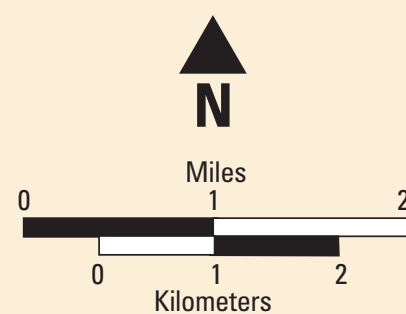
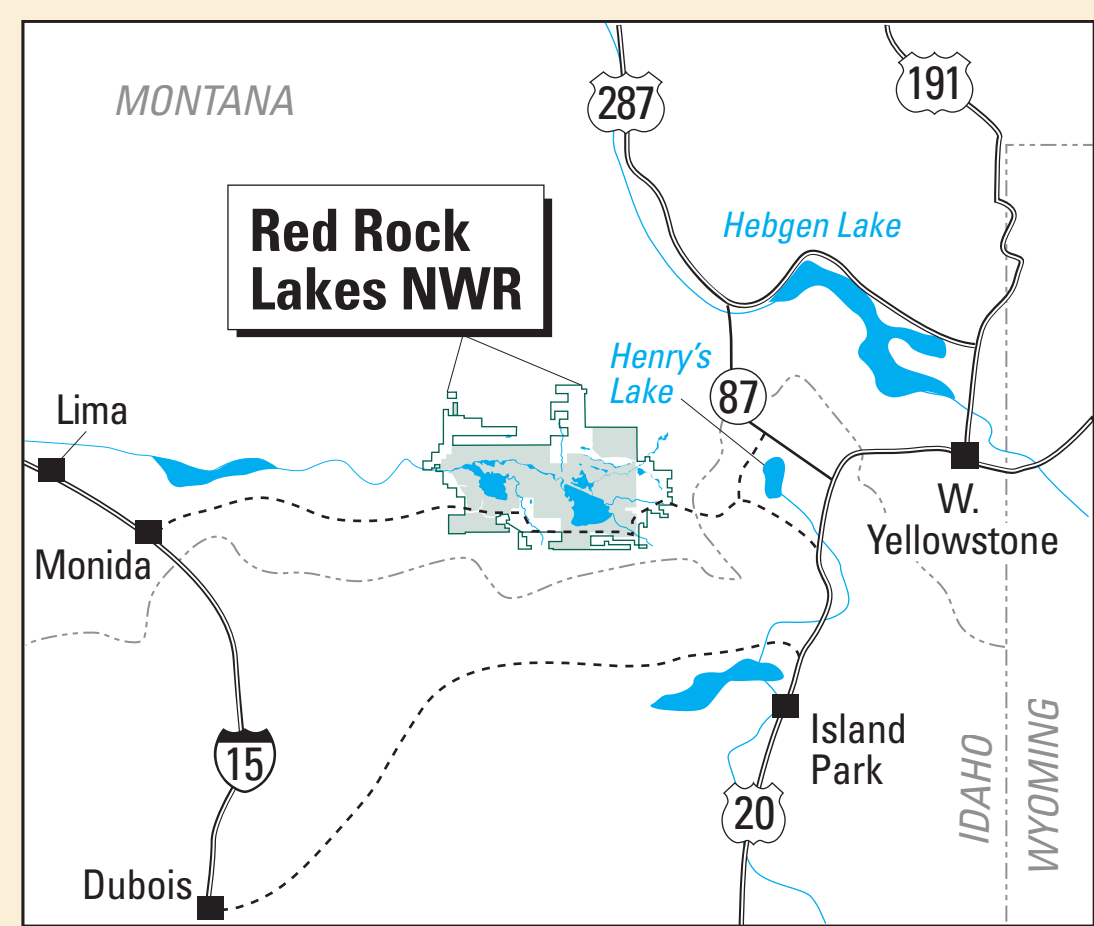
Activity	Hunt Areas	Season Dates	Other Regulations
Waterfowl	See designated waterfowl hunt area on map	Same as State Pacific Flyway season	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Waterfowl hunting is allowed only in the designated waterfowl hunt area surrounding Lower Red Rock Lake. ■ Entry into the designated waterfowl hunt area to hunt waterfowl is allowed from 2 hours before legal shooting time until 2 hours after legal shooting time only. Campers in the River Marsh Campground are permitted in this area if they are inside the fenced campground boundary. ■ Hunting waterfowl is prohibited within 50 yards downstream of Sparrow Pond Trail bridge. ■ Deer, elk, and pronghorn antelope are permitted to be hunted in the designated waterfowl hunt area. ■ Decoys may not be placed or set until the day of the hunt. Motorized or battery-operated decoys (e.g. MOJOs & water agitating) are prohibited. ■ Temporary blinds for waterfowl hunting may be constructed out of natural material. Blinds must be deconstructed and removed at the end of the day. ■ Hunters must remove all decoys, shell casings, and other personal equipment from the waterfowl hunt area each day. ■ Only non-motorized boats are allowed in the hunt area east of the Lower Red Rock Lake dam. West of the dam, 10 HP motors or less are permitted. ■ Hunters may not enter closed areas to retrieve birds.
Big game: elk, moose, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, white-tailed deer	See species-specific designated areas on map	Same as state season except that moose hunting in Montana moose zone 334 has a delayed open on the refuge portion of the zone. Season opens October 15 (bulls) and November 15 (cows).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hunting for elk, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, and white-tailed deer is allowed only in designated areas open to those species on the Refuge. ■ Hunting for elk, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, and white-tailed deer is prohibited in the moose-only hunting area. ■ Moose hunting is restricted to the willow fen area south of Elk Springs Creek, east of Upper Red Rock Lake, north and west of the South Valley Road, and west of Elk Lake Road at the southeast corner of the Refuge. ■ Moose hunters with antlerless permits may not harvest a cow moose having a calf/calves trailing her to allow calves an opportunity to survive the winter. Antlerless calves are permitted to be taken with an antlerless moose permit. ■ Hunting stands and blinds must be removed at the end of each day's hunt. ■ Deer, elk, moose, or pronghorn "drives" – the pushing, steering, ushering, or herding of animals for the taking or attempted taking of any big game is prohibited. ■ Horses may not be used to hunt and are not allowed in areas north of the South Valley Road, except to retrieve big game in areas open to hunting. ■ Hunters may not enter closed areas to retrieve downed game without first contacting Refuge staff.



