

Bulldog Canyon OHV Permit Zone Rules and Regulations

Riding Restrictions

- Motorized vehicles must stay on designated trails. All cross-country travel by a motorized vehicle, including OHVs, is prohibited.
- Travel by motorized vehicles which causes damage to native plants, wildlife habitat, riparian areas, cultural or natural resources or property or improvements is prohibited.
- Don't drink and drive! It is unlawful to operate an OHV under the influence of drugs or alcohol or in such a manner that endangers the safety of others.
- All off-road motorized vehicles and riders must meet Arizona State Requirements including:
 - Helmet: A properly fitted and fastened DOT approved helmet is required for those under 18 who operate or ride an OHV. Helmets are strongly recommended for all OHV operators and riders over 18.
 - A United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) approved spark arrestor
 - A muffler which prevents sound above 96 decibels
 - Brakes adequate to stop the vehicle
 - Lighted headlights and taillights, if the OHV is operated between one half-hour after sunset and one half-hour before sunrise
 - License plate securely fastened to the rear of the vehicle and clearly visible
- Please don't remove our signs or make your own. Removal or placement of regulatory signs is prohibited and OHV Volunteers work hard to repair damage to help keep trails signed and open for your use.
- State, county, and forest roads are marked differently by a horizontally-numbered or vertically-numbered route marker:
 - Vertical Signs: Forest roads with vertically-numbered route markers mean you can ride with an RV or MC plate and OHV Decal. On these roads, the driver does not need to be licensed (i.e. those under 16 years old can operate a motorized vehicle on these roads).
 - Horizontal Signs: Forest roads with horizontally-numbered route markers mean you have to be "street legal" (normal full-size car license plate or MC plate and OHV Decal) and have a valid driver's license.

Safety

- Plan ahead! Riders should wear appropriate safety gear, carry a first aid kit, plenty of water, ride with a partner, and ride with caution.
- All trails are two-way and provide a primitive trail experience. Blind turns, down trees, flooded washes, other OHV riders, and non-motorized recreation users (e.g., hikers) should be anticipated.

Camping and Other Non-Motorized Activities within Motorized Vehicle Use Permit Zone

- There are many non-motorized trails within the Bulldog Canyon OHV Zone; motorized use on these routes is prohibited. Please be respectful and use the routes marked for your use.
- As with all Federal lands, fireworks are not allowed anywhere in the permit zones.
- Hunting during regular hunting seasons with a valid hunting license is allowed in all Tonto Motorized Vehicle Use Permit areas subject to Arizona State Game and Fish hunting regulations. A valid permit is required to access the zone with a motorized vehicle.
- Each Tonto Motorized Vehicle Permit Zone may have different restrictions on camping, so be sure to check with your local District Office before you go. Generally, camping is prohibited at all staging areas and access points to allow for day-use parking and trailer staging.
 - In Bulldog Canyon OHV Zone, camping is prohibited for the first mile from each access gate, with the exception of Blue Point access gate; camping is prohibited for the first two miles from this gate. This restriction includes a distance of 300 feet on either side of the road/trail.
- Campfires are restricted during seasonal fire restrictions. Please contact the District Office for up to date information. Burning pallets is discouraged because it leaves behind hazardous nails on the ground.
- Facilities- there are currently no developed campgrounds or restrooms at the access points and throughout the permit zone. So bring everything you need with you because there won't be any water, electricity, or restrooms! Just the beautiful Forest and its amazing opportunities!

TONTO National Forest



Recreation
Opportunity
Guide

www.fs.fed.us/r3/tonto



OFF HIGHWAY TOURING

BULLDOG CANYON OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE ZONE

RANGER DISTRICT

Mesa Ranger Station
5140 E. Ingram Street
Mesa, AZ 85205
Phone (480) 610-3300
Fax (480) 610-3346

RELATED OPPORTUNITIES

Dispersed camping, hunting, hiking, horseback riding, and mountain biking

SEASON OF USE

All year

FEES

Each motor vehicle operator needs to obtain a six month permit from Recreation.gov prior to entry into Bulldog Canyon. Each access gate is locked, and you need a permit for the lock combination.

USGS MAPS

Apache Junction-Stewart Mountain

OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE ZONE

ACCESS

Blue Point, access point 1, can be reached through the Lower Salt River recreation area. This gate is located on the south side of Bush Highway, west of the bridge at Blue Point Recreation Site. Closed to camping for two miles.

