

**HUNTING MANAGEMENT PLAN**  
**Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge**  
**November, 1997**  
**Updated 2007**

**U.S. Department of the Interior**  
**Fish and Wildlife Service**  
**Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge**  
**Tucker County, West Virginia**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Canaan Valley is in Tucker County, West Virginia, just south of the town of Davis. The valley is 14 miles long and 2 to 4 miles wide, and the valley floor is at 3,200 feet elevation. The climate is cool and moist, and the wetland habitats include bogs, marshes, shrub thickets and wet meadows. The Canaan Valley wetlands are the largest in West Virginia and in the central and southern Appalachians. Common hardwood trees include maple, beech, birch, and cherry, and evergreen trees include hemlock, red spruce and balsam fir. There is a diversity of wildlife; game species include white-tailed deer, black bear, rabbits, turkey, ruffed grouse, woodcock, Canada geese and several species of ducks.

The idea of a national wildlife refuge in Canaan Valley was first considered in the early 1960's, but it did not come about until 30 years later. The refuge was established in 1994, and now consists of approximately 15, 921 acres. As a federal refuge, it is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), which is part of the Department of Interior. The Service will continue to purchase lands from willing sellers, with hopes that eventually the refuge will consist of most of the wetlands and wildlife habitat in the valley.

The refuge was established to conserve the unique habitats and wildlife of Canaan Valley for the benefit of the American people. Another major purpose is to allow people to use the refuge in ways that are compatible with refuge objectives. Hunting, which has been a tradition in the valley for many years, is a compatible use and will be permitted on most refuge lands.

## II. CONFORMANCE WITH STATUTORY AUTHORITIES

Several laws and a recent executive order apply to hunting on national wildlife refuges. They are summarized below.

### **National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997**

Signed by President Clinton on October 9, 1997, this new law defines compatible wildlife-dependent recreation as "legitimate and appropriate general public use of the [National Wildlife Refuge] System." It establishes hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation as "priority public uses" where compatible with the mission and purpose of individual national wildlife refuges.

**Executive Order 12996 (March 25, 1996)**

This Executive Order, entitled "Management and General Public Use of the National Wildlife Refuge System," contains a directive to: "...recognize compatible wildlife-dependent recreational activities involving hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation as priority general public uses of the Refuge System..."

**The National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966**

This Act (16 U.S.C. 668 dd-ee; 80 Stat. 927) authorizes the Secretary to "...permit the use of any area within the System for any purpose...compatible with the major purposes for which such areas were established..."

**The Refuge Recreation Act of 1962**

This Act (16 U.S.C. 460k) authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to administer such areas for public recreation as an appropriate incidental or secondary use only to the extent that it is practicable and not inconsistent with the primary objectives for which the area was established. In addition, the Refuge Recreation Act requires that funds are available for the development, operation, and maintenance of the permitted forms of recreation.

**Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 50**

Section 31.2(e) lists hunting as a method of surplus wildlife population control.

Section 31.15 states that the privilege of hunting may be extended to the general public.

Section 32.1 states that the opening of a wildlife refuge area to hunting will be dependant upon the provisions of law applicable to the area and upon a determination by the Secretary of the Interior that the opening of the area to the hunting of migratory game birds, upland game, or big game will be compatible with the principles of sound wildlife management and will otherwise be in the public interest.

Section 32.2 of Title 50 CFR has provisions applicable to each person engaged in public hunting on a wildlife refuge area.

Section 32.3 of Title 50 CFR explains the procedure for publication of special regulations.

**III. STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES**

**A. Refuge Purpose**

The refuge was officially established in 1994, under the authority of the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956. Under this Act, the legal purpose of the refuge is "...for the development, advancement, management, conservation, and protection of fish and wildlife resources...", and "...for the benefit of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, in performing its activities and services."

**B. Goals of the National Wildlife Refuge System**

The goals established for the National Wildlife Refuge System are delineated below:

To preserve, restore, and enhance in their natural ecosystems (when practicable) all animal and plant species that are endangered or threatened with becoming endangered;

To perpetuate the migratory bird resource;

To preserve a natural diversity and abundance of fauna and flora on refuge lands; and,

To provide an understanding and appreciation of fish and wildlife ecology and man's role in his environment, and to provide refuge visitors with high quality, safe, wholesome, and enjoyable recreational experiences oriented toward wildlife to the extent these activities are compatible with the purpose for which the refuge was established.

**C. Objectives of Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge**

As identified in the Environmental Assessment (1994), the refuge was established to meet the following objectives:

To preserve in perpetuity approximately 24,000 acres of relict boreal habitat and unique ecosystem, with its diverse flora and fauna;

To provide a unique educational opportunity by assisting with field studies of environmental inter-relationships and stimulating curiosity of living things by offering a variety of first-hand environmental experiences;

To provide for bird watching, photography, nature study, hunting, fishing, and other wildlife-oriented activities consistent with other refuge objectives;

To establish a Woodcock Research and Management Area consistent with other refuge objectives; and,

To provide and develop habitat for waterfowl consistent with preservation of existing ecosystems.

