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Refuge Part of MDC's Peck Ranch to Close Temporarily

MARCH 27TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Shut-Down During Elk Calving Period Is Annual Occurrence

Van Buren, Missouri - Ensuring the population stability of a popular wildlife resident is the primary reason behind the upcoming closure of the refuge area at the Missouri Department of Conservation's (MDC) Peck Ranch Conservation Area.

Peck Ranch Area's refuge will be closed April 1-July 1 to minimize stress and human interference during the elk calving period. Peck Ranch is home to 125 elk, the majority of which roam on Peck Ranch's 11,500-acre refuge.

The spring closing of Peck Ranch's refuge has been an annual occurrence since MDC's elk restoration project began in 2011. Public access will still be allowed to the approximately 12,000 acres of the area that are outside the area's marked refuge fence. (Peck Ranch Conservation Area encompasses more than 23,000 acres in Shannon and Carter counties.) Peck Ranch's elk-viewing automobile route is included in the area that will be closed to the public.

Peck Ranch's refuge will also be closed Oct. 10-11, Oct. 24-26, Nov. 14-24 and Dec. 5-6 to accommodate deer hunting opportunities during those time periods.

For more information, call the Peck Ranch Conservation Area, 573-323-4249 or MDC’s Ozark Regional Office in West Plains, 417-256-7161. People can also get information about the Peck Ranch Area online at the “Atlas” feature of MDC’s website.

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