

# News Release



Department of the Interior  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex  
26208 Finley Refuge Road  
Corvallis, Oregon 97333  
Phone: 541/275-1716  
[http://www.fws.gov/refuge/William\\_L\\_Finley/](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/William_L_Finley/)

**Date:** May 15, 2026

**Contact:** Eddy Pausch, Refuge Manager

## William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge 2026 Elk Hunts

William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge will again offer elk hunting in 2026. This year's hunt program will provide a total of 25 elk permits, with hunting divided into four hunts that run from August 29<sup>th</sup> – October 30<sup>th</sup>. **Only antlerless elk may be harvested.**

A single, 3-week archery-only hunt will begin on August 29<sup>th</sup>, with 10 permits allotted.

There will be three, 2-week short-range weapon hunts, beginning on September 19<sup>th</sup>, with 5 permits allotted for each hunt. Only hunters who plan to purchase a Willamette Unit General Season Antlerless Elk Damage tag will be considered for these hunts.

This year's elk hunts will take place in the same designated Refuge areas as during previous years, referred to and marked as Zones 1 and 2 (see refuge website for map).

In order to hunt on the Refuge you must be awarded a special Refuge elk hunt permit *in addition to* a current Oregon hunting license and valid state-issued elk tag. Refuge elk permits are allotted through a lottery. To obtain a Refuge elk hunt permit, fill out an application (located on our website) and make sure it is **postmarked by July 1, 2026**. Successful applicants will be notified by COB July 15<sup>th</sup> and provided additional information about Refuge regulations and hunting information. For more information and details on how to apply, visit our website and refer to the following documents: *2026 Elk Hunt Information* and *2026 Elk Hunt Application*.

Self-service hunt kiosks will be located along Finley Refuge Road at the Display Pond parking area and the Turtle Flats restrooms, as well as off Bruce Road near the east end of McFadden Marsh bridge. Maps and regulations will be posted at the hunt kiosks, as well as on the Refuge website:

[https://www.fws.gov/refuge/William\\_L\\_Finley/](https://www.fws.gov/refuge/William_L_Finley/)

Hunters are permitted on refuge one hour before and one hour after legal hunting time. Overnight camping and after-hours parking are prohibited on the Refuge. Hunters under 18 must have their hunter safety card on their person.

Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on National Wildlife Refuges must comply with all provisions of State and local laws. Persons may only use (discharge) firearms in accordance with Refuge regulations.

*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 [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov) --FWS--*