#### D. Hunting Program Objectives

The Fish and Wildlife Service policy on hunting as stated in the *Refuge Manual* (8RM 5.1) is: “...to permit hunting on any refuge within the Refuge System upon a determination that hunting is compatible with the major purposes for which such areas are established.” In addition to a compatibility determination, the Refuge Recreation Act requires verification that funds are available for the development, operation and maintenance of the hunting program.

The Service has long recognized that hunting is an integral part of a comprehensive wildlife management program and that significant positive benefits can be attributed to a well-managed hunt. Hunting is also recognized as an acceptable, traditional form of wildlife-oriented recreation that can be, and sometimes is, used as a management tool to effectively manipulate wildlife population levels.

This is especially true in an area where those lands have traditionally supported hunting, as in Canaan Valley. In situations where hunting opportunities may be modified, the reasons include: wildlife population considerations, habitat maintenance, providing for safety and maintaining a high-quality hunt, and in rare cases, protecting research populations from unwanted impacts. The Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge hunting program objectives are listed below:

- (1) To provide for the wise use of a renewable natural resource;
- (2) To provide a high quality hunting experience; and,
- (3) To maintain a healthy population of game animals and the unique Canaan Valley habitats in a healthy condition.

Hunting on Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge shall be in accordance with state, federal and refuge regulations. The refuge will institute a permit system, weapons restrictions, safety zones, and similar special conditions for safety, wildlife management, and other reasons. Portions of the refuge that are open for hunting will be designated by signs and/or shown on permits or maps. Special regulations and maps will be available to the public.

### **E. Relationship of Hunt Program to Goals and Objectives**

A refuge hunting program would provide the public with high quality wildlife-dependent recreation opportunities. Also, a refuge hunting program would benefit the habitat management objectives of the refuge, especially in controlling the deer population. High deer densities have been shown to alter the understory of forests and negatively affect neotropical migrant birds as well as small game populations. Overbrowsing by deer at Canaan Valley is a well documented problem.

The negative effects of a hunting program on the refuge have been minimized through the use of refuge-specific regulations. Safety issues, game population concerns, non-target species impacts, endangered species impacts, and "quality hunt" parameters have all been addressed in the Hunt Program Environmental Assessment prepared by the Service in 1997.

## **IV. ASSESSMENT**

An assessment of refuge resources can be found in the Hunt Program Environmental Assessment that has been prepared to address the impacts of opening the refuge to hunting. Also, separate Compatibility Determinations have been completed for migratory game bird hunting, white-tailed deer hunting, turkey hunting, black bear hunting, and upland (small) game hunting for a variety of species including ruffed grouse, squirrels, coyote, woodchuck, opossum and skunk. These documents address environmental impacts, population status, inter-specific competition, and effects of hunting on non-target species. In summary, the hunt program will not result in unacceptable impacts to the refuge resources. Those species proposed for hunting will not be adversely affected by the hunt program, provided the refuge-specific regulations listed in this document are followed.

## **V. DESCRIPTION OF THE HUNTING PROGRAM**

### **A. Guidelines for Hunt Program**

The following administrative procedures for refuge hunting programs can be found in the Service *Refuge Manual* (8 RM 5.5):

*"Refuge hunting programs should be planned, supervised, conducted, and evaluated to promote positive hunting values and hunter ethics such as fair chase and sportsmanship. In general, hunting on refuges should be superior to that available on other public or private lands and should provide participants with reasonable harvest opportunities, uncrowded conditions, limited interference from or dependence on mechanized aspects of the sport. This may require zoning the hunt unit and limiting the number of participants. Good planning will minimize the controls and regimentation needed to achieve hunting objectives."*

## B. Areas Open to Hunting

Canaan Valley Refuge currently consists of approximately 15,921 acres. (See Figure 1.) The Service is in the process of acquiring more land, and as each tract is acquired it will be considered for inclusion in the refuge hunt program. As new tracts are added to the refuge, they will be listed in the annual refuge hunting regulations leaflet. Certain tracts may be closed to hunting based on safety factors, size of tract, legal restrictions, access, compatibility with refuge objectives, etc.

All of the current refuge tracts are in the southern part of the valley, which has intensively developed sections. Local residents have concerns about the safety of hunting, particularly with rifles, in this part of the valley. In response to these concerns the refuge will prohibit hunting with rifles west of Cortland Road and south of Old Timberline Road and on a small area north of Old Timberline Road around the Blackwater River, as shown on Figure 2. (Note that some of the lands south of Old Timberline Road are both east and west of Cortland Road.) Safety Zones based on terrain will be established and signs installed around the housing areas adjacent to the rifle hunting zone if and when those lands have been acquired by the refuge. Hunting will be prohibited on the tract west of Highway 32, which is adjacent to Canaan Valley State Park where hunting is also not allowed.

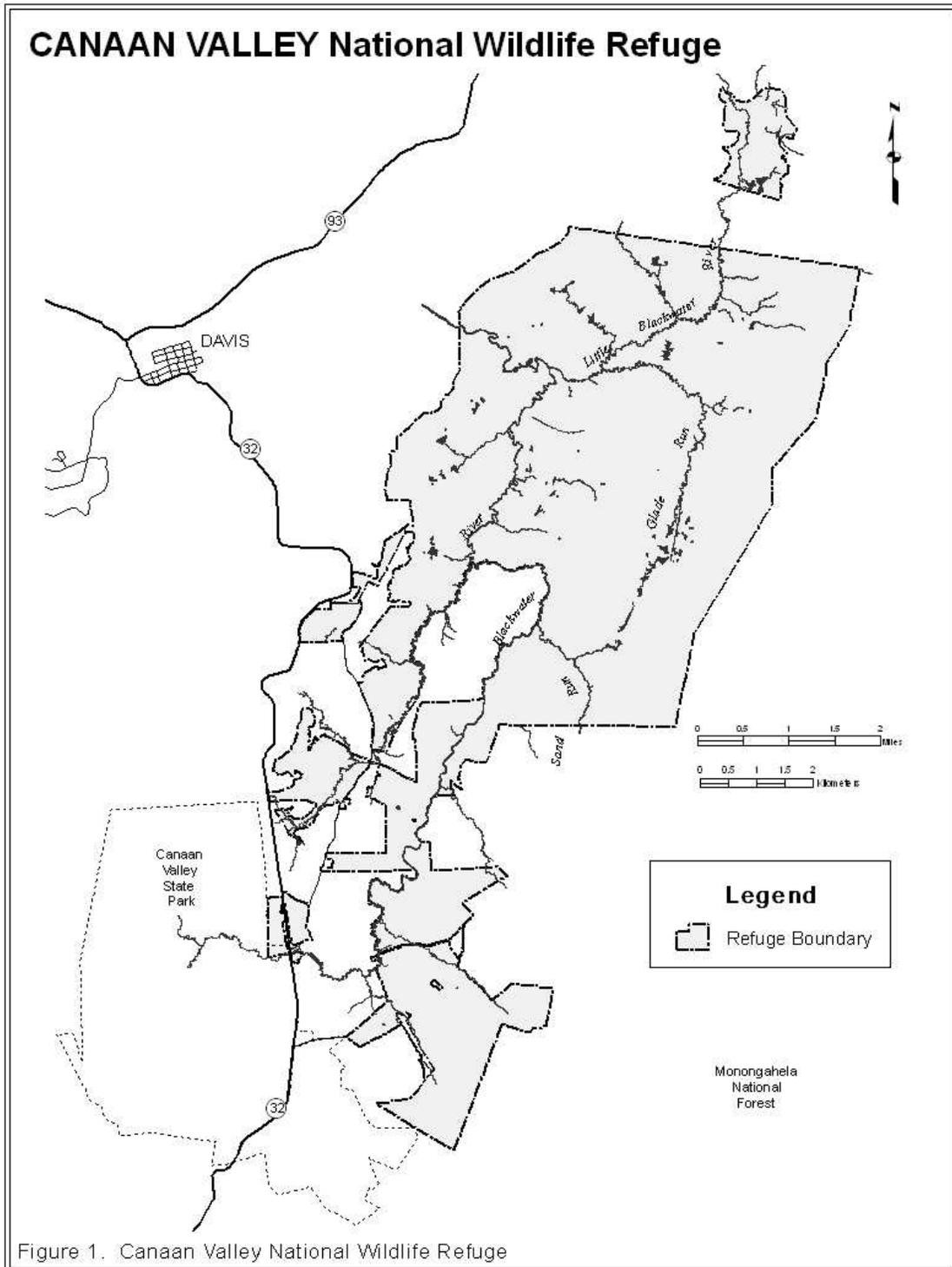
The Service honors all state and local laws applicable to hunting, including the following West Virginia law:

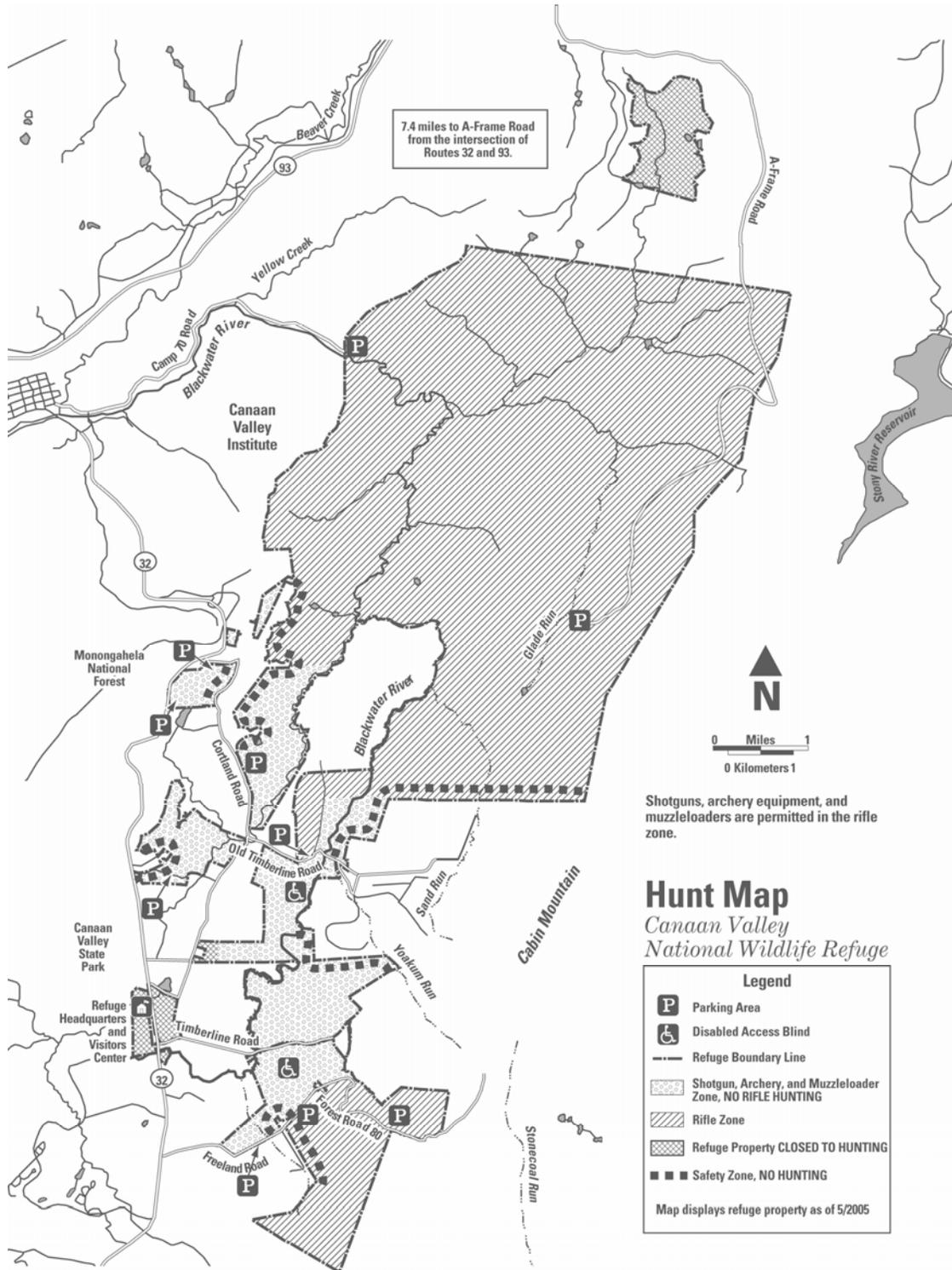
*WV Code 20-2-58 "It shall be unlawful for any person to shoot or discharge any firearms ... within 400 feet of any schoolhouse or church, or within 500 feet of any dwelling house, or on or near any park or other place where persons gather for purposes of pleasure ..."*

## C. Species to be Taken

As defined by the Service's *Refuge Manual*, hunting on refuges may be allowed for migratory game birds and resident game species, which are generally sub-divided into big game and upland (small) game categories. Hunting for species within all three categories will be permitted on Canaan Valley NWR.

- 1. Migratory Game Birds.** The take of migratory game birds will be permitted on those refuge tracts as indicated in the annual refuge hunting regulations leaflet. This includes the take of waterfowl, coot, gallinule, rails, snipe, woodcock, and mourning dove. The take of all other migratory birds will be prohibited.





The season and bag limits for these species will coincide with the appropriate state regulations. The use of retrieving and/or pointing dogs for migratory game bird hunting will be permitted; however, the dogs must be under the hunter's control at all times, and groups of three or more dogs per hunter will be prohibited. Non-toxic shot is required for hunting waterfowl under both West Virginia regulations and federal hunting regulations.

2. **Big Game (White-tailed Deer).** The take of white-tailed deer will be in accordance with state bag limits and seasons. Portable tree stands are the only type permitted on the refuge, and gun hunters are required to wear blaze orange. Some liberalization of the West Virginia antlerless deer hunting regulations may be instituted so that deer numbers can be reduced on the refuge. Service staff will work with the appropriate West Virginia Division of Natural Resources officials to explore the opportunities for an increased antlerless deer harvest on the refuge. One possibility is that the refuge be made a "Designated Management Area," and as such could have a longer antlerless season and be open to non-residents when the county is open to residents only. Other possibilities include making the refuge a "bonus area" for additional Class N tags, allowing non-residents to hunt with Class N tags on the refuge, and allowing unfilled Class RG/RRG tags to be used during antlerless or muzzle loader seasons on the refuge. All of these options are available within the framework of current state regulations. Also, special hunts such as youth hunts or hunts for the disabled could be established within the framework of existing state regulations. The goal would be to optimize hunting opportunities and reduce the deer herd to improve habitat conditions.
3. **Big Game (Black Bear).** Black bear hunting will be permitted according to state regulations during the bear archery season, but there will be several exceptions to state regulations during the bear gun hunting season. The refuge gun season will be approximately one week shorter, will not begin until the antlerless deer season is closed, and may be closed on Christmas Day. Releasing and picking up dogs on Old Timberline Road and Cortland Road will be prohibited. Hunters will be limited to six dogs each, and will have to account for each dog when checking in and out. Dog training on the refuge will be prohibited except during the refuge bear gun hunting season.
4. **Big Game (Turkey).** Turkey hunting will be permitted according to state regulations with two exceptions to improve hunter safety and reduce turkey crippling loss. The use of rifles for turkey hunting will be prohibited on the refuge, and hunters will be required to use #4 shot or smaller. Lead shot will be allowed.

