State Game Lands Regulations

State Game Lands are public hunting grounds.

Lawful hunting and trapping is permitted on game lands during open seasons. And many other rules are in place regarding game lands use.

To enable the Game Commission to effectively manage and protect these invaluable land holdings for this and future generations of hunters, trappers and wildlife enthusiasts,

Game Lands users may not:

- Camp or use campsites.
- Contaminate, pollute or degrade groundwaters or surface waters or any waterways.
- Graze or permit the grazing of domestic livestock; place or maintain beehives or beekeeping apparatus.
- Solicit or place private advertisements, signs or posters.
- Plant, gather, cut, dig, remove or otherwise injure any plants or parts thereof, including trees, shrubs, vines, flowering plants and cultivated crops. (Mushrooms and fruits of berry-producing plants may be picked.)
- Travel on lands by means of any vehicle or conveyance propelled by motorized power. (Exemption for individuals with Disabled Person Permit for battery-powered motorized wheelchair.)
- Ride a non-motorized vehicle, conveyance or animal, except on roads normally open to public travel, or designated routes as posted, or while lawfully engaged in hunting, trapping or fishing.
- Ride a nonmotorized vehicle, conveyance or animal from the last Saturday in September until the third Saturday in January, and prior to one hour after close of lawful hunting hours for spring turkey season from the second Saturday in April through the last Saturday in May, inclusive, except on Sundays or while lawfully engaged in hunting, trapping or fishing.
- Ride a non-motorized vehicle, conveyance or animal on roads open to foot travel only.
- Drive motor vehicles with or without attachments having a registered gross vehicle weight in excess of 12,000 pounds.
- Use boats propelled by a motor. Battery-powered electric motors may be used on waterways unless otherwise posted.
- Fish from dam breasts posted against fishing.
- Swim in any dam, pond, lake or stream.
- Injure, destroy or cause damage to property, real, personal or mixed.
- Remove or attempt to remove any manmade or natural object, except wildlife and fish lawfully taken. Objects that may not be removed include animals, rocks, minerals, sand and historical or archaeological artifacts.
- Participate in, become part of, contribute to or engage in disorderly conduct.
- Travel on roads open to vehicular travel with vehicle or conveyance propelled by motorized power that is not licensed or authorized for operation on a public highway.
- Violate, fail or neglect to follow instructions posted on signs authorized by the Executive Director.
- Destroy, mutilate or remove any sign or placard.
- Travel by mechanical or motorized conveyance or ride animals on newly constructed, seeded or planted roads, or other areas, when posted against travel.
- Consume, possess or transport any alcohol, liquor, beer, malt or brewed alcoholic beverage.
- Use or possess any controlled substance or drug paraphernalia.
- Occupy, use or construct, place or maintain structures or other tangible property, except that portable hunting blinds and stands may be used, provided no damage is caused to trees.
- Feed wildlife or place any food, fruit, hay, grain, chemical, salt or other minerals.
- Release any domestic animals, captive-bred or captive-raised game or wildlife.
- Operate a motor vehicle in willful and wanton disregard for the safety of persons or property or in excess of posted speed limits, or where no speed limit is posted, in excess of 25 mph.
- Target shoot with firearms, bows and arrows, or devices capable of launching projectiles, unless the person is in possession of a valid hunting or furtaker license signed by its holder. Exercise of privileges shall be done in a manner as to not cause injury to persons or property, or on areas not otherwise posted closed to those activities.
- Except as provided on established shooting ranges, discharge any firearm, bow and arrow or device capable of launching projectiles that is not a lawful device to hunt game or wildlife. Shoot clay birds anywhere except areas designated by the Executive Director by signs stating that clay bird shooting is permitted.
- Engage in any activity or event involving more than 10 persons, which may conflict with the intended purposes or uses of property, or poses a potential environmental or safety problem.
- Sell, distribute, deliver, service, guide or rent any equipment, material or commodity or otherwise transact or engage in any commercial activity. Such activity is when a person directly or indirectly accepts consideration of value as compensation for the provision of goods or services, including transportation.
- Use State Game Lands for any personal, organizational or commercial purpose other than the intended use of the property.
- Operate under authority of a contract, lease, agreement or permit and fail to abide by the terms and conditions set forth.
- Except on Sundays, to be present on State Game Lands from Nov. 15 through Dec. 15 inclusive when not engaged in lawful hunting or trapping and fail to wear a minimum of 250 square inches of fluorescent orange material on the head, chest and back combined, or, in lieu thereof, a hat of the same colored material. Orange material must be visible 360 degrees. Persons using shooting ranges are exempted.
- Small open fires for cooking or warming purposes are permitted, except when the Fire Index Rating used by the Bureau of Forestry, DCNR, is high, very high or extreme. Fires must be contained and tended at all times.
- Snowmobiles, as defined in the All Terrain Vehicle Act of 1985, may be driven beginning the third Sunday in January through April 1, only on designated areas, roads and trails marked with appropriate signs. Snowmobiles must display a valid registration decal.