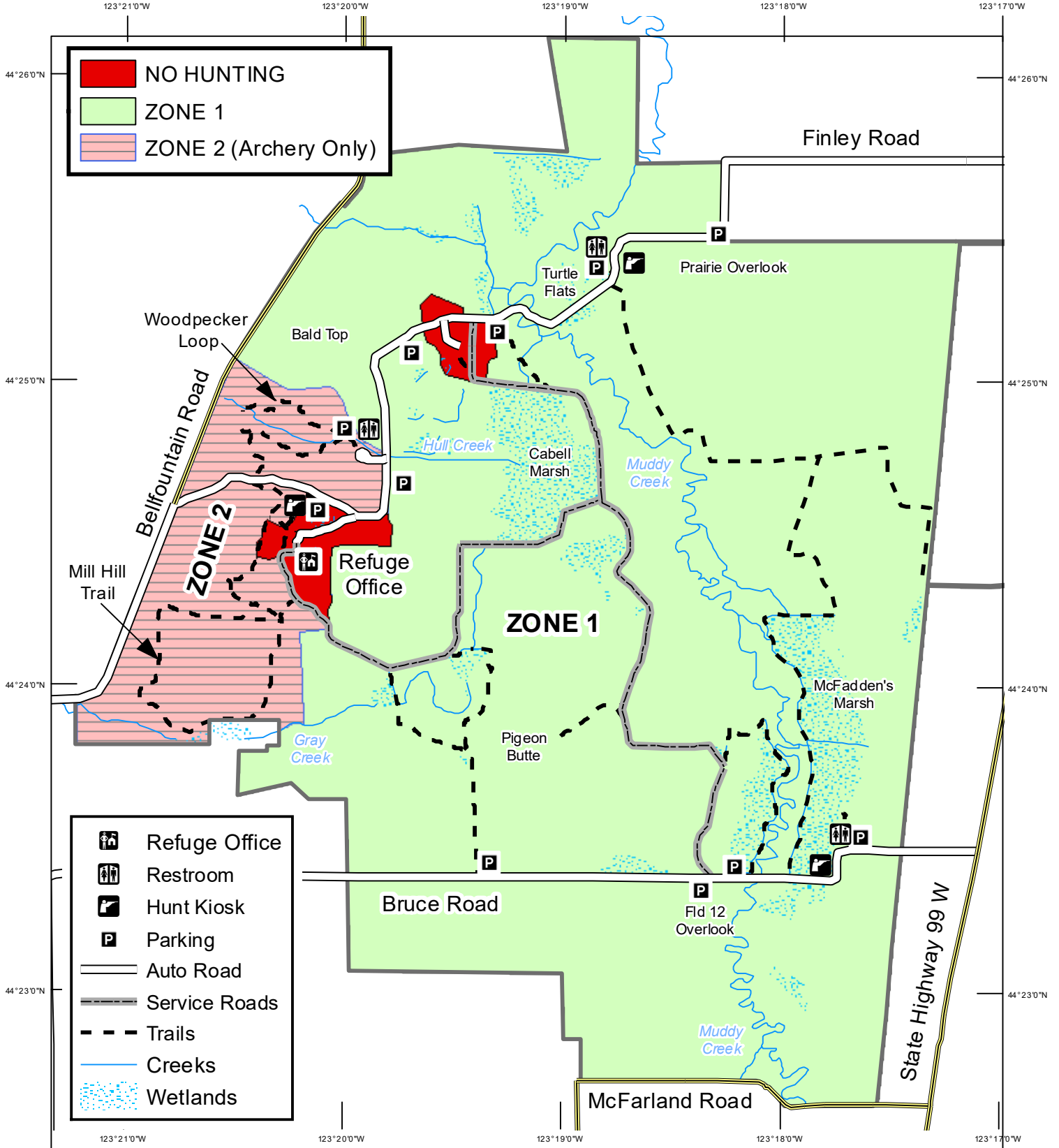


U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge

Benton County, Oregon

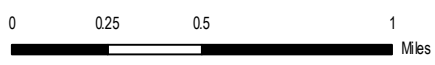
# 2026 ELK HUNT



	NO HUNTING
	ZONE 1
	ZONE 2 (Archery Only)

	Refuge Office
	Restroom
	Hunt Kiosk
	Parking
	Auto Road
	Service Roads
	Trails
	Creeks
	Wetlands

**Refuge Elk Hunt Permit  
AND  
ODFW Elk Tag  
ARE BOTH REQUIRED**





**United States Department of the Interior**  
U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE  
26208 Finley Refuge Road  
Corvallis, Oregon 97333-9533  
Phone (541) 757-7236



**WILLIAM L. FINLEY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**  
**2026 ELK HUNT APPLICATION**  
**RETURN VIA MAIL POSTMARKED BY JULY 1, 2026**

## **Background and Information**

Elk hunting has been permitted on William L. Finley NWR since 2015 to help control long-term elk population growth on the refuge. Only antlerless elk are allowed to be harvested. Elk hunting on the refuge requires a special Refuge Permit (obtained from the Refuge through a lottery drawing) as well as a valid Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) elk hunting tag, as described below.

The timing, location, weapon type, and number of permits for this hunt have been designed to assure a quality hunt that will provide for the safety of visitors and the accommodation of other Refuge visitor uses. The Refuge elk hunts will include one archery-only hunt and three short-range weapon hunts. We are no longer asking Hunters for a 2<sup>nd</sup> choice in their application, as we receive many applications for the hunt.

## **General Archery Hunt**

*Hunters can apply for these hunts without first purchasing an ODFW General Archery Elk tag. If successfully drawn, hunters must possess a valid ODFW General Archery Elk tag prior to hunting on the Refuge.*

**Hunt #1:** Archery-only hunting with a restricted bag limit of one antlerless elk. **Hunt #1 begins August 29<sup>th</sup> and runs through September 18<sup>th</sup>.** Ten (10) permits will be allotted.