To I-15 & Monida
(24 miles)
To Lima
(41 miles)

To Red Rock
Pass Road & West
Yellowstone
(33 miles)

Bridge out at
Culver Road;
No Through
Traffic



Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge

	Refuge headquarters		Elk, deer, pronghorn, and waterfowl-only area
	Linked symbols designate accessible features		Elk, deer, and pronghorn-only area
	Accessible restrooms		Moose-only area
	Parking		Waterfowl hunting
	Information kiosk		Restricted water (no hunting permitted)
	Interpretive exhibit		Wilderness area
	Boat launch		No hunting permitted
	Campground		Closed to public entry Oct 1 - Dec 15
	Fishing		Refuge boundary
	Canoeing, July 1 to freeze-up		Gravel road (county road)
	Canoeing, Sept. 1 to freeze-up		Seasonal road
	Potable water		Foot path
			Closed, year-round

Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge
27650B South Valley Road
Lima, MT 59739
406-276-3536
www.fws.gov/refuge/red-rock-lakes

For State Relay Service
TTY / Voice: 711

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
www.fws.gov

For Refuge Information
1-800-344-WILD (9453)

**National Wildlife Refuge System Violation
Reporting Hotline:**
1-844-FWS-TIPS (397-8477)
Email: fws_tips@fws.gov

State hunting and fishing violations:
1-800-TIP-MONT (847-6668)

Beaverhead County, MT Sheriff:
406-683-3700

July 2022

