

(c) *Existing right-of-ways.* We will not make a compatibility determination and will deny any request for maintenance of an existing right-of-way which will affect a unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System, unless: the design adopts appropriate measures to avoid resource impacts and includes provisions to ensure no net loss of habitat quantity and quality; restored or replacement areas identified in the design are afforded permanent protection as part of the national wildlife refuge or wetland management district affected by the maintenance; and all restoration work is completed by the applicant prior to any title transfer or recording of the easement, if applicable. Maintenance of an existing right-of-way includes minor expansion or minor realignment to meet safety standards.

(d) *Termination of uses that are not compatible.* When we determine an existing use is not compatible, we will expeditiously terminate or modify the use to make it compatible. Except with written authorization by the Director, this process of termination or modification will not exceed 6 months from the date that the compatibility determination is signed.

[65 FR 62482, Oct. 18, 2000]

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AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 685, 752, 690d; 16 U.S.C. 460k, 460l–6d, 664, 668dd, 685, 690d, 715i, 715s, 725; 43 U.S.C. 315a.

SOURCE: 41 FR 9168, Mar. 3, 1976, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—Introduction

§ 27.11 Purpose of regulations.

The regulations in this part 27 govern those acts by the public which are prohibited at all times except as permitted in this part, part 26, and part 25, subpart D—Permits.

[42 FR 56954, Oct. 31, 1977]

Subpart B—Taking Violations**§27.21 General provisions.**

No person shall take any animal or plant on any national wildlife refuge, except as authorized under 50 CFR 27.51 and parts 31, 32, and 33 of this subchapter C.

Subpart C—Disturbing Violations: With Vehicles**§27.31 General provisions regarding vehicles.**

Travel in or use of any motorized or other vehicles, including those used on air, water, ice, snow, is prohibited on national wildlife refuges except on designated routes of travel, as indicated by the appropriate traffic control signs or signals and in designated areas posted or delineated on maps by the refuge manager and subject to the following requirements and limitations:

(a) Unless specifically covered by the general and special regulations set forth in this chapter, the laws and regulations of the State within whose exterior boundaries a national wildlife refuge or portion thereof is located shall govern traffic and the operation and use of vehicles. Such State laws and regulations which are now or may hereafter be in effect are hereby adopted and made a part of the regulations in this part.

(b) No operator of a vehicle shall be under the influence of intoxicating beverages or controlled substances.

(c) Driving or operating any vehicle carelessly or heedlessly, or in willful or wanton disregard for the rights or safety of other persons, or without due care or at a speed greater than is reasonable and prudent under prevailing conditions, having regard to traffic, weather, wildlife, road, and light conditions, and surface, width, and character of the travel way is prohibited. Every operator shall maintain such control of the vehicle as may be necessary to avoid danger to persons or property or wildlife.

(d) The vehicle speed limit shall not exceed 25 m.p.h. except as otherwise legally posted.

(e)(1) Every motor vehicle shall at all time be equipped with a muffler in good working order, and which cannot

be removed or otherwise altered while the vehicle is being operated on a national wildlife refuge. To prevent excessive or unusual noise no person shall use a muffler cut-out, bypass, or similar device upon a motor vehicle. A vehicle that produces unusual or excessive noise or visible pollutants is prohibited.

(2) A refuge manager, by posting of appropriate signs or by marking on a map which shall be available at the refuge headquarters, may require that any motor vehicle operating in the designated area shall be equipped with a spark arrestor that meets Standard 5100-1a of the U.S. Forest Service, Department of Agriculture which standard includes the requirements that such spark arrestor shall have an efficiency to retain or destroy at least 80 percent of carbon particles, for all flow rates, and that such spark arrestor has been warranted by its manufacturer as meeting the above mentioned efficiency requirement for at least 1,000 hours, subject to normal use, with maintenance and mounting in accordance with the manufacturers recommendations.

(f) The operation of a vehicle which does not bear valid license plates and is not properly certified, registered, or inspected in accordance with applicable State laws is prohibited.

(g) Driving or permitting another person to drive a vehicle without valid license is prohibited. A valid driver's or operator's license must be displayed upon the request of any authorized official.

(h) Stopping, parking or leaving any vehicle, whether attended or unattended, upon any road, trail, or fire lane so as to obstruct the free movement of other vehicles is prohibited, except in the event of accident or other conditions beyond the immediate control of the operator, or as otherwise directed by an authorized official.

(i) All persons shall obey the lawful order or signal of any authorized official directing, controlling, or regulating the movement of traffic.

(j) Load, weight and width limitations, as may be necessary, shall be prescribed and the public advised under provisions of §25.31. Such limitations

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must be complied with by the operators of all vehicles.

(k) A motor vehicle involved in an accident is not to be moved until an authorized official arrives at the scene of the accident, unless such vehicle constitutes a traffic or safety hazard.

