For Immediate Release

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Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex Extends Public Review Period for Draft Hunting and Fishing Plan to May 16

Hunting and fishing are traditional uses of the National Wildlife Refuge System. At the Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) Complex, we welcome people of all backgrounds and abilities to participate in recreational hunting and fishing.

Rhode Island NWR Complex is seeking public review and comment on its proposed hunting and fishing opening plan. The public is invited to review the draft documents for our proposed hunts and fishing access, including the Draft Hunting and Fishing Plan, Compatibility Determinations and Environmental Assessment. These documents will be available for a 60-day comment period until May 16, 2020.

Rhode Island NWR Complex is proposing to:

- Expand opportunities for deer hunting and open migratory game bird hunting at Block Island NWR.
- Expand deer hunting opportunities, and open wild turkey hunting opportunities on Ninigret NWR lands.
- Open opportunities for deer, wild turkey, and migratory game bird hunting at John H. Chafee NWR. Additionally, open fishing opportunities in designated areas of John H. Chafee NWR.
- Open limited deer hunting opportunities at Sachuest Point NWR to special user groups including: youth, veterans, hunters with disabilities, and women.
- Expand migratory game bird hunting opportunities at Trustom Pond NWR, and open archery deer and wild turkey hunting opportunities by refuge permit beginning in 2021.
- Fox and coyote hunting opportunities will be available during the deer hunting season at Ninigret NWR, John H. Chafee NWR, Sachuest Point NWR, and Trustom Pond NWR.

A “Hunt Application/Permit” (FWS Form 3-2439) will be required for hunting on Trustom Pond
NWR only. No more than $20 permit fee for each type of hunt (deer and wild turkey) would be established to defray the costs of operation. A maximum of 35 deer permits and 35 wild turkey permits will be issued annually. For Trustom Pond NWR, permit applications would most likely be administered by a contracted company that will feature online, mail, and telephone services to collect hunter information, required fees, and issue permits. These services would provide hunters with the ability to apply, pay for, and receive hunting permits in advance of the hunting dates. All fees must be paid prior to the issuance of a permit. Refuge staff would work with the contractor to provide the highest level of customer support.

Draft documents were available online beginning March 16, 2020 at the refuge’s official website at www.fws.gov/refuge/ninigret/. You can contact the refuge at 401-364-9124 or rhodeislandcomplex@fws.gov to request more information.

Open house meetings have been cancelled. Please submit your comments to the refuge by mail at 50 Bend Road, Charlestown, RI 02813 or by email at rhodeislandcomplex@fws.gov by May 16, 2020.

Across the country, National Wildlife Refuges work closely with state agencies, tribes, and private partners to expand recreational hunting and fishing access. Hunting and fishing provide opportunities for communities, families, and individuals to enjoy the outdoors, support conservation efforts, and participate in a popular American tradition.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit http://www.fws.gov.

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