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New Signs Direct Recreational Use of Land at DOE's Paducah Site

New signs are intended to help the public understand the expanded use of public recreational and hunting activities on 1,986 acres of Department of Energy-owned land around the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant.

The changes took effect Jan. 1 after DOE signed a new five-year license agreement with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources for expanded use of DOE's portion of the West Kentucky Wildlife Management Area (WKWMA).

Posted in May, the new signs replace yellow DOE no-trespassing signs and require people to check in daily at the WKWMA clubhouse on Ogden Landing Road before they use the land. Visitors are instructed to use one of three check-in boxes to fill out basic information cards and drop them in the lower part of the box. One box is near the clubhouse, another is at the intersection of Hobbs and Woodville roads, and a third is at the east end of Ogden Landing Road.

People may call the WKWMA office at 270-488-3233 if they have questions regarding use of the newly posted area.

Public activities on DOE-owned land in the WKWMA in west McCracken County had been limited to some bow hunting for deer and state-approved bird dog and retriever trials. Expanded use includes youth turkey hunting, horseback riding, hiking, dog training and trials (no firearms with projectiles), gun hunting for small game, increased bow hunting for deer, mountain biking, and nature hiking.

The changes stem from feedback from public meetings and wildlife area users to expand the land's recreational use, said Reinhard Knerr, Paducah DOE site lead. "We want to support the community in any way we can."

Most of the new activities will start next fall when the bulk of hunting season begins.

"This is a very groundbreaking thing for us," said Tim Kreher, WKWMA manager. "There are very few publicly owned facilities that offer the array of events that we offer here with relatively few restrictions."

Kreher said expanded use of the land also improves the chances of getting a variety of public and private funding sources to help improve the management area.

-DOE-



A black Lab awaits his handler's signal to retrieve a duck during field trials in late March in the West Kentucky Wildlife Management Area.



A yellow Labrador retriever carries a duck as he races to the finish line.

Credit: John Brunjes