## **Willamette Unit General Season Antlerless Elk Damage Firearms Hunts**

*Hunters applying for one of the 3 short-range firearms hunts will be required to use an ODFW Willamette Unit General Season Antlerless Elk Damage tag. Hunters can apply for these hunts without first purchasing an ODFW tag. If successfully drawn, hunters must possess a valid ODFW Willamette Unit General Season Antlerless Elk Damage tag prior to hunting on the Refuge.*

**Hunt #2:** will start **September 19<sup>th</sup> and runs through October 2<sup>nd</sup>.** Open to shotgun with slugs, muzzleloader, and archery in Zone 1, and archery-only in Zone 2. This hunt has a restricted bag limit of one antlerless elk. Five (5) permits will be allotted.

**Hunt #3:** will start **October 3<sup>rd</sup> and runs through October 16<sup>th</sup>.** Open to shotgun with slugs, muzzleloader, and archery in Zone 1, and archery-only in Zone 2. This hunt has a restricted bag limit of one antlerless elk. Five (5) permits will be allotted.

**Hunt #4:** will start **October 17<sup>th</sup> and runs through October 30<sup>th</sup>.** Open to shotgun with slugs, muzzleloader, and archery in Zone 1 and archery-only in Zone 2. This hunt has a restricted bag limit of one antlerless elk. Five (5) permits will be allotted.

Tag Required	Month			Restrictions <i>All Hunts are for ANTLERLESS Elk Only</i>	
	August	September	October	Zone 1	Zone 2
General Archery (10 permits)		29 18 Hunt # 1		Archery Only	Archery Only
Willamette Unit General Antlerless Elk Damage (5 permits each hunt)		19 2 Hunt # 2		Shotgun with slugs, Muzzleloader, Archery	Archery Only
			3 16 Hunt # 3		
			17 30 Hunt # 4		

## Application procedures

Please fill out the HUNT APPLICATION / PERMIT form (FWS Form 3-2439) with your name and contact information and mark the Finley Refuge Hunt for which you are applying (1<sup>st</sup> choice).

Return the Application form by dropping off at the Finley Office or by Mail. Mailed applications must be **POSTMARKED no later than July 1, 2026** to:

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
 ATTN: Elk Hunt Application  
 26208 Finley Refuge Road  
 Corvallis, Oregon 97333-9533

All applications will be grouped by their 1<sup>st</sup> choice hunt and numbered in the order they are received. Random numbers will be generated for each group to select the successful applicants. **Successful applicants will be notified by COB July 15<sup>th</sup>** and provided additional information about Refuge regulations and hunting information. An individual cannot be selected for more than one hunt.

Successful applicants will be contacted by Refuge staff and provided specific information about Refuge rules, harvest reporting procedures, and a map showing parking areas and open hunt areas for their specific hunts.

In addition, since 2024 the Finley antlerless elk hunters have participated in a **Voluntary Lead-free Ammunition Incentive Program**. This program will continue in 2026 and successful firearm hunt permit holders will be able to participate in this program. More information for this national program can be found at <https://www.fws.gov/initiative/lead-free>.

SEE ELK HUNT APPLICATION / PERMIT FORM (FWS Form 3-2349) ON NEXT PAGES



## NOTICES

All information you provide will be considered in reviewing this application. False, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or representations made in the application may be grounds for revocation of the permit and may be punishable by fine or imprisonment (18 U.S.C. 1001).

## PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

**Authority:** The information requested is authorized by the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act (16 U.S.C. 668dd-ee) as amended and the Refuge Recreation Act (16 U.S.C. 460k – 460k-4, 640K-3, & 664).

**Purpose:** The collection of personal information is to verify that an individual is eligible to receive a permit to conduct monitored activity on areas within the National Wildlife Refuge System, national fish hatcheries, and other conservation areas administered by the Secretary of the Interior for fish and wildlife purposes.

**Routine Uses:** The individual's information will be used to verify permit status, provide permittees with permit-related information, and monitor activities conducted under a permit. This information may be shared in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 and the routine uses listed in the System of Records Notices: FWS-5 National Wildlife Refuge Special Use Permits; FWS-21 Permits System; FWS-10 National Fish Hatchery Special Use Permits.

**Disclosure:** Providing the information is voluntary; however, as a requirement for maintaining a Federal permit under the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act, failure to disclose the requested information may be sufficient cause for revocation of the permit.

## PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT

We are collecting this information subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*) to provide the refuge managers the information needed to decide whether or not to allow the requested use, and to respond to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act of 1974. The information that you provide is voluntary; however, submission of the requested information is required to evaluate the qualifications, determine eligibility, and document permit applicants. Failure to provide all required information is sufficient cause for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to deny a permit. We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. OMB has approved this collection of information and assigned OMB Control No. 1018-0140.

