



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Apostle Islands National Lakeshore
415 Washington Avenue
Bayfield, Wisconsin 54814-9599

IN REPLY REFER TO:

N1615
APIS
July 5, 2011

Dear Applicants:

We appreciate your inquiry regarding deer hunting opportunities in Apostle Islands National Lakeshore (APIS). For the past 26 years the lakeshore has provided deer hunters with a unique hunting experience with muzzleloader firearms and, starting in 2008, an archery season. Over the past few years, Sand Island has been closed for part of the muzzleloader season because of management actions occurring on the island. In 2011, Sand Island will be open for the entire October muzzleloader hunt.

CHANGES EFFECTIVE IN 2008

New Wisconsin DNR (WI-DNR) rules went into effect in 2008, expanding deer hunting opportunities. The changes include:

- Special DMU#79 carcass tags, up to 2 free tags per hunter per day under earn-a-buck rules.
- Deer hunting on all islands within the National Lakeshore.
- Archery season in September and November-December.
- Hunters retain the option to use their regular season deer tag.
- Hunters **must obtain a HUNTER ACCESS PERMIT** (see attachment) to hunt within Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, DMU#79.

SPECIAL DMU 79 CARCASS TAGS

Hunters are eligible for 2 free tags under earn-a-buck rules. This means the hunter must harvest an antlerless deer first in the current year before harvesting a buck. Each tag may be used to harvest any of the following:

- An antlerless deer,
- A buck deer if the hunter possesses an antlerless deer registration verification earned in Unit 79 in the current or previous year,
- A buck deer if the hunter possesses an antlerless deer that has been legally harvested in Unit 79 and is tagged prior to the harvest of the buck deer and the antlerless deer accompanies the buck deer until each is registered.

The hunter also has the option to use their Wisconsin State Deer/Firearms, Sportsman, or Conservation Patron license to harvest a buck first. However, the hunter will not have the buck tag to use during the regular archery or gun seasons.

How do you obtain free tags?

Free DMU#79 carcass tags for the 2011 season are available at the WI-DNR service center in Ashland or through NPS park headquarters in Bayfield. Hunters must provide their WI-DNR Customer ID number and Gun/Archery License Number.

NPS HUNTER ACCESS PERMIT REQUIRED

- Hunters **must obtain a HUNTER ACCESS PERMIT** (see attachment) to hunt within the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, DMU#79.

****** CLOSURES ******

Hunters are advised that York Island will be closed to hunting from October 1, 2011 through and including May 15, 2012 to accommodate a National Park Service (NPS) deer reduction effort. Sand Island will be open for the entire muzzleloader season and most of the archery season, but closed to hunting from December 1, 2011 through and including May 15, 2012. All other islands in the national lakeshore are open to hunting.

THE ARCHERY HUNT

The Archery Hunt is open during the following periods in 2010,
 - September 11 - September 30, 2011
 - November 1, 2011 - January 2, 2012 (note closures on York and Sand Islands)

THE MUZZLE LOADER HUNT

The muzzle loader hunt is conducted during the month of October. It is limited to muzzle loading weapons only as defined by Wisconsin DNR regulations. All State of Wisconsin regulations pertaining to these weapons apply. Do not bring any other type of firearms to the island(s).

HUNTING IN GENERAL

Public hunting does overlap the period of time when tribal hunters are also permitted to hunt deer in the exercise of treaty rights.

The deer population on the Apostle Islands is transient in that the deer move between the islands and mainland by traveling over-the-ice in the winter or by swimming in the summer. The population fluctuates, but, with the exception of a couple of islands, deer population levels tend to be low.

The primary reason for these special seasons is to provide a unique opportunity to camp and hunt under primitive conditions

in an outstanding backcountry area. It should not be considered a "target rich" environment compared to other areas of the state. The success of your participation in this hunt might best be measured by the challenges of the experience.

In general, State of Wisconsin deer hunting laws apply during the hunt. You need to obtain a pamphlet containing the state regulations when you purchase your state license.

Please pay particular attention to the following sections:

- General hunting restrictions
- Deer Management Unit #79 restrictions
- Muzzleloader firearms restrictions
- Firearms transportation
- Blaze orange requirements
- Deer carcass tags, applicable to DMU-#79

Additionally, National Park Service (NPS) regulations also apply, most specifically:

1. The feeding/baiting of any wildlife is prohibited.
2. Hunting within 100 yards of any building, dock, designated campsite, or park facility is prohibited. Possession of a loaded weapon in these areas will be interpreted as hunting in a closed area.
3. Portable tree stands are permitted, but no tree may be destroyed or injured by their use. The cutting of vegetation to provide shooting lanes is also prohibited.
4. Deer that are harvested by hunters must be secured from all wildlife contact. Acceptable storage includes bear proof lockers or suspending deer carcasses at a sufficient height between trees at least 100 yards from any designated camping area. If deer carcasses are stored in bear proof lockers they must be wrapped or enclosed in plastic to avoid sanitation and public health concerns.

Park Protection Rangers patrol the islands to provide assistance, enforce federal and state laws and regulations, as well as to register any deer that are taken.

ACCOMMODATIONS

There is no lodging or developed facilities on the islands. Camping is permitted in accordance with NPS Camping Regulations.

For a list of accommodations in the Bayfield area, please contact the Bayfield Chamber of Commerce, Box 138, Bayfield, Wisconsin, 54814. The phone number is 715-779-3335 or 800-447-4094.

CAMPING IN THE PARK

CAMPING RESERVATIONS/PERMITS ARE REQUIRED for all camping in Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. A camping fee is charged for each day of the permit. Reservations can be made by calling 715-779-3397 x 399.

Potable water is not available on most islands. Be prepared to take an adequate supply along or to filter or boil lake water before use.

Night temperatures may drop below freezing. Frost and the first snowfall are typical occurrences at the end October. October's average high temperature is 47.5 degrees Fahrenheit, and the low is around 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

TRANSPORTATION TO/FROM THE ISLAND(S)

If you wish to take your own boat to the island(s), there are public launches at Bayfield, Red Cliff three miles north of Bayfield, and Little Sand Bay (close to Sand Island).

Lake Superior can be very cold, rough and unforgiving. We do not recommend the use of small, open boats for crossing to the islands. Also, the docks on the islands can be very exposed under certain weather conditions.

If you are traveling by private boat, a marine VHF radio and cell phone are strongly recommended. The U.S. Coast Guard and National Park Service monitor Channel 16, which is a hailing and distress frequency. We strongly recommend that you consider utilizing one of several companies that provide Water Taxi Services in the area. For a list of water taxi services go to the park website at:

<http://www.nps.gov/apis/parkmgmt/upload/Trips-tours-services.pdf>

If you choose to utilize a water taxi service make advanced reservations. Regardless of your mode of transportation, bring extra food and provisions; and be prepared to have the weather and Lake Superior change your travel plans.

APPLYING FOR THIS HUNT

You can apply for a hunting access permit at any time. Permits will be issued through the last week of the respective hunting season.

These special hunting opportunities require some planning on the part of the hunters, but it is a unique and challenging experience that has been widely enjoyed by former participants.

Contact Information

If you have questions about the public hunt please contact Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, 415 Washington Avenue, Bayfield, Wisconsin, 54814. 715-779-3398 Extension 301. We wish you success.