



Att: Please note the dates

30th Annual Deer Hunt Call for Applications

Options and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service in collaboration with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is pleased to announce that applications for the 30th Annual Accessible Deer Hunt for people with disabilities to be held at Rydell National Wildlife Refuge are ready for release. The dates of the hunt will be October 16th, 17th, and 18th. This year's hunt will be open for buck or doe.

Rydell National Game Refuge, located south of Mentor, Minnesota, offers hunters with disabilities a unique experience by providing the opportunity to hunt in one of the most accessible wildlife refuges in the Nation. Rydell has miles of paved trails in addition to hard-packed trails. It is large enough to accommodate up to 20 hunters, having enough land so that the risks associated with deer hunting are minimized. The refuge has all-terrain vehicles with accessible trailers to transport hunters to and from stand locations, as well as a limited number of accessible hunting platforms available.

Hunters are responsible for travel to and from the refuge, their sleeping accommodations while at the hunt, purchasing their license, and providing for their personal needs such as warm clothes, guns, ammo, attendants, etc. Hunt organizers will assist hunters with getting from the refuge headquarters to and from their hunting site, providing volunteers to assist with the handling of the animal after it is shot, and meals. Meals will consist of a noon meal prior to hunting and an evening meal once the hunter has come back from hunting.

Anyone interested in applying for this year's hunt may contact Options for an application by calling (800) 726-3692. Questions can be directed to Randy @ (800) 726-3692. If more hunt applications are received than spots available applicants will be selected based on severity of disability, ability to hunt in other locations other than the Rydell hunt, hunting experience as a person with a disability, and hunting experience at Rydell Refuge. If all is equal, a random drawing will take place.

Additional Opportunity

The City of East Grand Forks will be offering an accessible Archery Hunt within the Green Way this year October 11 & 12. Options will be coordinating this hunt for up to four people. EGF residents will be prioritized along with Vets with disabilities up to two slots. If not enough applicants it will be for who ever applies up to four people. It is a two deer each hunt. If you would be interested please call Randy for an application packet.

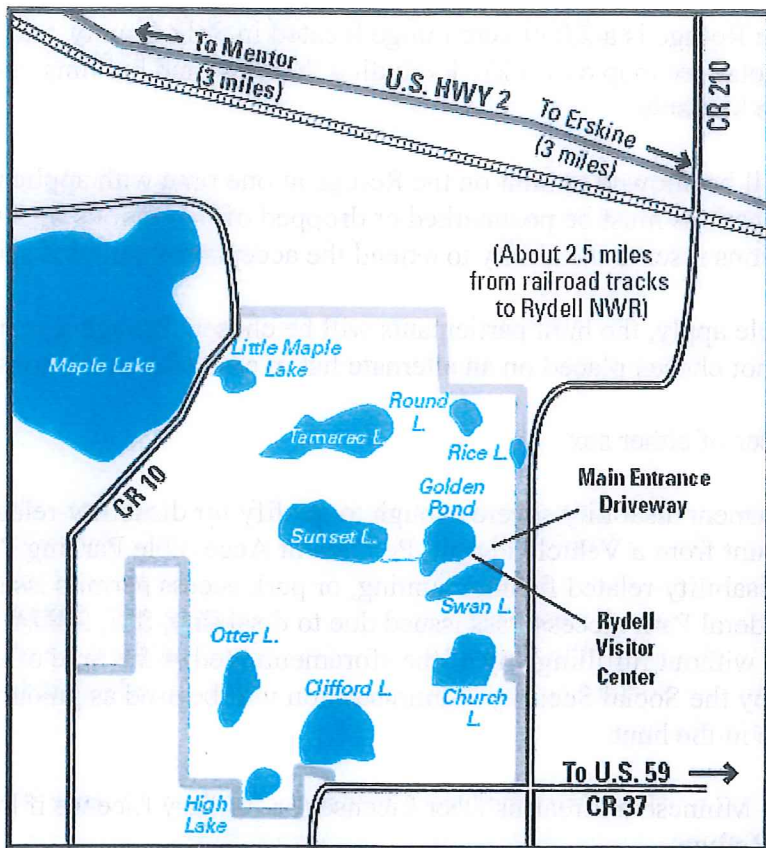
RYDELL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Deer Hunt for Persons with Disabilities

