

Free Public Hunting Permit - Waterfowl Hunting Guide 2025-2026

Maryland Department of Natural Resources – Wildlife and Heritage Service

WATERFOWL SITE RESERVATION AVAILABILITY and REGULATIONS

A Free Public Hunting Permit is required for all designated public sites.

Gwynnbrook

(Central/Eastern Region): 7:30am-11:30am, August 18, 2025 - February 13, 2026 (Mon-Fri)

Myrtle Grove 8:00am-12:00pm, August 18, 2025 - February 13, 2026 (Mon-Fri)

(Southern Region): 8:00am-9:00am, February 17, 2026 - March 5, 2026 (Tuesdays and Fridays)

Reservation Rules and Limitations:

- No walk-in reservations are allowed for the first hour of office hours. Offices are closed all State Holidays.
- Hunters may call a maximum of 4 calendar days prior to the day of the hunt for waterfowl sites. If the 4th day in advance falls on a day the office is closed, reservations will be taken the next business day.
- **A hunter may only make 2 site reservations per phone call, but no more than one reservation per day.** A hunter may only hold one reservation for each individual day. This included being added to a site originally reserved by another hunter.
- Reservations left on the answering machine will not be honored or returned. Hunters may add additional hunters to an already reserved site on the answering machine (make sure to include the name the reservation is under, the site name/number, the reservation date, and the DNR ID and name of hunter you are adding to the site).
- If you are unable to hunt, you **MUST** cancel your reservation at least one business day in advance before the office closes so that another hunter may utilize the opportunity to hunt. **Cancellations MAY be left on the answering machine.**

WATERFOWL SITE REGULATIONS – ALL AREAS

All State, Federal, County, and Property regulations apply. Failure to comply with any of these rules or regulations will result in a fine and/or suspension from the program. See Free Public Hunting Permit Packet for full regulations and suspension info (Pg 2).

- The maximum number of hunters at a waterfowl site is FOUR.
- Hunters are not required to use provided pits or blinds. However, hunters must hunt within 50 feet of the blind or marker when hunting a **Waterfowl or Goose Site**. When hunting a **Goose Field or Pond Site**, a hunter may utilize any part of the field or pond.
- All hunters at a site must have the Free Public Hunting Permit and a reservation, regardless of age or residency.
- Decoys cannot be placed earlier than 1 hr. before shooting hours and must be removed by 1 hr. after shooting hours.
- On properties open for waterfowl hunting, no waterfowl hunting may occur within 250 yards of an established blind site. Waterfowl hunting on tidal shoreline is only permitted at established blind sites or in a Waterfowl Hunting Zone. Some
- Hunters are permitted to have a non-hunting guest accompany them. This person does not need a permit or reservation but must remain with the hunter and unarmed at all times.
- Hunters are responsible for locating and coordinating their own boat access. A map of boat ramps can be found online, called the Maryland Water Access Guide <http://dnr.maryland.gov/Boating/Pages/water-access/boatramps.aspx>

WATERFOWL LOTTERIES

Lotteries are now online. Visit the [Central Region page](#) or [Southern Region page](#) to enter.

Lottery applications will be available no later than September 1, 2025.

Lottery Rules/Procedures:

- Only one application may be submitted per individual. Individuals who submit more than one application will have ALL applications removed from the lottery.
- If drawn, successful applicant will be issued their 1st choice. If their 1st choice is full, they will be issued their 2nd choice, etc.
- Any remaining sites will be available for reservation 4 calendar days prior to the date of the hunt.
- Only successful applicants will be notified. Successful applicants must notify the office if you are adding hunters to the site.
- The Southern Region Waterfowl Lotteries include all sites that require reservations. First-come, first-served sites and Waterfowl Hunting Zones are not included in the lotteries and will operate as normal on lottery days.

