

## Sloughs WMA Waterfowl Hunting

Waterfowl hunting can be found on the Sauerheber, Jenny Hole, Highland Creek and Grassy Pond/Powel's Lake units of Sloughs WMA. Waterfowl hunting opportunities at Sloughs WMA include online quota hunt draws, weekly on-site drawings, and season-long blind drawings. There is also walk-in hunting available on large portions of the WMA. Hunt units consist of a diverse mix of seasonally flooded grain crops and natural "moist soil" vegetation, natural marsh, seasonally flooded bottomland forest, and natural depressions or "sloughs," that contain flooded stands of bald cypress lined with buttonbush thickets. Waders should be used to hunt in the water on all units. Woody vegetation, beaver runs, and rapid changes in elevation are a possibility on all waterfowl hunting units. Hunting the Jenny Hole Unit typically requires a boat or canoe. Ohio River levels should be closely monitored to determine if a boat is needed to access and hunt the remaining hunt units at the Sloughs. Ohio River levels exceeding 30 feet at the Evansville and/or J.T. Meyer gauge indicate the potential loss of road access to some areas of the WMA. There is one blind available for mobility impaired hunters on the Sauerheber Unit. The blind is wheelchair accessible. On all hunt units, shooting hours are one-half hour before sunrise until 2 p.m. CST. **Hunters must exit the area by 2 p.m. daily.** Hunters may not enter a hunt area until 4 a.m. CST daily. Each unit has specific information that can be found below.

### Sauerheber Unit

During duck season (November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018- February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019), waterfowl hunting is available on the Crenshaw and Duncan tracts through an online Quota Hunt drawing. Hunting is permitted only within designated hunt unit boundaries or blinds. The remainder of the Sauerheber Unit is closed to all public access from November 1-March 15. The quota hunt application period is September 1 to September 30. Visit the "Quota Hunt" section of this guide for more detailed information and application procedure. Results of the drawing will be available in mid-October. New this year: successful applicants will be assigned a hunt unit or a specific hunting blind. If you draw a hunt unit, you may hunt anywhere within the defined hunt unit boundary (See Sloughs WMA: Sauerheber Hunt Unit Maps). Two of the twelve available units are blind locations only. You cannot hunt outside of the blind on these two units.

Hunters selected for a Sauerheber Quota Hunt must check-in on the Sunday prior to their hunt by sending an email to [sloughsquotahunt@ky.gov](mailto:sloughsquotahunt@ky.gov). In the email, please include your name, hunt unit, hunt dates, and hunt confirmation number. **If the permit holder fails to check-in the Sunday prior to the hunt, the vacated hunt unit(s) will be allocated via a drawing held every Monday at 6 p.m. CST at the Sloughs WMA office. If Monday falls on the Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve or New Year's Day holiday, the drawing will be postponed until the following Wednesday night.** At least one hunt unit will always be available through the weekly draw each week. No drawing will be held for the week of the duck-season split (November 26<sup>th</sup>-December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018).

All hunters must complete and submit the Daily Post-Hunt Survey provided by the Department by 3 p.m. CST each day. Failure to complete the Daily Post-Hunt Survey will result in the permit holder being ineligible to hunt at Sloughs WMA for the remainder of the current and following waterfowl season.

Daily Post-Hunt Survey cards and drop-box will be located next to the kiosk in front of the Sloughs WMA office on Highway 268.

Quota hunt permits are not transferable. No hunt unit/blind site may be hunted unless the hunter selected for that hunt unit/blind site, for that specific date(s) is present and has on their person a valid Hunt Confirmation Number issued by KDFWR. No standby hunting is allowed.

Quota permit holders may bring up to three (3) additional hunting guests. No more than four (4) hunters are allowed per hunt unit/ blind site. Hunters are allowed 25 shells per day on the Crenshaw/Duncan tracts. All hunters must have a photo ID and all appropriate licenses and permits.

The entire Sauerheber Unit is closed to all public access on Tuesday and Wednesday during waterfowl season.

### **Sauerheber Unit Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Where can I find directions and information about individual hunt units?**

More information, including maps, access information, available cover, and required gear

can be found at [fw.ky.gov](http://fw.ky.gov) under the "Quota Hunts" section of the "Hunt" tab, and/or on the Sloughs WMA information page found through the "Public Lands Search Link" of the "Hunt" tab.

