



Forest Service  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

# Hunting Game and Birds

## Stanislaus National Forest

Residents and visitors of the Sierran gold country have a long tradition of hunting within what is now the Stanislaus National Forest. The proliferation of game on forested public lands affords its visitors plentiful hunting opportunities in season. Learn how to do so safely, legally, and responsibly.

### In the Forest

Hunters on the Stanislaus National Forest must adhere to all regulations from the **California Department of Fish and Wildlife**. These can be found on their website: [www.wildlife.ca.gov/Regulations](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Regulations).

Regulations are published by species and type, such as mammals and waterfowl. They also define seasons by the type of weapon allowed, such as bow or gun season, and when and where dogs are allowed to be used. The most commonly hunted animals on the Stanislaus are deer, turkey, or bear. Hunting licenses and tags must be current, valid, and in your name.

From Dec. 15 to April 15 most forest roads are closed to vehicle travel. Obtain a motor vehicle use map from your local ranger station for details. It is your responsibility to know where any private property is within National Forest boundaries and to not trespass. You must be aware of and comply with all state, county, and federal laws pertaining to the possession and transportation of firearms.

Using a safe, commonsense approach to hunting on the forest prevents injury to others and natural resources.



### Weapons and Vehicles

Per the California Penal Code (*PEN §25850*) visitors may not carry loaded firearms on or in a vehicle. A weapon is considered loaded if the ammunition is in or attached to a weapon, including a loaded clip or magazine. During hunting season, licensed hunters may have a clip or magazine in the weapon, but a round cannot be chambered. *FGC §2006*

### Discharging a Weapon

The following actions are PROHIBITED under Federal regulations:

- Discharging a firearm or any other implement capable of taking human life, causing injury or damaging property; *36 CFR 261.10(d)*
  1. In or within 150 yards of a residence, building, campsite, developed recreation site or other occupied area; or
  2. Across or on any Forest System road, or a body of water adjacent thereto, or in any manner or place whereby any person or property is exposed to injury or damage as a result in such discharge;
  3. Into or within any cave.
- Damaging any natural feature or property of the United States [including trees]. *36 CFR 261.9(a)*



Read and review the firearm safety course published by the California Office of the Attorney General: [California Firearm Safety Certificate Study Guide](#)

## Help Keep The Forest Safe

We ask forest visitors who witness any firearms incidents that they believe do not follow local, state, or federal policies to report the occurrence to the appropriate law enforcement officials.

See Fish and Wildlife's website for information on how to **report poaching and polluting**—anonymous reporting is available: [www.wildlife.ca.gov/Enforcement/CalTIP](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Enforcement/CalTIP)

You can find more information on our website on where and how to use firearms on the Stanislaus National Forest.

## Special Restricted Areas

Per California game laws, one may not carry a loaded firearm in a State Game Refuge. The nearest refuge is between the North and Middle forks of the Stanislaus River. In these areas, the weapon must be broken down, with the trigger assembly removed from the housing, and kept in a place separate from ammunition. *FGC §10506*

## Know Your Hunting Zones

In California, hunting permits are issued by hunting zones. Tags in certain zones are determined by lottery draw or allow hunting of multiple zones on the same tag. You may only take the appropriate type and number of animals in the zone for which the tag is issued. If you aren't sure which zone your favorite hunting spot falls in, ask a game warden or forest ranger for more information, or visit: [www.wildlife.ca.gov/hunting](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/hunting).

## What To Wear In The Woods

Take care to wear clothing that gives you a good chance of being seen by other hunters. It's no good being able to hide from the animals if the end result is that you are mistaken for one and injured as a result. Wear blaze orange vests and clothing that is easily distinguishable from any vegetation you hide in.

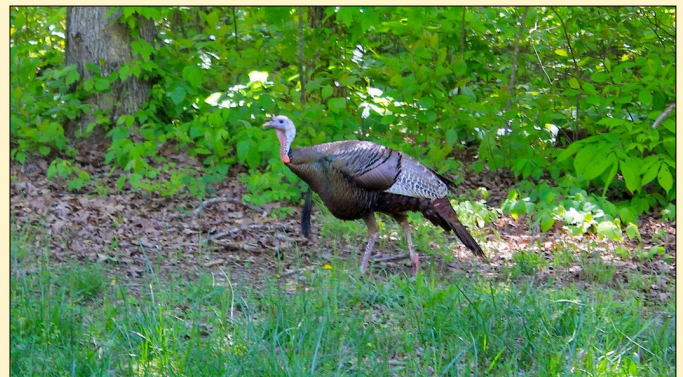


## Kill Validation

Hunters must tag and validate (countersign) their deer and elk kills prior to returning home. *T14 CCR §708.6* Kills may be validated by any Forest Service, CalFire, or CA Fish and Wildlife employees, as well as any law enforcement officer. See the aforementioned regulation for the full list of validators. Tags should be filled out in their entirety when animals are taken. Check the Fish and Wildlife website, [www.wildlife.ca.gov/Licensing/Hunting](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Licensing/Hunting) for full reporting requirements.

California Fish and Wildlife must validate all bear kills. (Note: the bear's skull must be kept for accurate validation). Hunters may remove the kill from the Stanislaus and arrange an appointment with Region 4:

- Stockton (209) 234-3420
- Mokelumne River Hatchery (209) 759-3383
- La Grange (209) 853-2533 Ext. 6
- Moccasin Hatchery (209) 989-2312



## Contact Us:

**Supervisor's Office**  
19777 Greenley Road  
Sonora, CA 95370  
(209) 532-3671

**Summit Mi-Wok District  
Highway 108 Corridor**  
1 Pinecrest Lake Rd  
Pinecrest, CA 95364  
(209) 965-3434

**Groveland Ranger District  
Highway 120 Corridor**  
24545 Highway 120  
Groveland, CA 95321  
(209) 962-7825

**Calaveras Ranger District  
Highway 4 Corridor**  
5519 Highway 4  
Hathaway Pines, CA 95223  
(209) 795-1381

Most offices are open Monday through Friday, call or visit <https://www.fs.usda.gov/stanislaus> for current open hours.