

STATE OF DELAWARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
DELAWARE FOREST SERVICE
Statutory Authority: 3 Delaware Code
Section 1008 & 1011 (3 Del.C. S 1008,1011)

STATE FOREST REGULATIONS

1.0 AUTHORITY

These regulations are promulgated pursuant to the delegation of authority to the Department of Agriculture by the General Assembly found in Sections 1008 and 1011 of Title 3 of the Delaware Code.

2.0 PURPOSE

The State Forests of Delaware are open to the public for all legal forms of recreation and enjoyment. The following regulations were developed to ensure that these publicly owned lands are conserved, protected, and maintained for the benefit of all.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

3.1 Department is the Delaware Department of Agriculture

3.2 DFS is the Delaware Forest Service

3.3 DNREC is the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control

4.0 GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

4.1 No living trees, shrubs, or other vegetation may be cut, felled, uprooted, removed, or otherwise injured or destroyed, unless written permission has first been obtained from the forest officer in charge.

4.2 Fires are prohibited for any purpose on State Forest lands other than in designated areas. Written permission must be obtained in advance for fires on State Forest lands outside of designated areas. Any such authorized fire must, at all times, be under the direct supervision and care of a competent adult, and must be thoroughly extinguished before the fire site is abandoned.

- 4.3 The dumping or depositing of rubbish, trash, household items, or other debris, and the placing of advertisement signs within State Forests are prohibited.
- 4.4 For the sake of sanitation and attractiveness, persons using public camp and picnic sites are required to deposit all waste paper, tin cans and other refuse in the containers, if provided. Where containers are not provided, users must properly dispose of all refuse off State Forest lands.
- 4.5 Writing upon, mutilating, carving, and otherwise defacing trees, buildings, structures, signs, and official notices is prohibited.
- 4.6 All State Forest boundaries are well marked with metal signs, yellow paint on boundary line trees, brushed-out paths or with a combination of all three features. Therefore, boundary lines should be easy to identify. State Forest visitors should avoid trespass or encroachment upon adjoining private lands by staying within boundaries of State Forest lands.
- 4.7 Many State Forest access roads are closed to vehicular travel to improve the quality of recreation and to reduce littering. These roads and trails are open to pedestrian and non-vehicular travel only. Non-pedestrian traffic (e.g. horseback riding, mountain biking) is restricted to access roads and trails, unless otherwise noted. In addition, vehicle use of tax ditches is unlawful. Furthermore, no off-highway vehicles or all-terrain vehicles, either registered or non-registered, are permitted. The only exception to this rule applies to those off-highway vehicles owned, operated, and/or authorized by the Delaware Forest Service (DFS). Violators will be prosecuted for trespassing.
- 4.8 With the exception of animals permitted under lawful hunting regulations, all animals must be under the continuous control of the owner(s) unless otherwise authorized in writing by the Forestry Administrator. All dogs must be leashed, unless covered by the exception above. State Forest visitors are responsible for the conduct and any damages, either personal or property, caused by their animals.
- 4.9 Entry to State Forest lands is prohibited from sunset to sunrise, except for lawful hunting, permitted camping, permitted Redden Lodge use, or as otherwise permitted in writing by the DFS.
- 4.10 Fishing on State Forest lands is limited to catch and release only.

5.0 CAMPING RULES AND REGULATIONS

- 5.1 A forest use permit is required for all camping on State Forest lands. Camping is free of charge, year round, but restricted to map-designated campsites. Permits are available at the State Forest office during office hours or from the information box.
- 5.2 Campsites are on a first-come/ first serve basis. Reservations may be accepted for special occasions.
- 5.3 Campsites are of a primitive type, and are to be used **ONLY** for tent, van or pickup campers. Travel trailers and /or self-propelled motor homes are excluded due to access and parking limitations, unless otherwise noted.
- 5.4 There are a limited number of campsites, each is large enough to accommodate large families. These are equipped with tables, fire pits, charcoal grills and a trash barrel. Campsites are limited to a maximum number of 25 people per site, with a maximum stay of three nights per week.
- 5.5 Camping is at your own risk. State Forests are a public use area and there is no after-hours, nighttime or weekend security. Law enforcement is provided by the Delaware State Police should the need arise.
- 5.6 State forests are “multiple-use facilities”, which means other activities will continue while you camp. These activities include: hunting, picnicking, hiking, orienteering, nature study, horseback riding, firewood cutting (by permit only), and timber harvesting. The DFS reserves the right to limit or deny permits during times of conflicting use.
- 5.7 Firewood for camp use is available at the campsites. If more firewood is needed, it may be gathered locally from dead and downed trees. No standing trees or shrubs are to be cut. Using firewood located at the office complex is prohibited. Campfires are to be in established fire rings only.
- 5.8 Campsites are to be left clean for the next users, and all fires are to be extinguished before departing from the area.

6.0 REDDEN STATE FOREST LODGE

- 6.1 Maximum Lodge capacity is 45 persons (overnight use).
- 6.2 The organization or individual renting the Lodge must be at least 21 years of age and provide a minimum of one adult supervisor per ten youths. Youth are defined as persons under 18 years of age and adults as having reached the age of 21.
- 6.3 The use or possession of illegal drugs is strictly prohibited. Additionally, alcoholic beverages are prohibited (unless approved in writing by the DFS). Smoking and the use of other tobacco products are prohibited inside the Lodge.
- 6.4 Unauthorized heating equipment is prohibited in the Lodge. The fire alarm system is designed for the protection of all those who use the Lodge and the structure itself. **Any misuse or intentional activation of this and other alarms is strictly prohibited and legal action(s) will be taken pursuant to Delaware Code.**
- 6.5 The use or possession of **firearms or other weapons (except as permitted for legal hunting outside the safety zone, or as approved in writing by the Delaware Forest Service)**, etc., is strictly prohibited.
- 6.6 No outside fires may be started at any time in the vicinity of the Lodge, except in the permanent grills installed on site and the fire pit area, or as approved in writing by the Delaware Forest Service.
- 6.7 Service dogs are permitted; no other pets shall be permitted within or near the Lodge.
- 6.8 An adequate supply of firewood will be provided and placed on the back porch.. Please do not retrieve additional wood from the shed/storage area. No charcoal, wax logs, or other materials shall be used in the fireplaces.
- 6.9 No sleeping facilities are provided at the Lodge. There are cooking facilities and tables and chairs for eating. There are no pots, pans, dishes, or serving articles. Do not move any furniture or fixtures. Folding tables and chairs are not permitted outside the Lodge.
- 6.10 The telephone at the Lodge is provided for emergencies, local calls, and credit card or collect long distance calls and are only for use by adults, except in emergencies. You must dial 9 before placing any call. The number for the Lodge phone is (302) 856-5939, and incoming calls can be received. Please remember this telephone is only to be used when necessary and are not for social calls. It is the responsibility of the applicant to honor these restrictions and inform all lodge users of the telephone restrictions. If the telephone restrictions are not honored, the Delaware Forest Service reserves the right to remove the telephone at any time.

6.11 Lodge Rental Fees, Reservations, Deposits, and Cancellations

6.11.1 Reservations shall be made on a first-come, first-served basis. To secure a reservation, a completed application and the full Lodge user fee must be received at least 120 days prior to the desired reservation date.

6.11.2 A security-damage deposit in the amount of \$100.00 must be received at the time of check-in. If the security-damage deposit is not paid prior to check-in, the person/group/organization will not be permitted use of the lodge. The security-damage deposit will be returned within 5 days after check-out, if the lodge is found in good condition. If the lodge is not found in good condition, an itemized list of charges will be provided to the person/group/organization.

6.11.3 Cancellation policy: Reservations must be canceled at least fifteen (15) working days prior to the arrival date. If this cancellation policy is not followed, the reservation deposit will be forfeited. The security-damage deposit will be refunded for all cancellations.

6.11.4 Types of Use

6.11.4.1 Daily: 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

6.11.4.2 Evening: 4 p.m. - 10 p.m.

6.11.4.3 Weekend: Friday 4 p.m. - Sunday 10 p.m.

6.11.4.4 Weekday Overnight: 4 p.m. - 8 a.m.

6.11.5 Lodge Rental Fees: Lodge user fees shall be as follows:
(Amounts in parentheses indicate proposed increases in fees)

6.11.5.1 May 1 to September 30

6.11.5.1.1 \$75 Daily, Evening Use, and
Weekday Overnight

6.11.5.1.2 \$200 Weekend Use

6.11.5.2 October 1 to April 30 (Increased fees due to heating expenses)

6.11.5.2.1 \$85 Daily, Evening Use, and
Weekday Overnight

6.11.5.2.2 \$225 Weekend Use

6.11.5.3 Checks should be made payable to: Department of Agriculture.

6.11.5.4 Payments and application should be mailed to:

Redden State Forest
18074 Redden Forest Drive
Georgetown, DE 19947
(302)856-2893
weekdays 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

7.0 Hunting Rules and Regulations

- 7.1 State Forests are year-round multiple use areas. Hunters share the use of State Forest lands with other public users such as hikers, campers, horseback riders, firewood cutters, and loggers.
- 7.2 No special permits are required to hunt on State Forest lands, **except as specified in the DNREC, Division of Fish and Wildlife annual hunting manual.** Properly licensed hunters may hunt during any open season except on areas designated, such as those marked with Wildlife Sanctuary, NO HUNTING, or Safety Zone signs.
- 7.3 Parking is available on all State Forest tracts.
- 7.4 No permanent deer stands, platforms, ladders, or blinds may be constructed. No screw-in tree steps, spikes, screws, or nails are allowed.
- 7.6 Deer drives by any person or persons are not permitted on any State Forest land at any time.
- 7.7 Small game hunting is closed on State Forest lands during firearm deer seasons.
- 7.8 The DFS reserves the right to close to hunting specific State Forest tracts during specific hunting seasons. Therefore, it is important to consult the current hunting guide for a listing of these closures.
- 7.9 Trapping rights may be leased for State Forest lands. No other trapping is permitted on State Forest lands.
- 7.10 Target shooting is prohibited. Firearms are allowed for legal hunting only, and are prohibited on State Forest lands from March 1 through August 31.
- 7.11 Waterfowl hunting is not permitted on State Forest land or waters.