LOTTERY APPLICATION DATES

	Split/Season	Hunt Date(s)	Due	Drawn
Southern Region Waterfowl Lotteries	Opening Day of First Duck Split	Oct 11, 2025	Sept 12, 2025	Sept 15, 2025
	Opening Day of Second Duck Split	Nov 15, 2025	Oct 10, 2025	Oct 14, 2025
	First Saturday of Third Duck Split and Late Canada Goose	Dec 20, 2025	Nov 14, 2025	Nov 17, 2025
Gunpowder Falls/North Point Lottery	First Saturday of First Duck Split, Sites 1-24, BR1&2	Oct 11, 2025	Sept 12, 2025	Sept 15, 2025
	First Saturday of Second Duck Split, Sites 1-24, BR1&2	Nov 15, 2025	Oct 10, 2025	Oct 14, 2025
	First Saturday of Third Duck Split, Sites 1-27, 46, BR1&2	Dec 20, 2025	Nov 14, 2025	Nov 17, 2025

DESIGNATED WATERFOWL SITES

All designated sites require the Free Public Hunting Permit, reservation, and are open for all seasons, unless noted.

Properties in WHITE: Reservations handled by the Gwynnbrook Office 410-356-9272				Properties in GRAY: Reservations handled by the Myrtle Grove Office 301-743-5161
Co	Property	Site #	Blinds/Pits?	Notes and Restrictions (Canada Goose=CAGO)
AA	Sandy Point SP	Site 1 & Site 2	None	Open for 3 rd Duck Split only. Boat access only. AP Zone for CAGO. Waterfowl hunting is only allowed at designated sites.
	Holly Beach Farm NRMA	Sites 1 - 5	None	Closed in September, open all other seasons. AP Zone for CAGO. Hunters that reserve #5 can hunt 5A or 5B.
Calvert	Hall Creek NRMA	Site 1	None	AP Zone for CAGO.
	Kings Landing NRMA Huntingtown Area	Cocktown 1 - 3 Goose Site 1 & 2	None 1 Blind at each	Cocktown Creek sites may be closed on limited dates/times due to special events. Goose Sites may not be reserved until crops are harvested. AP Zone for CAGO.
Cecil	Courthouse Point MHA	Sites 1 - 3	1 Blind at each	All sites must be reserved September 1 through the end of Migratory CAGO and for the Feb youth/veteran hunt. Outside this timeframe, sites are first-come, first-serve. Hunters reserving goose fields may utilize any part of the field The water in the pond at Courthouse Point is often very low. Sites 1-3 are on the pond. Courthouse Point Site 4 is on the Elk River. Fields may not be reserved until crops are harvested. Exact blind locations in fields may change from year to year. Grove Farm Site 4 is on the Sassafras River and is water access only.
		Site 4	None	
	Elk Forest MHA	Pond 1 & 2	None	
	Grove Farm WMA	Sites 1 - 3, & 5	1 Blind at each	
		Site 4	None	
		Fields 6, 7, & 9	1 Blind at each	
		Field 8	2 Blinds	
		Site 10	None	
	Grove Neck MHA	Site 1 & Site 2	None	
	Old Bohemia WMA	Field 1	1 Pit and 1 Blind	
		Field 2	2 Pits	
		Field 3	1 Pit	
		Field 4	1 Pit and 1 Blind	
		Fields 5, 6, & 7	1 Blind at each	
		Pond Site	1 Blind	
	Welch Point MHA	Site 1 & 4	None	
		Site 2 & 3	1 Blind at each	
Charles	Cedar Point WMA	Cedar Point 2	None	Early Resident Western and Late Southern MD Resident Zone for CAGO. Goose Sites may not be reserved until crops are harvested.
		Goose Creek 10 - 13	None	
		King Creek 15 - 17	None	
		Goose Site 20 - 23	1 Blind at each	
		Impoundment 1	1 Blind	
	Chicamuxen WMA	Sites 1 - 4	1 Blind at each	Early Resident Western and Late Southern MD Resident Zone for CAGO.
		Site 5	None	
	Chapel Point SP	Sites 1-7	None	No permit or reservation required. First-come, first-served. Early Resident Western and Late Southern MD Resident Zone for CAGO.
	Indian Creek NRMA	Sites 1-4	None	No permit or reservation required. First-come, first-served. AP Zone for CAGO.
	NEW! Maxwell Hall Park	Sites 1-4	None	Permit and reservation required. Water access only, hunters may not enter the park by land. Sites are only open on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays for the 3 rd Duck Split and the February Youth/Veteran hunt day. AP Zone for CAGO.
	Nanjemoy WMA	Douglas Point	1 Blind	Accessible waterfowl blind, reservations required. Early Resident Western and Late Southern MD Resident Zone for CAGO.