#### **I have hunted at the Sauerheber Unit in previous years; will the water level and vegetation cover be similar to past years?**

No; with hunters no longer restricted to the blind sites only, managers plan to gradually flood impoundments throughout the season. Therefore, in managed pool areas, hunters can expect water levels to be lower than in the past during the early part of the season, with impoundments not reaching full pool until approximately January. In natural sloughs, water levels can vary from year to year, therefore, check with the Sloughs office for current conditions within these hunt units. Additionally, soybeans will no longer be planted within floodable areas of managed water impoundments. Instead, these flooded areas will be managed for moist-soil plants.

#### **Why are pools not fully flooded at the start of the season?**

Puddle ducks cannot feed in water depths great than 16 inches. Because none of the pool areas are level, fully flooding the pools at the start of the season eliminates large amounts of food sources. By gradually flooding the pool areas, new food sources are available throughout the season, thereby increasing waterfowl use within the hunt units.

**What are moist soil plants?**

Moist soil plants are naturally occurring wetland plants that grow in areas where soils are saturated (wet) during a portion of the growing season. These include wild millets, smartweeds, sedges, sprangle top, panic grasses and other species. These plants are not planted like an agricultural crop, rather the seeds are in the soil and germination occurs as the wetland dries and the soil is disturbed.

**Where can I hunt within my designated hunt unit?**

Unless indicated otherwise, hunters may choose to hunt anywhere within the hunt unit boundary, as outlined on individual "Sloughs WMA: Sauerheber Hunt Unit Maps." Hunting is permitted from the blind site only on the Crenshaw 5 and Crenshaw 6 Hunt Units. Department hunting blind(s)/pit(s) are available for use within some of the hunt units (See Sloughs WMA: Sauerheber Hunt Unit Maps and Sauerheber Hunt Unit Descriptions for details), however, hunters are no longer restricted to the blind sites only.

**What are some techniques successful hunters use?**

Food sources, water depth, and available cover vary greatly within each hunt unit. Therefore, hunters must be adaptable to current conditions in order to be successful. Proper concealment is often the key, therefore, hunters may choose to use layout blinds, layout boats, temporary blinds, natural cover (willow thickets, standing corn), or standing timber to ensure a successful hunt.

**Are any hunt units wheelchair accessible?**

Yes, a mobility impaired blind is available on the Duncan 1 Hunt Unit. Hunters who indicate mobility impaired status during the quota hunt application process will be eligible to draw the Duncan 1 Hunt Unit. Handicapped hunters who draw the Duncan 1 Hunt Unit MUST hunt from the mobility-impaired blind. Hunters selected for the Duncan 1 Hunt Unit who did not indicate Mobility Impaired Status are allowed to hunt anywhere within the hunt unit boundary.

**If the Sauerheber Unit of the WMA is flooded due to overbankflooding of the Ohio River, can I still participate in my quota hunt?**

No. There are many dangers associated with flooding events on the WMA. In the event of flooding, there could be significant difficulties in finding assigned units and the boundaries of those units. Preference points will be returned after the season. For the Sauerheber Unit, river levels exceeding 36 feet at the Evansville and/or J.T. Meyer Gauge indicate the potential loss of road access. Hunters should call the Sloughs WMA office regarding current river conditions.

**Can decoys be set out prior to my first hunt day (the afternoon or night before)?**

No, decoys may not be set out until the first morning of the hunt. However, for multi-day hunts, decoys may be left out until the last day of the hunt. Hunters may not enter the area before 4 a.m. CST on hunt days.

### **Is scouting allowed prior to my hunt days?**

No, quota permit holders and their guests are only allowed on the Sauerheber Unit during the dates listed on their permit.

### **If I choose to hunt a Department blind, may I camouflage it myself?**

Yes, Department blinds/pits will be camouflaged prior to the waterfowl season, but hunters are allowed to add camouflage themselves at any time, as long as the integrity of the blind is maintained.