(l) A motor vehicle shall not be operated at anytime without proper brakes and brake lights, or from sunset to sunrise without working headlights and taillights which comply with the regulations for operation on the roads of the State within whose boundaries the refuge is located.

(m) If the refuge manager determines that electric bicycle (also known as e-bike) use is a compatible use on roads or trails, any person using an e-bike where the motor is not used exclusively to propel the rider for an extended period of time shall be afforded all of the rights and privileges, and be subject to all of the duties, of the operators of nonmotorized bicycles on roads and trails. An e-bike is a two- or three-wheeled electric bicycle with fully operable pedals and an electric motor of not more than 750 watts (1 h.p.) that meets the requirements of one of the following three classes:

(1) Class 1 e-bike shall mean an electric bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 20 miles per hour.

(2) Class 2 e-bike shall mean an electric bicycle equipped with a motor that may be used exclusively to propel the bicycle, and that is not capable of providing assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 20 miles per hour.

(3) Class 3 e-bike shall mean an electric bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 28 miles per hour.

(n) Such other requirements which are established under the provisions of this subchapter C.

[41 FR 9168, Mar. 3, 1976, as amended at 85 FR 69235, Nov. 2, 2020]

§ 27.32 Boats.

(a) The use of boats in national wildlife refuges is prohibited except as may

be authorized under and subject to the requirements set forth below.

(b) When the use of boats is permitted on any national wildlife refuge, the public will be notified under the provisions of this subchapter C and the following operational requirements and limitations will apply:

(1)(i) In addition to the regulations contained in this part, the U.S. Coast Guard Regulations, titles 33 and 46 CFR, are applicable on navigable waters of the United States.

(ii) Unless specifically covered by the general and special regulations set forth in this chapter, the laws and regulations of the State within whose exterior boundaries a national wildlife refuge or portion thereof is located shall govern boating and the operation and use of boats. Such laws and regulations which are now or may hereafter be in effect are hereby adopted and made a part of the regulations in this part.

(2) No operator or person in charge of any boat shall operate or knowingly permit any other person to operate a boat in a reckless or negligent manner, or in a manner so as to endanger or be likely to endanger any person, property or wildlife.

(3) No person shall operate or be in actual physical control of a boat while under the influence of intoxicating beverages or controlled substances.

(4) No person shall operate a boat in a manner which will unreasonably interfere with other boats or with free and proper navigation of the waterways of the areas. Anchoring in heavily traveled channels or main thoroughfares shall constitute such interference if unreasonable in the prevailing circumstances.

(5) No person shall operate a boat on refuge waters that has a marine head (toilet) unless it conforms to Environmental Protection Agency regulations regarding sewage discharge.

(6) Every sailboat when underway from sunset to sunrise shall carry and exhibit a bright white light visible all around the horizon for a distance of two miles.

(7) Leaving any boat unattended, outside of designated mooring or beaching areas, for a period in excess of 72 hours

without written permission of the refuge manager is prohibited and any boat so left may be impounded by the refuge manager.

(8) Government-owned docks, piers, and floats are not to be used for loading and unloading of boats, except in emergencies or unless specifically authorized by the refuge manager.

§ 27.33 Water skiing.

When water skiing is permitted upon national wildlife refuge waters, the public will be notified under the provisions of this subchapter C and the following requirements and limitations will apply:

(a) Water skiing is permitted only during daylight hours and during periods posted or otherwise designated under the provisions of this subchapter C.

(b) When a skier is in "tow" there must be two persons in the boat at all times, with one person not operating the boat, acting as an observer of the skier in tow.

(c) The direction of a tow boat when circling will be counter clockwise.

(d) Skiers must wear U.S. Coast Guard approved ski belts, life jackets or buoyant vests.

(e) Water skiing is prohibited within 300 feet of harbors, swimming beaches, and mooring areas, and within 100 feet of any designated swimming area.

§ 27.34 Aircraft.

The unauthorized operation of aircraft, including sail planes, and hang gliders, at altitudes resulting in harassment of wildlife, or the unauthorized landing or take-off on a national wildlife refuge, except in an emergency, is prohibited. National wildlife refuge boundaries are designated on update FAA aeronautical charts.

Subpart D—Disturbing Violations: With Weapons

§ 27.41 General provisions.

Carrying, possessing, or discharging firearms, fireworks, or explosives on national wildlife refuges is prohibited unless specifically authorized under the provisions of this subchapter C.

§ 27.42 Firearms.

Only the following persons may possess, use, or transport firearms on national wildlife refuges in accordance with this section and applicable Federal and State law:

(a) Persons using firearms for public hunting under the provisions of 50 CFR part 32.

(b) Persons carrying unloaded firearms, that are dismantled or cased, in vehicles and boats over routes of travel designated under the provision of subchapter C.