DESIGNATED WATERFOWL SITES Continued...

All designated sites require the Free Public Hunting Permit, reservation, and are open for all seasons, unless noted.

Properties in WHITE: Reservations handled by the Gwynnbrook Office 410-356-9272				Properties in GRAY: Reservations handled by the Myrtle Grove Office 301-743-5161
Charles	Nanjemoy Creek WMA	Sites 1 - 3	None	Early Resident Western and Late Southern MD Resident Zone for CAGO.
	Riverside WMA	Site 1 & Site 2	None	Early Resident Western and Late Southern MD Resident Zone for CAGO.
	NEW! Smallwood SP – Newburg Property	Site 1 & Site 2	None	Permit and reservation required. Water access only. AP Zone for CAGO.
	Tayloes Neck SF	Site 1 & Site 2	None	Early Resident Western and Late Southern MD Resident Zone for CAGO.
	Zekiah Swamp NEA (Allen's Fresh)	Site 1 & Site 2	None	Boat Access Only. Closest ramp is Wicomico Shores (~6 miles). Car top boats may be launched at the end of the dirt road off 234. AP Zone for CAGO.
Kent	Millington WMA	Sites 1 - 4	1 Blind at each	All sites must be reserved September 1 through the end of Migratory CAGO and for the Feb youth/veteran hunt. Outside this timeframe, sites are first-come, first-serve. Vehicle access only allowed to Site 4 for Universal Disability Pass holders.
	Sassafras NRMA	Site 1	None	Site 1 (stake site) must be reserved all waterfowl seasons. AP Zone for CAGO.
Prince George's	Bowen WMA	Sites 1-6	None	Boat Access Only. AP Zone for CAGO.
	Milltown Landing NRMA	Site 1 - 3	None	AP Zone for CAGO
	National Park Service Blinds	Site 1A, 1B, 2 - 15	None	Boat Access Only. Sites 1-10 open Tues, Thurs, and Sat. Sites 13-15 open Tues and Thurs. Early Resident Western and Late Southern MD Resident Zone for CAGO.
	Nottingham NRMA	Site 1 & 2	None	Site 1&2 boat access only. Site 3 & Goose Site are walk-in access. Goose hunting from land is only permitted at designated sites. Goose Sites may not be reserved until crops are harvested. AP Zone for CAGO.
		Site 3	None	
		Goose Site	Blind	
	Spice Creek	Site 1	None	AP Zone for CAGO.
St. Mary's	Greenwell SP	Sites 1 – 3	None	No permit or reservation required. First-come, first-served. AP Zone for CAGO. Waterfowl hunting is only allowed at designated sites.
	Myrtle Point Park	Sites 1 - 4	None	Open 3 rd duck split only on Tues, Thurs, & Sat. AP Zone for CAGO. Waterfowl hunting is only allowed at designated sites.
	Newtowne Neck SP	Goose Site 1 & 2	1 Blind at each	Goose Sites may not be reserved until crops are harvested. AP Zone for CAGO.
	Point Lookout State Park	Sites 1 - 3	None	Boat access only. No permit or reservation required. First-come, first-served. AP Zone for CAGO. Waterfowl hunting is only allowed at designated sites.
	St. Inigoes State Forest	Sites 1 - 5	None	Goose Sites may not be reserved until crops are harvested. AP Zone for CAGO.
		Goose Site 1 & 2	1 Blind at each	
		Goose Site 3	None	
	St. Mary's Lake	Sites 1 - 3	None	Electric motor or paddle only. Closed until 2 nd Duck Split. AP Zone for CAGO. Day use fee required. Park opens at 7am. Waterfowl hunting is only allowed at designated sites.
QA	Browns Branch WMA	Field 1	2 Blinds	All sites must be reserved Sept 1 through the end of Migratory CAGO and for the Feb youth/vet hunt. Outside this timeframe, sites are first-come, first-serve. Hunters reserving goose fields may utilize any part of the field. Fields are closed until crops are harvested. Exact blind locations in fields may change from year to year. AP Zone for CAGO.
		Field 2	1 Blind	
		Pond Site	1 Blind	