2025 Fact Sheet

- The accessible hunt will be conducted at Rydell National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) from October 16th - 18th, 2025. Hunting hours are from 12:00 P.M. through the end of legal hunting time each day (1/2 day each).
- The Rydell National Wildlife Refuge is a 2,039-acre refuge located in Polk County near the communities of Erskine and Mentor, Minnesota (see map on back). Excluding the lakes and building sites, approximately 1,400 acres of the Refuge are huntable.
- A maximum of 20 people will be allowed to hunt on the Refuge at one time with applications disseminated starting Aug. 1, 2025. Applications must be postmarked or dropped off at Options by 5:00 P.M., Sept. 12, 2025, to be considered. Options reserve the ability to extend the acceptance period if spots are available.
- If more than 20 eligible people apply, the hunt participants will be chosen through a selection process/drawing with those not chosen placed on an alternate list in case of cancellations.
- Each hunter may take one deer of either sex.
- Hunters must possess a permanent disability severe enough to qualify for disability-related programs/services such as Hunt from a Vehicle Permit, Permanent Accessible Parking Placard, Waivered Home Services, any of the disability-related fishing, hunting, or park access permits issued by the MN DNR based on one's disability, Federal Park Access Pass issued due to disability, SSI, SSDAC, and/or SSDI. If a person possesses a disability without fulfilling any of the aforementioned at the time of application the definition of disability used by the Social Security Administration will be used as guidance when assessing one's eligibility to participate in the hunt.
- Hunters must possess a valid Minnesota Firearms Deer License (or Archery License if hunting with a bow or crossbow) to hunt on the Refuge.
- Participation in this hunt does not prevent a Minnesota hunter from party hunting during the regular season (off-refuge) if a deer is bagged, or hunting with an unfilled tag in the season of their choice during the regular season. Licenses should be purchased by choosing the season of choice for the regular season, no matter if it includes the zone Rydell NWR is located within. Hunters are asked to refer to the big game regulations outlined in the 2025 Minnesota Hunting and Trapping Regulations booklet for further detail on the laws about licensing and to ensure nothing has changed between the date this is written and the date of the hunt. It may be possible the area has management or bonus deer tags available that may save a hunter from using a Regular Deer Hunting Tag, though these tags must be for area 257.
- An assistant may accompany each person with a disability on the hunt, as the hunter deems necessary. The unlicensed assistant may discharge a firearm to dispatch a wounded deer if needed. If a hunter does not have an assistant available and would like one, Options can coordinate a volunteer to assist upon request. Hunt organizers reserve the ability to assign a volunteer to a hunter.
- The hunt will be coordinated by Options: Interstate Resource Center for Independent Living in partnership with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and in collaboration with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.
- For more information, contact Randy at Options (218) 779-7408 / (218) 773-6100 / (800) 726-3692 or Gregg Knutsen at Rydell National Wildlife Refuge (218) 687-2229.

Map of Rydell NWR



Rydell National Wildlife Refuge Deer Hunt
October 16th-18th, 2025
Application/Questionnaire

***If you need assistance filling out this form please call 800-726-3692.**

Print Name _____

Cell Phone _____ **Home Phone** _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Email Address _____

Are you a Veteran? _____

Date of Birth: __/__/__ **Gender:** **Male** **Female**

Ethnicity: **Caucasian** **Native American** **Asian American**
 African American **Hispanic** **Pacific Island**

Have you applied, will apply, or been accepted for any other deer hunt for persons with disabilities this year? _____

What are your personal goals and expectations coming out of this hunt?

What type of disability do you possess? Name and please describe.

How many years have you been hunting as a person with a disability? _____

How many years prior? _____

What type of modifications/adaptive equipment do you use while hunting? _____

What accommodations do you need from us?

To get to the deer stand/post site? _____

Within the deer stand? _____

When shooting?(Gun or Crossbow) _____

Gutting deer? _____

Dragging deer? _____

Are there any other accommodations you need in order to have a successful hunt?

Will you be bringing someone with you to assist you on stand? _____

Do you need an assigned volunteer to assist you while on stand? _____

If you use an assigned volunteer, what training will the volunteer need in order to fulfill their duties? _____

Do you possess your firearm safety certificate? _____

What type of weapon will you be using and is it adapted in order for you to use it? _____

Would you like to be on the edge of a field or in the woods? _____

Do you have any dietary restrictions? _____

Any questions or concerns we should know about in order to make the hunt successful?

Do you need our help planning or would you like to waive our assistance? _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Notes: