

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

About Hunting on State-owned Lands in New Hampshire

(Lands under the jurisdiction of the Departments of Resources and Economic Development (DRED), Fish and Game, and the Department of Environmental Services (DES) Water Division)

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Is hunting allowed on state-owned lands?

Hunting is allowed on state lands unless otherwise posted or prohibited by law. A small percentage of state lands are closed to hunting (see #3).

2. Why is hunting allowed on state lands?

State lands are managed for a wide variety of public purposes. Hunting is a traditional and popular form of public recreation in New Hampshire. Hunting is also an important means of managing some species of wildlife.

3. Are there any state-owned forest lands where hunting is not allowed?

Hunting is not allowed at the *Frost Farm Historical Site* in Derry, *Urban Forestry Center* in Portsmouth, *Odiorne Point State Park* in Rye (east side of Route 1A only – the west side of Route 1A is open to hunting), *Shieling State Forest* in Peterborough, *Opeechee Bay State Forest* in Laconia and *Pondicherry Wildlife Refuge* in Jefferson (see #6 - Why are some state properties closed to hunting?).

See also #11 "*Compact Zones*"; and #13 special precautions.

4. When is hunting season? What are the different seasons?

Small game season begins October 1st; archery season for deer begins in mid-September; firearm season for deer begins early November; there is no closed season on coyote. There are some year-round seasons; for specifics refer to Fish and Game, www.wildlife.state.nh.us or tel. 603-271-3127.

5. Are there any properties managed specially for hunting?

No single property is managed exclusively for hunting. State-owned forest lands under the jurisdiction of DRED, Fish and Game, and DES are managed for multiple uses.

6. Why are some state properties closed to hunting?

There must be a demonstrated need to ban hunting on a specific property. State-owned properties are considered candidates for posting "No Hunting" through an interagency review process if one or more of the following situations exist: 1) high non-hunter use and/or developed recreation, 2) urban interface, and 3) small property size in combination with 1 or 2.

7. How much state land is there? How do I get there? Where can I get a map?

DRED, Fish and Game, and DES collectively manage more than 200 state forests, parks, wildlife management areas, and flood control areas totaling over 200,000 acres.

State highway maps available through DRED show the location of most major state parks and forests. Individual state park maps for many of the state parks are also available through DRED. USGS topographical maps are available at most bookstores and typically show public land boundaries.

<i>ENFORCEMENT - COMPLAINTS</i>
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8. Who enforces and/or investigates complaints and violations on the use of firearms?

Any law enforcement officer with full police power can enforce any or all state laws or can refer enforcement to appropriate local or state authority.

9. How are inquiries or complaints about hunting on state lands handled?

The procedure is described in "GUIDELINES FOR CALLER RESPONSE - About Hunting on State-owned Lands," available at the New Hampshire Division of Forests and Lands website. Visit www.nhdfl.org and click on "publications."

10. Who is responsible for enforcement of hunting laws on state lands?

The Fish and Game Department is responsible for regulating hunting on all lands; for information about hunting regulations; tel. Fish and Game at 603-271-3127.

11. What is a compact zone and who determines if a property falls within a compact zone?

The discharge of firearms is illegal within "compact zones" defined by RSA 644:13 as any place where six or more residences are each within 300 feet of another; includes a 300-foot perimeter around all of the buildings.

Some state lands fall within these zones. Each individual has a responsibility to know where compact zones exist to comply with the law. A law enforcement officer can make an on-site determination if there are any questions.

Hunters are advised to check with city or town officials regarding local ordinances that may govern the discharge of firearms.

REGULATIONS - RESTRICTIONS

12. Can we recreate on state lands during hunting season?

Hunting should not conflict with other activities normally occurring on state properties. Hunters and non-hunters have responsibility to share public lands with care. The most important precaution is to wear "*hunter orange*" or other bright fluorescent colors such as reds and yellows. Safety is everyone's responsibility and common sense precautions are in order.

13. Are there any special recreation precautions or hunter safety regulations on state-owned forest lands?

Hunting is not appropriate near hiking trails, campgrounds, and other developed recreation facilities. Hunters are advised not to discharge firearms within 150 feet of trails or within 300 feet of any developed recreation area. For example, much of Monadnock State Park is inappropriate for hunting because of the preponderance of recreation trails in the park.

Hunters are advised to follow general hunting regulations available from Fish and Game, www.wildlife.state.nh.us or tel. 603-271-3127.

14. Are deer stands allowed on state lands?

Permanent tree stands or structures are not allowed on state lands.

Portable tree stands are allowed on state lands without a permit during the legal deer season providing:

1. no nails or other devices are inserted into a tree;
2. the stand can be removed without damage to any vegetation;
3. no vegetation is removed or cut for visibility or concealment;

15. Are there any areas with special hunting restrictions?

The *Frost Farm Historical Site* in Derry, *Urban Forestry Center* in Portsmouth, that portion of *Odiorne State Park* that lies on the east side of Route 1A in Rye, *Shieling State Forest* in Peterborough, and *Opeechee Bay State Forest* in Laconia are posted "No Hunting".

A portion of *Bear Brook State Park* that lies between the Campground Road and Podunk Road is a designated game refuge and open to bow hunting only for deer.

16. Is game baited on state lands?

Baiting wildlife is permitted on listed State lands *by permit only*. Baiting permits are issued by Fish and Game. Baiting wildlife is not allowed on lands managed by the Division of Parks and Recreation. For a complete list of permissible lands, contact the Wildlife Division at Fish and Game headquarters, tel 603-271-2462.

17. Am I allowed to use dogs to hunt on state lands?

Taking bear with dogs is not allowed on State Parks managed by the Division of Parks and Recreation; it *is* allowed on other forest lands managed by other agencies. Rules and regulations pertaining to taking any wildlife species with dogs must be followed. There are also rules and regulations pertaining to training dogs for hunting on state lands.

Questions concerning either hunting with dogs or training dogs for hunting should be directed to Law Enforcement Division of the Fish and Game Dept., tel 603-271-3127.

<i>PROCEDURES & QUESTIONS</i>
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18. Do I need permission to hunt on state land? To cross private land to get to state land to hunt?

Each state-owned forest land is open to hunting unless otherwise posted. It is a courtesy to contact private landowners to cross or use their land if not otherwise posted.

19. Who do I contact about hunting on state lands?

The Fish and Game Department is responsible for the regulation of hunting on all public and private lands. For questions about hunting regulations on state-owned lands, Fish and Game or the local Conservation Officer should be contacted. Fish and Game tel. 603-271-3127.

20. If I have a question about a particular property, whom do I call?

Questions about specific properties should be answered by the agency that is the primary property manager.

<i>MANAGEMENT</i>

21. Who manages state-owned land?

State agencies take the management lead on properties assigned to them. Forests and Lands, Parks and Recreation, Natural Heritage Inventory, Fish and Game, Historic Preservation, Dept. of Environmental Services, and Dept. of Transportation combine staff and other resources to cooperatively manage lands under each agency's jurisdiction.

22. Who is responsible for managing wildlife on state-owned lands?

The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department is legislatively designated to manage wildlife. By cooperative agreement, Fish and Game works with other agencies assigned land management responsibilities to carryout projects of mutual interest to improve wildlife habitat, forest recreation, and forestry operations for public use and benefit.