CENTRAL REGION STATE PARK WATERFOWL SITES

Free Public Hunting Permit required. **WATER ACCESS ONLY** with no physical blinds. Sites are marked with a post/sign or buoy. Hunting an unoccupied site when reservations are required is prohibited. Hunters may arrive NO earlier than 2 hours before legal shooting time. **The \$35 Managed Hunt Permit is no longer required to hunt any DNR properties and is not available for purchase.**

Property/Site #s	Seasons Open, Notes and Restrictions	
Gunpowder Falls SP Days Cove (Sites 1-11)	All sites must be reserved September 1 through the end of Migratory CAGO and for the Feb youth/veteran hunt. Early Resident CAGO open Mon-Fri (no Sat) and must conclude by 9:30am. CLOSED Labor Day. AM Hunting only during 1 st Duck Split. All day reservations for 2 nd & 3 rd Splits. AP Zone for CAGO.	Site #6 not recommended to hunt without a retriever dog.
North Point SP Back River (BR1&2)	Open all Waterfowl Seasons in Baltimore County by first-come, first-served except on lottery days. Early Resident CAGO open Mon-Fri (no Sat) and must conclude by 9:30am. CLOSED Labor Day. AM Hunting only during 1 st Duck Split, AM/PM hunting 2 nd & 3 rd Splits. AP Zone for CAGO.	Stay off the barges at Site 13 for your safety.
North Point SP (Sites 12-14)		Sites 15 and 16 CLOSED all of September. Sites 15A&B, 16A&B may all be utilized at same time.
North Point SP-Pleasure Island (15A, 15B, 16A, 16B, 17)		Sites 19 and 20 are CLOSED all of September. Sites 18 and 24 must be hunted from a boat with shooting only over the water.
North Point SP-Hart Miller Island (Sites 18-24)		
Gunpowder Falls SP-Dundee Creek (Sites 25, 26, 27, 46)	Open 3 rd Duck Split, Migratory CAGO, and Feb Youth/Vet Hunt by reservation or lottery. Hunting is allowed until 10am at sites 27 and 46. Sites 25 and 26 are an all-day reservation. Site 26 has 2 locations; both may not be hunted at the same time. AP Zone for CAGO. Sites 25 and 26 may be accessed by land	
Elk Neck SP (Sites 28-34)	Open 2 nd & 3 rd Duck Splits, Migratory CAGO, and Feb Youth/Vet Hunt by reservation only. All day hunting, no lotteries. Hunting must be conducted within 50ft of the blind marker. AP Zone for CAGO. *The Rogues Harbor Area boat launch and soft launch will be closed June 17, 2025, until February 18, 2026*	
Susquehanna SP Sand Islands (Sites 35-38)	All sites must be reserved September 1 through the end of Migratory CAGO and for the Feb Youth/Vet hunt. All day hunting, no lotteries. AP Zone for CAGO.	
Susquehanna SP River Sites (Sites 39-45)	All Waterfowl Seasons in Harford County by reservation only. All day hunting, no lotteries. On Susquehanna River a warning siren will sound when dam is releasing water. Use caution! Hunting Robert's Island is not recommended after 3:00 p.m. Conowingo Spill Conditions: 1-877-457-2525. AP Zone for CAGO.	

WATERFOWL HUNTING ZONE REGULATIONS

It is legal to hunt from a boat at anchor or while standing on the natural bottom adjacent to certain properties as delineated on the maps of the area according to the following conditions:

- The Free Public Hunting Permit is required
- Hunters must remain at least 250 yds from the property line of any adjoining properties, or where the line would be if it were extended into the water. (Marked on shore of each property by a metal stake wrapped in reflective material and painted orange.)
- Hunters must remain at least 250 yds from any licensed stationary blind, blind site, or another person or party hunting waterfowl.
- Hunters must be no more than 300 yards from shore.
- A person may not guide hunting parties for economic gain in any waterfowl hunting zone.