State Game Lands Shooting Ranges

- Rifle and handgun ranges are open from 8 a.m. until sunset Monday through Saturday, and from noon to sunset Sundays, unless otherwise posted. **Exception:** The Sunday immediately preceding the regular antlered and antlerless deer season and bear season the hours are 8 a.m. to sunset.
- A range may be reserved for exclusive use by an organized group from Jan. 1 through Oct. 1. Arrangements must be made with the appropriate Game Commission region office at least 20 days in advance. An individual may not use the range when it has been reserved.
- An individual or organized group using a range is responsible for keeping the area clean and free of debris and may not discard, deposit or leave litter, except in refuse containers. Users shall remove targets from backboards.
- The Game Commission is not responsible for anyone injured on a range. An individual using a Game Commission range does so at his or her own risk and assumes all responsibility for injuries to a person or property.
- When more than one person is using a range, a range officer shall be designated.
- Individuals under the age of 16 may not use a range unless accompanied by a person 18 years of age or older.
- A Game Commission region director may close a range by the posting of signs.

Prohibited Acts

- Possess a loaded firearm, except at an established shooting station on the firing line.
- Discharge a firearm, except from an established shooting station on the firing line at a paper target placed on a permanent backboard.
- Discharge armor-piercing, incendiary, explosive, tracer or multiple-projectile ammunition.
- Be intoxicated, use or possess alcohol or a controlled substance.
- Possess an automatic firearm.
- Possess, load or discharge a firearm that contains more than three rounds of single-projectile ammunition, except at a Game Commission facility specifically designated as a handgun range an individual is permitted to load and discharge a handgun containing a maximum of six rounds of single-projectile ammunition at any one time.
- Shoot clay birds anywhere except areas designated by the Game Commission Executive Director, marked with signs stating that clay bird shooting is permitted.

Prohibitions apply at rifle and handgun ranges located on land under Game Commission ownership, except when authorized.

Range Permits

Permits are required for individuals who use Game Lands shooting ranges, including designated clay bird shooting areas, but who don't possess a valid Pennsylvania hunting or furtaker license.

Range permits will be issued to persons 16 years of age or older. A permitted person is allowed one guest.

Permits must be in possession, but do not have to be displayed.

Permits are $30 and must be purchased by credit card through The Outdoor Shop at the Game Commission's website, or at Game Commission region offices or the Harrisburg headquarters.

Permits are effective from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016.

Appalachian Trail

Hunters are reminded that hunting or discharging firearms, and use of off-road vehicles, including ATVs, are prohibited on National Park Service (NPS) lands acquired for the protection of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail.

Individuals can now possess firearms on national park or refuge lands if they are legally permitted to carry a firearm in the state and municipality where they are located.

Sections of the Appalachian Trail that run through State Game Lands are not subject to the listed regulations.

Please be advised that State Game Lands regulations require **any group consisting of 10 or more people** using the game lands, including trails, to a obtain a Special Use Permit.

Maps that show the NPS lands where hunting is prohibited are available for viewing at the Appalachian Trail Conference Regional Office in Boiling Springs, Pa. (717-258-5771).

Small open fires for cooking or warming purposes may be kindled, used and maintained by persons exercising the privileges of a valid hunting, furtaker or fishing license and through-hikers within the corridor of the Appalachian Trail.

This exception to the prohibition on fires is applicable only where the small fires are located at places where adequate precautions are taken to prevent the spread of fire, and the small fires are attended at all times and the index rating used by the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is not High, Very High or Extreme for that area.

A person causing a wildfire, in addition to possible criminal penalty, is liable for all damages, cost of extinguishing and fines.

Know the Signs

On State Game Lands, recreational riding of horses and bicycles is allowed only on designated trails, marked by **GREEN** triangles. Trails that are closed are marked with **ORANGE** triangles. Recreational off-trail riding is not permitted.