5. **Upland/Small Game (Ruffed Grouse, Rabbits, Hare and Squirrels).** The take of ruffed grouse, rabbits, hare and squirrels will be permitted in accordance with state regulations with several exceptions. The use of pointing and/or retrieving dogs for grouse hunting will be permitted, as will the use of pursuit dogs for rabbit and hare hunting, but dogs must be under the hunters' control at all times. Grouse hunters will be limited to two dogs per hunter, and rabbit and hare hunters will be restricted to four dogs each. Because the northern bobwhite (quail) is rarely seen in the valley, and is a "bonus bird" for wildlife watchers, hunting for them will be prohibited. Hunter bag checks may be conducted during the rabbit/hare season to learn more about the status and relative proportions of the harvest for the three species found in the valley--the eastern cottontail, Appalachian cottontail and snowshoe (varying) hare.
6. **Upland/Small Game (Furbearers: Foxes, Raccoon and Bobcat).** The take of four species of furbearers--red fox, gray fox, raccoon and bobcat--will be permitted in accordance with state regulations with several exceptions. The use of pursuit dogs for raccoon hunting will be permitted, but dogs must be under the hunters' control at all times, and each hunter will be restricted to four dogs. All night hunters will be required to have a Refuge Night Hunting Permit in addition to the Hunting Refuge Hunting Regulations Leaflet. Dog training and/or "night hunts" will be prohibited except during raccoon hunting season.
7. **Upland/Small Game ("Unprotected Wildlife").** The take of several species of animals, which are not protected in West Virginia, will be permitted on the refuge during the regular hunting season from September through February. These species are woodchuck, coyote, opossum and striped skunk. The take of spotted skunks will be prohibited and the take of all other unprotected species--weasels, crow, European starling and house (English) sparrow--will be prohibited.

#### **D. Justification for Requiring Permits**

When hunting on Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge, hunters will be required to have in their possession a copy of the current Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge Hunting Regulations Leaflet which they have signed. The leaflet will serve as a refuge hunting permit and will be updated each year. It will inform hunters of current refuge regulations, no-rifle zones, and other pertinent information for the current year's hunt. It will be available in the leaflet boxes on the refuge tracts or from the refuge office.

For the present, permits will be free and not limited in number. In the future, the Service may charge a permit fee and/or limit the number of permits to ensure a high-quality hunt or achieve a management objective. If the refuge becomes a Designated Management Area for antlerless deer hunting, a specific permit will be required for that hunt.

The signed hunting permit will comply with the state "written permission" law which states:

*WV Code 20-2-7 "It shall be unlawful for any person to shoot, hunt, fish or trap upon the fenced, enclosed, or posted lands of another ..... without permission in writing from the owner, tenant or agent of such owner, and every person hunting, fishing, shooting or fowling upon such lands shall have in his possession such written permission when so doing."*

**E. Staffing and Funds**

During the next few years, the annual cost of this program is expected to be \$11,000. Refuge staff will prepare the annual refuge hunting regulations leaflet, make changes to the hunt plan and regulations as needed, prepare annual output reports, edit the hunting leaflet annually, respond to public inquiries about the hunt program, and conduct hunter use surveys.

Currently, the refuge has one authorized law enforcement staff. The Refuge may occasionally request Service law enforcement staff to be brought in from other field stations. In addition to staff expenses, the refuge will incur costs for signs, vehicle maintenance, road repair and maintenance, leaflet printing, and miscellaneous supplies.

Refuge Staff Time/Salary	\$17,771
Law Enforcement Officer	\$18,600
Law Enforcement Officers Expenses	\$2,061
Leaflet Printing	\$1,441
Miscellaneous (signs, vehicle, road work, etc.)	<u>\$5,975</u>
Total	\$45,848

(Note: As the staff of the refuge grows, it will include persons with law enforcement authority, and this may reduce the cost of the hunt somewhat. However, funds will be needed to pay overtime for refuge law enforcement staff and for help from other refuges and/or full time Service law enforcement agents.)