- 7.12 The following hunting restrictions apply to several tracts of Blackbird State Forest. Maps delineating these areas are available at Blackbird State Forest headquarters or by calling (302)653-6505.
- 7.12.1 All deer hunting is limited to numbered stands.
- 7.12.2 For shotgun season stands will be chosen in a pre-season lottery. To apply for a stand during the shotgun season fill out the application in the Delaware Hunting and Trapping Guide. For leftover stands there will be a daily lottery held at Blackbird State Forest Headquarters, located on the Tybout tract on Blackbird Forest Rd. (Rd. 471), 1 ½ hours before legal hunting time.
- 7.12.3 For Muzzleloader season there will be a daily lottery held at Blackbird State Forest Headquarters, located on the Tybout tract on Blackbird Forest Rd. (Rd. 471), 1 ½ hours before legal hunting time.
- 7.12.4 All hunters on these tracts, during shotgun and muzzleloader season, must hunt from the stand only, as walk around hunting is not permitted.
- 7.12.5 During Archery season bowhunters must be within 50 yards of their designated stand.
- 7.12.6 Stands will be available during Archery season on a first come first serve basis.
- 7.12.7 No more than one hunter may hunt from a stand at any one time.
- 7.13 These special hunting restrictions apply to the Tybout tract of Blackbird State Forest:
- 7.13.1 Squirrel hunting is not allowed with rifle or muzzleloading rifle, shotgun squirrel hunting is permitted.
- 7.13.2 Dog training is prohibited at all times.

8.0 FOREST USE PERMITS

- 8.1 Forest use permits on State Forests are issued on a first-come first-served basis and are required for camping, firewood cutting, lodge rental (Redden State Forest), organized special events, and pavilion reservation (Blackbird State Forest only). Upon arrival at the facility users are required to fill out a Forest Use Permit (Doc. No. 65-04-02/87/10/03). Under special circumstances facilities may be applied for in advance.

8.2 Items to be filled out by all applicants include:

- 8.2.1 Date of application
- 8.2.2 Time of application submission
- 8.2.3 Applicants' name
- 8.2.4 Applicants' address, city, state, zip code

8.3 Camping:

- 8.3.1 Individual or group permit
- 8.3.2 Number of persons camping
- 8.3.3 The name of organization (if applicable)
- 8.3.4 Vehicle make, model, color, and license number
- 8.3.5 Permit effective date & termination date
- 8.3.6 Applicants' signature

8.4 Group Users/Special Events:

- 8.4.1 The name of the person in charge
- 8.4.2 The name of organization
- 8.4.3 Number in the group
- 8.4.4 Permit effective date
- 8.4.5 Permit termination date
- 8.4.6 Facility used:
 - 8.4.6.1 Camping
 - 8.4.6.2 Picnic shelter
 - 8.4.6.3 Nature study area
 - 8.4.6.4 Other
 - 8.4.6.5 Applicants' signature

8.5 Firewood Permits:

Firewood permits are required to harvest firewood on State Forest lands and are issued at the discretion of the State Forest staff. When available, these permits are issued on a first come first serve basis. There is a fee of \$20 for firewood permits, which allows the holder to cut two standard pickup loads of firewood. No trees are to be felled; only downed wood may be cut. Designated firewood cutting areas will be delineated by State Forest employees and posted as such.

9.0 DEPARTMENT ENFORCEMENT REGULATIONS

- 9.1 Whoever violates any of the foregoing regulations shall be deemed to have committed an unclassified misdemeanor and fined not less than \$25 nor more than \$250 and pay the court costs for each violation. For each subsequent violation, within three years of the previous conviction, the violator shall be fined not less than \$50 nor more than \$500 and pay court costs. In addition to such fines and court costs, a violator who is convicted of damaging, destroying, or removing property owned and maintained by the State Forest Service, shall be required to make restitution to the Department for the replacement or restoration of such property.
- 9.2 Justices of the Peace throughout the State shall have jurisdiction over alleged violations of these State Forest Regulations; however, any violator shall, upon arrest, be taken to the nearest available Justice of the Peace in the county where such violation is alleged to have occurred, or in lieu thereof, be provided with an assessment form for the voluntary payment of fines.
- 9.3 Notwithstanding the immediate preceding subsection, a forest service officer making an arrest for a violation of these regulations may issue a summons requiring the violator to appear in person at a subsequent date at the Justice of the Peace Court nearest to the place of arrest and during the regularly scheduled hours of the Court.
- 9.4 After payment for fines and costs, if any, is received by the Department of Justice or Justice of the Peace Court, the Department or the Court shall mail a receipt indicating payment for such fine if the violator paying such fine makes a written request for a receipt and encloses a self-addressed envelope with proper postage affixed thereon.