## ESTIMATED BURDEN STATEMENT

Public reporting for this collection of information is estimated to average 10 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Service Information Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 5275 Leesburg Pike, MS: PRB (JAO/3W), Falls Church, VA 22041-3803, or via email at [Info\\_Coll@fws.gov](mailto:Info_Coll@fws.gov). Please do not send your completed application to this address.

***APPLICANT DOES NOT NEED TO PRINT OR RETURN THIS PAGE***



United States Department of the Interior  
U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE  
26208 Finley Refuge Road  
Corvallis, Oregon 97333-9533  
Phone (541) 757-7236



## 2026 ELK HUNT INFORMATION

### WILLIAM L. FINLEY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

ELK HUNTING IS ALLOWED BY SPECIAL PERMIT ONLY (*SEE FINLEY ELK HUNT PERMIT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS*) AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH OREGON STATE REGULATIONS, AND SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

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#### **GENERAL GAME REGULATIONS**

- Hunting for **Antlerless Elk ONLY**, during specified seasons on Finley Refuge (see Elk Hunt Calendar) with both a **Finley Refuge Elk Permit AND valid ODFW tag**.
- Hunters must have a **current Oregon State hunting license and valid state-issued tag** including one of the following:
  - **General Archery elk tag**
  - **Willamette Unit General Season Antlerless Elk Damage tag**
- Shotguns (slugs only) and muzzleloaders are allowed during the firearms portions of the elk hunt.
- Hunting is permitted seven days a week. Hunters are permitted on refuge one (1) hour before and one (1) hour after legal hunting time. **You must contact a refuge law enforcement officer after hours to retrieve a wounded animal.** Normal Refuge hours are dawn to dusk daily.
- Unless the dates are listed as archery only, all refuge hunting is restricted to archery, shotguns using slugs, and muzzleloaders.
- We allow only portable hunting stands. Hunters are limited to one (1) stand on the refuge at any time. Hunters may erect their stand one (1) day prior to their permitted refuge hunt and must remove it the last day they hunt. Hunters must permanently affix the owner's name, address, and phone number to stands. Stands and blinds not in full compliance with these regulations will be removed. The Refuge is not responsible for personal property.
- Hunters under 18 must have their hunter safety card on their person.
- Hunters must visit the Refuge website or one of the self-service hunt kiosks on or before their first hunt day to read the most up-to-date Refuge hunt regulations.
- Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on national wildlife refuges must comply with all provisions of State and local law. **Persons may not carry or use firearms while archery-only elk hunting on the Refuge.**
- Note: Elk hunting is not currently permitted on the Snag Boat Bend Unit, Ankeny Refuge, or Baskett Slough Refuge.

#### **PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES**

- Overnight camping
- After hours parking
- The use of nails, wire, screws, or bolts to attach a stand to a tree, or hunting from a tree into which a metal object has been driven to support a hunter
- Cutting or removing trees and other vegetation
- The use of flagging, paint, blazes, tacks, or other types of markers
- The use of dogs to hunt or track wounded game
- The use of trail cameras
- The use or possession of alcoholic beverages or controlled substances

## 2026 William L. Finley NWR Elk Hunt Calendar

Tag Required	Month			Restrictions <i>All Hunts are for ANTLERLESS Elk Only</i>	
	August	September	October	Zone 1	Zone 2
General Archery (10 permits)		29 _____ 18 Hunt # 1		Archery Only	Archery Only
Willamette Unit General Antlerless Elk Damage (5 permits each hunt)		19 _____ 2 Hunt # 2		Shotgun with slugs, Muzzleloader, Archery	Archery Only
			3 _____ 16 Hunt # 3		
			17 _____ 30 Hunt # 4		

### SELF-SERVICE HUNT KIOSKS and REFUGE WEBSITE INFORMATION

- Three self-service kiosks are located on the Refuge at the Mill Hill (Display Pond) Parking Area, across from the Turtle Flats restrooms, and the pullout east of the McFadden Marsh bridge on the north side of Bruce Road. Please see the *Elk Hunting Zone* map for kiosk locations.
- **FOR MORE ELK HUNT INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT THE REFUGE OFFICE OR WEBSITE:**  
[https://www.fws.gov/refuge/William\\_L\\_Finley/](https://www.fws.gov/refuge/William_L_Finley/)