**VI. MEASURES TAKEN TO AVOID CONFLICTS WITH OTHER MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES**

**A. Biological Conflicts**

The proposed hunting will cause few biological conflicts with other wildlife species. Some disturbance of other animals is unavoidable when people are on the refuge and when they are using firearms. However, most of the current and potential refuge lands were, or are, open for private or public hunting, and are open to the public for hiking, bird watching and similar activities now. Public hunting on refuge lands will not change the situation very much unless

hunting pressure increases markedly. If that happens, the refuge will take measures--such as having a lottery system or allowing hunting only on certain days of the week--to reduce the number of hunters.

Two federally listed species in the valley, the threatened Cheat Mountain salamander and the endangered Virginia northern flying squirrel, are only found in a small portion of the valley not currently part of the refuge. It is unlikely that there would be conflicts if their habitat became part of the refuge because the flying squirrel is active only at night and the salamander is confined to wet areas in the red spruce forest. The major threat to both species is habitat destruction and modification.

Canaan Valley is within the range of three other endangered species: the American peregrine falcon, the Indiana bat and the Virginia big-eared bat; however, these species have not been recorded specifically from the valley. The bats have hibernacula elsewhere in Tucker County, and the falcons nest in two adjoining counties and fly over the valley occasionally. A threatened species, the American bald eagle, also nests in two nearby counties, and flies over as well. A few eagles have been seen feeding on lakes in the valley. It is highly unlikely that hunting on the refuge would have any impact on these species.

To insure sound wildlife management, the refuge will develop a wildlife inventory plan. Data should be collected to learn more about the population dynamics of refuge game species and to monitor the effects of hunting, if any, on local populations. Appropriate surveys may include drumming counts for grouse, additional singing ground surveys for woodcock, call counts for snipe, turkey brood counts, and more area specific harvest data for deer, black bear, and turkey. Some of this information is necessitated by the existence of the hunt program and may increase the cost of administering the hunts.

## **B. Public Use Conflicts**

Local residents in the southern part of Canaan Valley are very concerned about safety. The Service is also concerned about safety and for these reasons, the refuge will establish a no rifle zone and safety zone. (See Figure 2.) Conflicts with other refuge users will be minimal during the gun seasons for deer, which is the major form of hunting in Canaan Valley. By late November when buck season with firearms begins, most of the hikers, bird watchers, leaf peepers and others are out of the woods. Conflicts earlier in the fall during waterfowl season and deer archery season can be worked out by closing high use areas where non-hunters are recreating, such as trails, interpretive sites, etc.

Skiing is the major winter recreation in the valley. At present there are no refuge lands adjacent to the downhill ski slopes, but a large cross-country ski facility is located adjacent to one of the refuge tracts. Conflicts between skiers and hunters will probably be minimal because most of the skiing occurs after the primary hunting season, which is for deer. If conflicts arise, parts of the tract could be closed to skiing or hunting.

## **C. Administrative Conflicts**

No administrative conflicts are anticipated.

# **VII. CONDUCT OF THE HUNT**

## **A. Federal Regulations**

Hunting on the refuge would be contingent on specific regulations enacted by the federal agency for refuges in general and Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge in particular. These are in addition to state regulations, and would take precedence where they are more restrictive than the state regulations. General stipulations for refuge hunting as contained in the Code of Federal Regulations (50 CFR Part 32) state that hunters must have a valid state license, valid Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (“Duck Stamp”) for waterfowl hunting, comply with all current federal hunting regulations including the migratory bird regulations (50 CFR Part 20), and comply with all state hunting and safety regulations. Additionally, hunters must comply with the terms and conditions established by the refuge for access to the refuge itself and for its hunting program. Some of the more pertinent federal regulations for hunting on refuge lands follow:

- 1) The use or possession of lead shot while hunting waterfowl is prohibited; only non-toxic shot allowed.

- 2) The use of all terrain vehicles (ATVs) or other vehicles on refuge lands is prohibited.<sup>1</sup>
- 3) The use of nails, wire, bolts, etc., to attach a stand to a tree is prohibited, as is the use of a tree with existing nails, wire or bolts.
- 4) Hunting over bait is prohibited.
- 5) The use or possession of alcoholic beverages while hunting is prohibited.

### **B. State Regulations**

All state regulations will apply to hunting on the refuge, and all state licenses, tags and stamps will be required.

### **C. Refuge-Specific Hunting Regulations**

In addition to the foregoing state and federal regulations, the refuge-specific hunting regulations listed below will govern the hunting program on Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge. These will be enforced by both Service law enforcement agents and West Virginia conservation officers.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> As the refuge grows, and especially if the refuge acquires large tracts of roadless lands, the Service may consider allowing hunters to use horses or bicycles to transport deer or bear carcasses to the roads.

<sup>2</sup> The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources signed a Memorandum of Understanding titled "Cooperative Law Enforcement" in March, 1996. This allows West Virginia conservation officers to be designated as deputy federal law enforcement agents.