(c) Persons authorized to use firearms for the taking of specimens of wildlife for scientific purposes.

(d) Persons authorized by special regulations or permits to possess or use firearms for the protection of property, for field trials, and other special purposes.

(e) Notwithstanding any other provision in this Chapter, persons may possess, carry, and transport concealed, loaded, and operable firearms within a national wildlife refuge in accordance with the laws of the state in which the wildlife refuge, or that portion thereof, is located, except as otherwise prohibited by applicable Federal law.

[46 FR 47230, Sept. 25, 1981, as amended at 73 FR 74971, Dec. 10, 2008]

§ 27.43 Weapons other than firearms.

The use or possession of cross bows, bows and arrows, air guns, spears, gigs, or other weapons on national wildlife refuges is prohibited except as may be authorized under the provision of this subchapter C.

[46 FR 47230, Sept. 25, 1981]

Subpart E—Disturbing Violations: Against Plants and Animals

§ 27.51 Disturbing, injuring, and damaging plants and animals.

(a) Disturbing, injuring, spearing, poisoning, destroying, collecting or attempting to disturb, injure, spear, poison, destroy or collect any plant or animal on any national wildlife refuge is prohibited except by special permit unless otherwise permitted under this subchapter C.

(b) [Reserved]

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§ 27.52 Introduction of plants and animals.

Plants and animals or their parts taken elsewhere shall not be introduced, liberated, or placed on any national wildlife refuge except as authorized.

Subpart F—Disturbing Violations: Against Nonwildlife Property

§ 27.61 Destruction or removal of property.

The destruction, injury, defacement, disturbance, or the unauthorized removal of any public property including natural objects or private property on or from any national wildlife refuge is prohibited.

§ 27.62 Search for and removal of objects of antiquity.

No person shall search for or remove from national wildlife refuges objects of antiquity except as may be authorized by 43 CFR part 3.

§ 27.63 Search for and removal of other valued objects.

(a) No person shall search for buried treasure, treasure trove, valuable semiprecious rocks, stones, or mineral specimens on national wildlife refuges unless authorized by permit or by provision of this subchapter C.

(b) Permits are required for archeological studies on national wildlife refuges in accordance with the provisions of this subchapter C.

(c) Permits are required for the collection of paleontological resources on national wildlife refuges in accordance with the provisions of 43 CFR part 49.

[41 FR 9168, Mar. 3, 1976, as amended at 87 FR 47329, Aug. 2, 2022]

§ 27.64 Prospecting and mining.

Prospecting, locating, or filing mining claims on national wildlife refuges is prohibited unless otherwise provided by law. See § 29.31 for provisions concerning mineral leasing.

[41 FR 9168, Mar. 3, 1976, as amended at 44 FR 42976, July 23, 1979]

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§ 27.65 Tampering with vehicles and equipment.

Tampering with, entering, or starting any motor vehicle, boat, equipment or machinery or attempting to tamper with, enter, or start any motor vehicle, boat, equipment or machinery on any national wildlife refuge without proper authorization is prohibited.

Subpart G—Disturbing Violations: Filming, Photography, and Light and Sound Equipment

§ 27.71 Commercial filming and still photography and audio recording.

(a) We authorize commercial filming and still photography on national wildlife refuges under the provisions of 43 CFR part 5.

(b) Audio recording does not require a permit unless:

(1) It takes place at location(s) where or when members of the public are not allowed;

(2) It uses equipment that cannot be carried or held by one person;

(3) It uses equipment that requires an external power source; or

(4) We would incur additional administrative costs to provide management and oversight of the permitted activity to:

(i) Avoid unacceptable impacts and impairment to wildlife or resource values;

(ii) Minimize health or safety risks to the visiting public

(c) Failure to comply with any provision of 43 CFR part 5 is a violation of this section.

(d) The location fee schedule for still photography conducted according to a permit issued under 43 CFR part 5 will apply to audio recording permits issued under this part.

(e) We will collect and retain cost recovery charges associated with processing permit requests and monitoring the permitted activities.

(f) *Information collection.* A Federal agency may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information, unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. The information collection requirements contained in this section have been approved by the OMB under

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44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.* and assigned control number 1018-0102. The information is being collected to provide agency managers data necessary to issue permits and grant administrative benefits. The obligation to respond is required to obtain or retain a benefit. You may send comments on this information collection requirement to the Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1849 C Street NW., Mailstop 2042-PDM, Washington, DC 20240.

[78 FR 52097, Aug. 22, 2013]

§ 27.72 Audio equipment.

The operation or use of audio devices including radios, recording and playback devices, loudspeakers, television sets, public address systems and musical instruments so as to cause unreasonable disturbance to others in the vicinity is prohibited.

§ 27.73 Artificial lights.