Usery, access point 2, is three quarters of a mile north of Usery Mountain Regional Park. The gate is on the east side of the road, tucked behind a blind curve on Usery Pass. Closed to camping for one mile.

Wolverine, access point 3, can be reached from Apache Junction. Travel north on Idaho Road, east on McKellips Road, north on Wolverine Pass Road, east on Tonto Street, and north on Cactus Road. The road will curve and lead to the access gate. Closed to camping for one mile.

Hackamore, access point 4, also can be reached from Apache Junction. From State Route 88 (Apache Trail), travel north 1.5 miles on Hackamore Road to the gate. Closed to camping for one mile.

Dutchman, access point 5, is on the west side of State Route 88, 1.1 miles north of Lost Dutchman State Park. Closed to camping for one mile.

Willow, access point 6, is beyond access point 5 about 1.8 miles north of Lost Dutchman State Park on the west side of State Route 88. Closed to camping for one mile.

ATTRACTIONS

Bulldog Canyon offers views of the Goldfield Mountains, Superstition Mountains, and parts of the Sonoran Desert. Many non-motorized trails are also located in the Bulldog Canyon zone.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Operate vehicles only on roads designated as open by brown fiberglass vertical markers. All roads and routes other than FR 10 and FR 12, 1356, 3512, 3556, and 3554 are closed to motorized travel.
- Road conditions are primitive in some areas, and require 4-wheel-drive.
- Road length: FR 10 is 7 miles long.
- FR 3554 is 4 miles long.
- Practice "Leave No Trace" ethics: PACK IT IN, PACK IT OUT!!
- Carry an adequate supply of drinking water.
- Please help us care for this fragile environment by ensuring that all fires are "dead out."
- Camping is prohibited all of NFSR 78 (First Water Road) and the user made horse trailer parking area located adjacent to State Route 88, mile post 203. For more information view the Closure Order [here](#) and the Maps [here](#).

Bulldog Canyon OHV Permit Information

The Mesa Ranger District on the Tonto National Forest is home to the Bulldog Canyon OHV Permit Zone. This zone has had controlled access gates since the mid 90's that were put in place to protect the natural resources from over use because this zone is literally in the backyard of local communities. The access gates have combination locks and the combinations are changed monthly. Up until March 19, 2020 permits were issued from the Mesa Ranger District office which issued the user 6 months of combinations to the gates and is a free permit. Starting March 19, 2020 the permits will only be available online at recreation.gov. A \$6 fee will be charged to administer the issuing of permits online.

Why is the Forest Service issuing Bulldog Canyon permits online rather than from the office?

The OHV user community have asked for the permits to be available online to make them more readily available and convenient. The popularity of the Bulldog Canyon zone along with the popularity of Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) use in general has created a demand that exceeds the ability of the Mesa office to issue.

This permit was free before, why do we have to pay \$6 for a permit now?

The \$6 charge is not a fee to access the zone, it is the cost to administer the online permit platform. The fee pays for contracted services through the Recreation.gov platform, for online, call-center and field reservations. Online reservations are available 24/7 and call center hours are available year-round, 10 a.m. – 12 a.m. Eastern Time (closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day). To continue to provide riding experiences in the Bulldog Canyon zone and streamline the permit process using current technology it is necessary to go to an online permit.

What is recreation.gov?

Recreation.gov is a joint initiative among participating federal agencies. A dozen federal agencies participate with Recreation.gov to offer more than 103,000 reservable sites and activities. The site was created in 1995 to provide a reservation service to the public for Federal recreation facilities and activities.

What is different about the online permits?

They are online! No need to e-mail or come in to the district office! The past Bulldog Canyon permits allowed for up to 5 additional household members to be added to the permit. After March 19, 2020 each OHV operator 16 years or older will need a permit on hand while riding in the permit zone. Passengers who will not be operating motorized vehicles in the permit zone do not need a permit.

How do I get a permit online?

After March 19, 2020 visitors with an existing account on Recreation.gov are encouraged to login and update their password if needed. For those who may be new to Recreation.gov, you will need to create a new account. To reserve a permit, search for 'Tonto National Forest Off-Highway Vehicle Permit' and follow prompts to purchase and then print the permit. **Note: You will receive a confirmation e-mail but that is not the permit. You must print the permit from the recreation.gov site.** The permit will have 6 months of gate codes and must be in your possession while operating a motorized vehicle in the Bulldog Canyon zone. Then go enjoy riding in Arizona's famous Sonoran Desert!



