

Hunters should be aware of conditions at wildlife management areas (WMAs) in the state's northwest corner following recent wildfires, according to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

Among the wildlife areas, Metcalf and Bighorn WMAs were 100 percent burned. Ponderosa WMA has unburned cover on the southern two-thirds of the area, while 40 percent (northern portion) burned.

Chadron Creek Ranch WMA has unburned cover on most of the area, while 20 percent (northwest portion) burned.

Bordeaux Creek, Gilbert Baker, Peterson and Fort Robinson WMAs did not burn and will offer hunting sites, although hunting pressure is likely to increase on these areas. Landowners may be hesitant to allow hunting; hunters should make extra efforts to secure permission before traveling to the northwest.

Burned areas, especially if they remain dry in the next month, will be blackened with ash and have little green growth or cover. Wildlife has left these areas in search of food and other habitat and will offer limited hunting opportunities.

Fires did not affect Fort Robinson State Park (SP). Chadron SP reopened Sept. 7 after a fire forced evacuation, then the closing of the park over the Labor Day weekend.

Chadron SP sustained vegetation burns over 80 percent of the park but no damage to buildings, roads or infrastructure. The park was inspected for unsafe timber and precautions are being taken to minimize the public's exposure to dangerous trees.