1. All hunters must have in their possession a current Refuge hunting permit and display a Refuge issued vehicle permit for each hunter traveling in a vehicle when it is parked on Refuge property during hunting seasons. Permits are currently issued free, however, if funding becomes limited, a fee program for hunting permits may be implemented.
2. Only the following game species may be taken on the refuge: white-tailed deer, black bear, wild turkey, waterfowl, rails, gallinule, coot, woodcock, snipe, squirrels, ruffed grouse, rabbits, hare, foxes, raccoon, bobcat, woodchuck, coyote, opossum and striped skunk.
3. It shall be unlawful to shoot or discharge any firearm within 500 feet of a dwelling house or occupied building.
4. The refuge will be closed to hunting between March 1st and August 31st of each year, **except for the spring turkey season.**
5. All game that is killed or crippled shall be retrieved, if possible, and retained in the custody of the hunter in the field.
6. In the no-rifle zone of the refuge the take of big game will be restricted to archery, muzzleloader, and shotgun, and the take of upland/small game will be restricted to shotgun only. Handguns will be prohibited in the no-rifle zone. Muzzleloaders will be restricted to the type defined by State regulations; telescopic sights will be permitted during buck and antlerless seasons, but not permitted during muzzleloader season. Shotguns firing slugs will be permitted for deer hunting.
7. Hunting birds with pointing and/or retrieving dogs will be permitted, but no more than two dogs per hunter will be allowed in the field. Extra dogs remaining in a hunter's vehicle will not count as dogs in the field.
8. The take of wild turkeys with rifles will be prohibited throughout the refuge, and shot larger than #4 will be prohibited.
9. A minimum of 400 square inches of blaze orange must be worn by all hunters, except for waterfowl, turkey and archery hunters. For waterfowl, turkey, and archery hunters, 400 square inches of blaze orange must be worn while traveling between stands and/or blinds.
10. Portable tree stands are the only type permitted on the refuge.

11. Bear dog training on the refuge will be prohibited except during the refuge bear gun hunting season.
12. When hunting bear with dogs, hunters must account for all dogs at the conclusion of the hunt. Hunters must search for lost dogs for at least three days and hunting is prohibited during the search period. All dogs must wear a collar displaying the owner's name, address, and telephone number.
13. The refuge bear gun season will be approximately one week shorter than the state season, and will not begin until the antlerless deer season is closed.
14. Hunting rabbits and raccoons with pursuit dogs will be permitted, but no more than four dogs per hunter will be allowed in the field. Extra dogs remaining in a hunter's vehicle will not count as dogs in the field.
15. Raccoon dog training and/or "night hunts" will be prohibited except during raccoon hunting season.
16. Night hunting on the refuge will be by permit only. Hunters will have to apply for the permit in person or by mail or telephone.
17. Hunting will be prohibited on refuge lands west of Highway 32 and adjacent to Canaan Valley State Park.
18. No camping will be allowed on refuge lands.
19. All accidents and injuries must be reported to the refuge office as soon as possible.

#### **D. Anticipated Public Reaction**

Before the refuge was established Service staff participated in over 70 public meetings. The public voiced support for hunting on the refuge, since hunting is a traditional activity in Tucker County. Service staff assured the public that hunting would be considered on the refuge where and when it was compatible with refuge objectives.

Currently most local residents and business people support hunting on the refuge, but most of them also have concerns about safety. They are particularly concerned about rifle shooting in the southern valley in general, and around roads and housing subdivisions in particular.

There may be reaction to the refuge hunts by anti-hunter groups. Response to any demonstrations or protests will be coordinated through the Northeast Regional Office of the Service, and may require assistance from refuges who have dealt with these situations in the past. If necessary, state and local law enforcement officials may be asked to assist.

#### **E. Hunter Application and Registration Procedures**

All persons hunting on the refuge will be required to obtain the necessary state licenses, tags and stamps. Migratory game bird hunters will be required to have a Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp ("Duck Stamp"). All hunters must have in their possession a current Refuge hunting permit and display a Refuge issued vehicle permit for each hunter traveling in a vehicle when it is parked on Refuge property during hunting seasons. Permits are currently issued free, however, if funding becomes limited, a fee program for hunting permits may be implemented.