The following areas have Waterfowl Hunting Zones:

- Calvert Cliffs State Park – The waters of the Chesapeake Bay. AP Zone for CAGO. Waterfowl hunting is only allowed in the Waterfowl Zone. Hunting from shore is prohibited.
- Cedar Point WMA – Excluding the waters of Kings Creek, Goose Creek, and a 250-yard radius around Cedar Point Blind #2. Early Resident Western and **Late Southern MD Resident Zone** for CAGO.
- Chapman State Park – **Boat access only** must remain below mean high tide line. Hunting from shore is prohibited. Early Resident Western and Late Southern MD Resident Zone for CAGO. Waterfowl hunting is only allowed in the Waterfowl Zone.
- Nanjemoy WMA – Potomac River shoreline, excluding a 250 yd radius around the accessible blind. Early Resident Western and **Late Southern MD Resident Zone** for CAGO.
- Newtowne Neck State Park – Excluding the waters of Breton Bay north of channel marker “5”. **Boat access only** must remain below mean high tide. Hunting from shore above the high mean tide line is prohibited. AP Zone for CAGO.
- St. Clement's Island State Park – All waters surrounding the island. AP Zone for CAGO.
- St. Inigoes State Forest – Excluding the waters of Smith Creek and Chicken Cock Creek. AP Zone for CAGO.

WATERFOWL HUNTING **WITHOUT** DESIGNATED SITES

These properties allow waterfowl hunting outside of designated sites, or they do not have any designated sites but still allow waterfowl hunting.

Co.	Property	Permit and Reservation FPHP=Free Public Hunting Permit	Notes and Restrictions
Cecil	Bethel MHA	FPHP. No Reservation, Open Sat/Sun only.	Waterfowl hunting is allowed anywhere on the pond or in fields. No hunting allowed on the tidal shoreline.
	Courthouse Point MHA	FPHP. Reservations only required for designated waterfowl sites or pond sites.	Must be 250 yards away from an established blind site. Hunting on tidal shoreline is only allowed from established blind sites.
	Elk Forest MHA		
	Welch Point MHA		
	Grove Farm WMA	FPHP. Reservations are only required when hunting a designated waterfowl site.	Must be 250 yards away from an established blind site. Hunting on tidal shoreline is only allowed from established blind sites. Hunters cannot utilize any part of a Goose Field without a reservation. Waterfowl hunting is allowed on Little Bohemia Creek at Old Bohemia WMA.
	Old Bohemia WMA		
Charles	Cedar Point WMA	Permit and reservation are only needed when reserving a designated waterfowl site.	No waterfowl hunting may occur within 250 yards of an established blind site. Waterfowl hunting on tidal shoreline is only permitted at established blind sites or in a Waterfowl Hunting Zone. Early Resident Western and Late Southern MD Resident Zone for CAGO.
	Chicamuxen WMA		
	Nanjemoy WMA		
	Nanjemoy Creek WMA		
	Riverside WMA	No permits or reservations	Early Resident Western and Late Southern MD Resident Zone for CAGO.
	Doncaster State Forest		
	Myrtle Grove WMA		
PG	Popes Creek WMA	No permits or reservations	
	Bowen WMA	Permit and reservation are only needed when reserving a designated waterfowl site.	No waterfowl hunting may occur within 250 yards of an established blind site. Waterfowl hunting on tidal shoreline is only permitted at established blind sites or in a Waterfowl Hunting Zone. AP Zone for CAGO.
St. Mary's	Elms CWMA	FPHP & Sign-in Required	AP Zone for CAGO. Tidal shoreline is not open for waterfowl hunting.
	St. Mary's River State Park	No permits or reservations	AP Zone for CAGO. Must park in designated areas.
	Salem State Forest	No permits or reservations	AP Zone for CAGO.
QA	Browns Branch WMA	FPHP & Reservations required Sept 1 through the end of Migratory CAGO and the Feb Youth/Vet Hunt.	Waterfowl hunting is allowed along any stream on the WMA without a reservation. Must be 250 yards away from an established blind site.

SEE MARYLAND GUIDE TO HUNTING AND TRAPPING OR DNR WEBSITE FOR MORE WATERFOWL HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES, THIS LIST DOES NOT INCLUDE ALL WATERFOWL HUNTING AREAS