

# WATERFOWL HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES AT MIDDLE CREEK

## MIDDLE CREEK IS DIVIDED INTO FOUR AREAS:

1. **Public Hunting Areas** – All hunting is permitted during all open hunting seasons, (except for the early Canada goose season at which time, Middle Creek is **CLOSED**). During the regular Canada goose season, the daily limit is one Canada goose. More information below.
2. **Public Recreation Areas** – Waterfowl hunting is **prohibited**.
3. **Controlled Areas** – Waterfowl hunting is permitted via special drawing processes. More information below.
4. **Propagation Areas** – Entry by **any** means is **prohibited**. (Except for additional permitted hunts that occur throughout the year)

## PUBLIC HUNTING AREAS

Hunting is permitted during all open hunting seasons, (except for the early Canada goose season at which time, Middle Creek is **CLOSED**). If you are unfamiliar with the area, please come to the Visitor Center and have someone explain about the various locations. Also, a three-dimensional floor map can be studied at the Visitor Center. Most of the waterfowl hunting opportunities in this area would be pass-shooting at the birds. There are, however two small ponds on the east side of the property, which may be suitable for duck hunting at times.

## CONTROLLED HUNTING AREAS

Waterfowl hunting is permitted via special drawing processes. The processes are as follows:

### REGULAR DRAWING FOR CANADA GOOSE BLINDS

1. **Filling out the application** – An Application for Controlled Goose Hunting Area may be found in the Pennsylvania Digest of Hunting & Trapping Regulations booklet that comes with your hunting license (hereafter referred to simply as "the digest"). A copy may be printed from the Game Commission website. When filling out the application:
  - a. Make sure to fill out **all** requested information.
  - b. Read and follow the instructions carefully.
  - c. Make sure to send the application to the proper address.
  - d. Several applications (from different applicants of course) may be put in one envelope. The envelopes are opened upon receipt, and all applications are reviewed prior to the drawing.
2. **Drawing process** – Applications are received, and reviewed prior to the drawing date. A public drawing is held at the Visitor Center on the date/time as specified in the digest. Audience members pull applications from the drawing barrel until all needed applications are drawn. During the drawing process, the dates are filled from the earliest through the latest, unless we can accommodate the applicant's first or second choice of dates. An announcer will then recite the names of the successful applicants as each hunting date is filled. Applications are then processed. Successful applicants should receive their notification through the mail about one week following the drawing date.
3. **Helpful hints** – **Check the box** that you will accept any other available date. That way, as long as your application is pulled in the drawing, you will get a hunting date. On the application, there are spaces that you can "List Two Preferred Dates". These spaces are there to try to accommodate your wishes if possible, and to try to prevent "no-shows". The actual hunting dates are not established until about the third or fourth week in August. Trying to guess at the dates is not a good policy. Instead, choose days or times of the year, rather than

actual dates. For instance, "any Saturday", "not Thursdays", "earliest date in second season", "January", etc. These types of choices are good no matter what the actual dates are.

4. **Increasing your chances of being drawn** – If selected to hunt, you may bring up to three guests, for a maximum of four in the hunting blind. In other words, all four of you should have applied for the drawing in the first place. This would increase your odds of getting to hunt, even if only to be a guest of another in your hunting party.
5. **If selected to hunt** – you will be sent complete instructions on what date/time to arrive, and what to bring with you.

## NO-SHOW DRAWINGS

If not selected in the regular drawing, you may show up any of Middle Creek's shooting days, (Tues., Thurs., & Sat.) to enter a separate drawing to obtain an unclaimed blind otherwise known as "no-shows". You should be at the Visitor Center about an hour prior to start time. Hunting hours are posted in your digest (remember to add four minutes for the meridian line for the Middle Creek Area.) Fill out the "no-show" card, following the instructions at the counter, and wait for the drawing. Deadline for the drawing is 35 minutes prior to start time. The drawing begins at 30 minutes prior to start time. At that time, it is too late for those who have a reservation to claim their blind. The drawing is done via a bingo wheel. Each ball corresponds to a blind number, thus a ball will be left for each unclaimed blind. In the event that there are more "no-show" applicants than there are balls left, a corresponding amount of black unnumbered balls will be inserted into the wheel. The "no-show" cards are then shuffled, turned upside-down, and the drawing begins. (If a black unnumbered ball is selected, the party does not get a blind.)

## SECONDARY NO-SHOW DRAWINGS

"Secondary No-Show" Drawings have been developed to allow a hunter that has already participated to try again. **This process is the only way that a hunter may hunt multiple times in a blind.** Even if only one person in your party has been in a blind previously during the present hunting license year, the others must enter this part of the drawing as well. This drawing process is identical to the "No-Show" process and is held immediately following the "No-Show" drawing. There will only be a drawing provided that there are still unclaimed blinds following the "no-show" process. This drawing is only for the goose blinds.

## DUCK BLIND DRAWINGS

Six duck blinds are operated at Middle Creek. These blinds are operational only during the time when duck seasons coincide with the Canada goose seasons, (unless needed as an additional goose blind during goose season), and only on Middle Creek's shooting days. In addition, the blinds are only open providing that there is adequate water in the ponds in/around those blinds and the ponds are not frozen. The process for obtaining a duck blind is the same as for obtaining a "no-show" blind, except that the deadline for the drawing is 50 minutes prior to start time. The drawing begins at 45 minutes prior to start time. **Everyone** applying for a duck blind needs to have waders.

## RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR CONTROLLED HUNTING AREA

1. Park only at assigned parking areas; *do not* park on roads. Driving across fields to and from blinds is prohibited.
2. Please follow guided markers to your blind as explained the morning of the hunt. This is important for your safety and to ensure a quality hunt for you and others at Middle Creek.
3. Shooting is permitted only from your assigned blind; hunters must keep their firearms unloaded except while occupying assigned blinds. However, every reasonable effort must be made to retrieve crippled birds. Entering any other blind is prohibited.
4. Do not shoot at geese out of range. Remember: **LET THEM GET CLOSE!**

5. Hunters *shall not* have more than **10 rounds of ammunition** (approved non-toxic shot only). Shot size for *all* waterfowl hunting is **no larger than "T" shot**. Hunters may give ammunition from their 10 rounds to others in the blind.
6. When ducks or other waterfowl (including snow geese) are in season, hunters may shoot these birds from blind. Hunters are still limited to 10 total rounds of ammunition each.
7. **Season limit of Canada geese – one (1) per person. All other limits to conform to state and federal regulations.**
8. All *State* and *Federal* regulations must be observed.
9. No person shall leave any trash or refuse in or around any blind. Please leave the blind in better condition than you found it.
10. Dogs must be kept under control at *all* times.
11. *Do not* remove waterfowl from your blind until you are prepared to check out.
12. When leaving your blind please remember to slide the blind covers back onto the blind so water does not get into the blind. **If you have trouble for any reason getting the covers back onto the blind, please call the visitor center at 717-733-1512.**
13. All shooting must end at 1:30 p.m. When finished hunting, each permit holder must surrender, in person, their permit at the registration center through which they entered. All hunters shall submit for examination such game as they may have bagged. The check-out deadline is 2:30 p.m.
14. Please return your rented decoys with the heads all facing the same way. Make certain you have returned all items for which you signed. You will be charged for missing parts or damage to decoys.

We reserve the right to cancel permits and deny any further privileges on the area to anyone violating *State* or *Federal* regulations or indulging in unsportsmanlike activities.