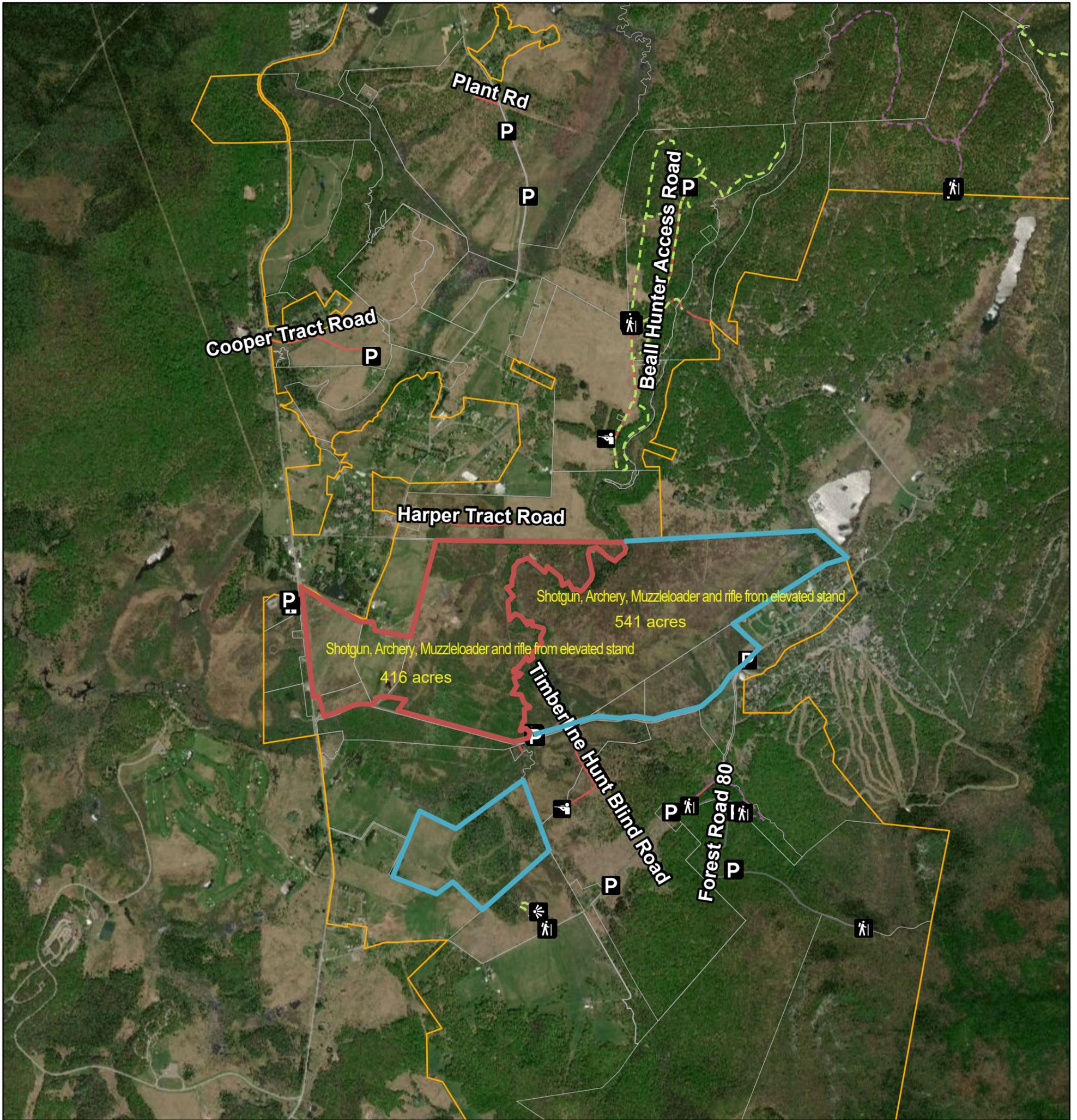
#### **F. Description of Hunter Selection Process**

Hunter numbers will not be limited initially. Refuge Hunting Regulations Leaflets will be available kiosks on refuge tracts, at the visitor's center or upon request from the refuge manager. Hunter numbers may be limited in the future if necessary to promote safety, relieve hunter congestion or public use conflicts or ensure compatibility with other refuge objectives.

#### **G. Media Selection for Announcing and Publicizing Hunts**

The public will be informed of refuge hunting regulations through news releases and Refuge Hunting Regulations Leaflets. The address and telephone number of the refuge will be included in the West Virginia hunting brochures, so interested people can contact the refuge. An annual program update will be filed each year as required, outlining any changes in the current hunt program. Rules and regulations will be published in the *Federal Register* as required.

# Canaan Valley NWR Cat Ex 2020-2021

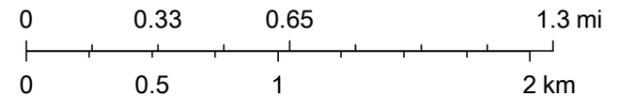


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FWS\_NWRS\_HQ\_VisitorServiceAmenities\_V2 USFWS HQ NWRS Trails

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|--|-------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
|  | Fishing Platform              |  | Hiker / Pedestrian              |
|  | Hand Launch/Small Boat Launch |  | Horse                           |
|  | Hunting Blind                 | <b>USFWS HQ Roads</b>                    |                                 |
|  | Information                   |  | Class 1 - Principal Refuge Road |
|  | Interpretive Exhibit          |  | Class 2 - Connector Refuge Road |
|  | Parking                       |  | Class 5 - Restricted Road       |
|  | Scenic Viewpoint              | <b>FWS Approved Acquisition Boundary</b> |                                 |
|  | Trailhead                     |  | Inclusive                       |
|  |                               |  | FWS Managed Tracts              |



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community, Airbus,USGS,NGA,NASA,CGIAR,NCEAS,NLS,OS,NMA,Geodastasy