### **Jenny Hole Hunt Unit**

New this year: During duck season (November 22, 2018 –February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019), waterfowl hunting on the Jenny Hole Unit is allowed by permit only. A person or party that wishes to hunt waterfowl on the Jenny Hole Unit must attend a weekly on-site drawing at the Sloughs WMA office or apply using the online quota hunt system. The drawing will be held each Monday prior to a hunt week, at 6 pm CST during duck season; **unless Monday falls on the Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve or New Year's Day holiday, in which the drawing will be postponed until the following Wednesday night. No drawing will be held for the week of the duck-season split (November 26<sup>th</sup>-December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018).** Nine hunt parties will be permitted to hunt the Jenny Hole Unit each week during duck season through the on-site drawing. One hunt party will be allocated using the online quota hunt system. Hunt permits are issued for a 5-day hunt each week (Thursday-Monday). Online applications for this unit will be taken September 1 – September 30. Visit the "Quota Hunt" section of this guide for more detailed information and application procedure. The successful online drawing participant must check-in on the Sunday prior to their hunt by sending an email to [sloughsquotahunt@ky.gov](mailto:sloughsquotahunt@ky.gov). In the email, please include your name, hunt unit, hunt dates, and hunt confirmation number. **If the permit holder fails to check-in the Sunday prior to the hunt, the vacated hunt unit slot will be allocated via the drawing held every Monday at 6 p.m. CST at the Sloughs WMA office. If Monday falls on the Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve or New Year's Day holiday, the drawing will be postponed until the following Wednesday night.**

The Jenny Hole Unit is closed to waterfowl hunting on Tuesday and Wednesday during waterfowl season.

The Jenny Hole Unit is closed to ALL boats from Thanksgiving Day through the last Sunday in January, except for hunters with a valid Jenny Hole Hunt Permit. Trappers who wish to trap the Jenny Hole Unit during this time must obtain a special permit from the Sloughs WMA office. Hunters drawn for the Jenny Hole Unit may NOT access the unit except during the dates listed on their hunt permit(s). Therefore, scouting in the afternoon or prior to hunt dates is NOT allowed.

All hunters must complete and submit the Daily Post-Hunt Survey provided by the Department by 3 p.m. CST each day. Failure to complete the Daily Post-Hunt Survey will result in the permit holder being

ineligible to hunt at Sloughs WMA for the remainder of the current and following waterfowl season. Daily Post-Hunt Survey cards and drop-boxes are located at two sites within the Jenny Hole Unit.

### **Jenny Hole Unit Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Do I have to be present at the weekly on-site draw in order to hunt waterfowl in the Jenny Hole Unit?**

No, because hunters must identify their party prior to each week's draw, as long as one member of your party is present, you can be eligible to hunt. However, a valid KDFWR ID number must be presented for each party member prior to the drawing. If drawn, each party will be given a hunt permit that they must keep on their person while hunting the Jenny Hole Unit. Hunt permits are non-transferable. All party members must also keep a valid ID on their person while hunting. Additionally, persons who wish to hunt the Jenny Hole Unit may apply for a hunt through the online quota hunt system, however, only one party will be drawn for each 5-day hunt week through the online drawing.

#### **Is scouting allowed prior to hunt days and/or in the afternoon?**

No, waterfowl hunters may access the Jenny Hole Unit only during their specified hunt date. Hunters may not enter the hunt units until 4 am CST each morning, and must cease hunting by 2 pm CST each day of the hunt.

#### **Is hunting besides waterfowl open on the Jenny Hole Unit?**

Yes, hunting for other species beside waterfowl is open under general hunting regulations in the Jenny Hole Unit. However, except for those persons drawn for a waterfowl hunt or through a Department issued permit, no boats are permitted in the Jenny Hole Unit from Thanksgiving Day through the last Sunday in January.

### **Highland Creek and Grassy-Pond/Powell's Lake Units**

On these units, waterfowl hunting is allowed from permanent blind sites that are seasonally assigned by a pre-season drawing. Information about the season-long blind drawing can be found in the quota hunt section of this guide. Walk in hunting is also available on this unit, but walk in hunters must remain a minimum of 200 yards between hunters or hunting parties. Pre-season drawn blinds/blind sites not occupied one-half hour before shooting hours are available on a first-come, first-served basis.