No unauthorized person shall use or direct the rays of a spotlight or other artificial light, or automotive headlights for the purpose of spotting, locating, or taking any animal within the boundaries of any national wildlife refuge or along rights-of-way for public or private roads within a national wildlife refuge.

Subpart H—Disturbing Violations: Personal Conduct

§ 27.81 Alcoholic beverages.

Entering or remaining in any national wildlife refuge when under the influence of alcohol, to a degree that may endanger oneself or other persons or property or unreasonably annoy persons in the vicinity, is prohibited.

§ 27.82 Possession and delivery of controlled substances.

(a) Definitions for the purpose of this section:

(1) The term *controlled substance* means a drug or other substance, or immediate precursor, included in schedules I, II, III, IV, or V of part B of the Controlled Substance Act (21 U.S.C. 812) or any drug or substance added to these schedules pursuant to the terms of the Controlled Substance Act.

(2) The term *practitioner* means a physician, dentist, veterinarian, scientific investigator, pharmacist, or other person licensed, registered, or otherwise permitted by the United States or the jurisdiction in which he practices to distribute or possess a controlled substance in the course of professional practice.

(3) The term *delivery* means the actual, attempted or constructive transfer and/or distribution of a controlled substance, whether or not there exists an agency relationship.

(b) Offenses. (1) The delivery of any controlled substance on a national wildlife refuge is prohibited, except that distributed by a practitioner in accordance with applicable law.

(2) The possession of a controlled substance on a national wildlife refuge is prohibited unless such substance was obtained by the possessor directly, or pursuant to a valid prescription or order, from a practitioner acting in the course of his professional practice, or except as otherwise authorized by applicable law.

(3) Presence in a national wildlife refuge when under the influence of a controlled substance to a degree that may endanger oneself, or another person, or property, or may cause unreasonable interference with another person's enjoyment of a national wildlife refuge is prohibited.

§ 27.83 Indecency and disorderly conduct.

Any act of indecency or disorderly conduct as defined by State or local laws is prohibited on any national wildlife refuge.

§ 27.84 Interference with persons engaged in authorized activities.

Disturbing, molesting, or interfering with any employee of the United States or of any local or State government engaged in official business, or with any private person engaged in the pursuit of an authorized activity on any national wildlife refuge is prohibited.

§ 27.85 Gambling.

Gambling in any form, or the operation of gambling devices, for money

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or otherwise, on any national wildlife refuge is prohibited.

§ 27.86 Begging.

Begging on any national wildlife refuge is prohibited. Soliciting of funds for the support or assistance of any cause or organization is also prohibited unless properly authorized.

Subpart I—Other Disturbing Violations

§ 27.91 Field trials.

The conducting or operation of field trials for dogs on national wildlife refuges is prohibited except as may be authorized by special permit.

§ 27.92 Private structures.

No person shall without proper authority construct, install, occupy, or maintain any building, log boom, pier, dock, fence, wall, pile, anchorage, or other structure or obstruction in any national wildlife refuge.

§ 27.93 Abandonment of property.

Abandoning, discarding, or otherwise leaving any personal property in any national wildlife refuge is prohibited.

§ 27.94 Disposal of waste.

(a) The littering, disposing, or dumping in any manner of garbage, refuse sewage, sludge, earth, rocks, or other debris on any national wildlife refuge except at points or locations designated by the refuge manager, or the draining or dumping of oil, acids, pesticide wastes, poisons, or any other types of chemical wastes in, or otherwise polluting any waters, water holes, streams or other areas within any national wildlife refuge is prohibited.

(b) Persons using a national wildlife refuge shall comply with the sanitary requirements established under the provisions of this subchapter C for each individual refuge; the sanitation provisions which may be included in leases, agreements, or use permits, and all applicable Federal and State laws.

§ 27.95 Fires.

On all national wildlife refuges persons are prohibited from the following:

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(a) Setting on fire or causing to be set on fire any timber, brush, grass, or other inflammable material including camp or cooking fires, except as authorized by the refuge manager or at locations designated for that purpose or as provided for under § 26.33(c) of this subchapter C.

(b) Leaving a fire unattended or not completely extinguished;

(c) Throwing a burning cigarette, match, or other lighted substance from any moving conveyance or throwing of same in any place where it may start a fire; and

(d) Smoking on any lands, including roads, or in any buildings which have been designated and/or posted with no smoking signs.

§ 27.96 Advertising.

Except as may be authorized, posting, distributing, or otherwise displaying private or public notices, advertisements, announcements, or displays of any kind in any national wildlife refuge, other than business designations on private vehicles or boats is prohibited.

§ 27.97 Private operations.

Soliciting business or conducting a commercial enterprise on any national wildlife refuge is prohibited except as may be authorized by special permit.

PART 28—ENFORCEMENT, PENALTY, AND PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS FOR VIOLATIONS OF SUBCHAPTER C

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