

FOREST SERVICE RULES George Washington & Jefferson National Forests

The following rules are designed to protect the forest and the natural environment, ensure the health and safety of visitors, and promote pleasant and rewarding outdoor recreation experiences for all visitors. Forest officers are empowered to enforce the federal regulations and rules. Please take time to read and understand them.

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GENERAL OVERVIEW

Supervisor Orders

Regional Foresters and Forest Supervisors may issue orders that will close or restrict the use of certain areas if the need arises. These orders will be posted so visitors can become familiar with them. Copies of these orders are also available in the Supervisor's Office and the Ranger District Offices.

Federal Regulations

All visitors and users of national forests are subject to federal regulations. The points of conduct listed are generally included in and enforceable through federal regulations. All of the regulations are published in Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 261, and are on file at all Forest Supervisor and District Ranger offices. Violation of orders and regulations is subject to punishment by fine or imprisonment.

Authority: 16 USC 551, 7 USC 1011(f).

Safety

- You are responsible for your own safety.
- If you hike, mountain bicycle or ride your horse off trails, swim or dive in streams or lakes, rock or ice climb, you do so at YOUR OWN RISK.
- Watch for natural hazards when you are in the forest. Be especially alert for "hazard trees" – trees damaged by last night's, last week's or even last year's storms that may fall across a trail, dispersed campsite, road, or recreation facility.
- Get a current local weather forecast and take all severe weather, flash flood and high wind warnings seriously.
- Provide trip plans to a family member or friend at home, including the specific area(s) of the national forest you plan to visit and your estimated return time.

RECREATION RULES

Boat Ramps and Docks

- State rules, regulations and laws apply to the use of watercraft.
- Do not fish from or swim within 100 feet of boat ramps and docks.
- Do not leave an unattached trailer in a boat ramp parking area.
- Do not leave your watercraft unattended overnight (except in the boat storage area at Bolar Flats).
- Sleeping in watercraft is prohibited on Lake Moomaw and in trailer parking areas around Lake Moomaw.

Business Activities

- Special Use Permits are required for any commercial activity. These include, but are not limited to:
 - Selling food or merchandise.
 - selling services such as outfitting, guiding, and shuttling.
 - Posting or distributing handbills and circulars.
 - Conducting a recreation event, public assembly or operating a public address system.
- Contact the Forest Service office nearest the location of your desired commercial activity to get more information about obtaining a special use permit.

Campfires

- Obey restrictions on fires. Fires may be limited or prohibited at certain times.
- Within campgrounds and other developed recreation sites, build fires only in fire rings, stoves, or grills provided for that purpose.
- Be sure your fire is completely extinguished (no heat present) before leaving. YOU are responsible for keeping fires under control.

Camping

- Camp only in designated campsites. Exceptions are very low level campgrounds such as Oronoco and North River.
- At least one person must occupy a campsite during the first night. After that, a campsite cannot be unoccupied for more than 24 hours without permission.
- Do not leave camping equipment unattended for more than 24 hours. The Forest Service is not responsible for any loss or damage to personal property.
- All tents and equipment must be located within the designated site and all vehicles must be located on the campsite parking spur or in other designated parking areas. See on-site information board for limits on camping units (number of tents and/or trailers and RVs allowed per site).
- Some campgrounds offer utility hookups. Campers who occupy these campsites must pay the utility fee, regardless of whether the utility is used.
- There is a limit of 14 consecutive days for overnight visits to the national forest. Only Bolar Mountain Campground has an exception with a 21 day limit.
- Campgrounds have designated quiet hours, typically 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.
- Non-campers visiting a campground must depart by 10 p.m.
- There are time restrictions for running generators, typically 2 or 3 hours with an equal break of 2 or 3 hours, depending on the campground. Check the on-site information board for specific information on time increments for running generators.
- In equestrian campgrounds and on trails, a negative Coggins Report for infectious equine anemia within the past 12 months must be in the possession of horseback riders for each horse present.
- Alcohol is allowed in your personal campsite unless otherwise posted within the recreation area as being prohibited. Check the campground-specific information on this website as well as on-site campground

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information board. Public consumption within the recreation area, but outside of your personal campsite, is not allowed in any campgrounds. Please be responsible with alcohol and remember that these are family campgrounds.

- Dispersed camping is allowed in general forest areas except where closed to camping through a Forest Supervisor's Order.

Fireworks and Firearms

- Fireworks are prohibited throughout the forest. Do not set off fireworks or other explosives within campgrounds and other recreation sites.
- Weapons are not allowed on national forest lands outside of hunting seasons. (See State Game Regulations) Shooting ranges are the exception.
- Firing a gun is not allowed:
 - In or within 150 yards of a residence, building, campsite, developed recreation site or occupied area.
 - Across or on a road or body of water.
 - In any circumstance whereby any person may be injured or property damaged.
 - Outside of hunting season, unless a specific supervisor's order exists stating otherwise.

Hunting and Fishing

- State traffic, game and fishing laws apply to national forests unless otherwise specified.
- Hunting seasons, regulations and bag limits are set by state game and fish agencies.
- Hunting and fishing licenses and regulation guides can be obtained at many local retail stores and on the internet at:
 - Virginia: <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/licenses/>
 - West Virginia: <http://www.wvdnr.gov/hunting/licensing.shtm>
 - Kentucky: <https://fw.ky.gov/license/waonlinefront.aspx>
- While in possession of a firearm for the purpose of hunting, you must have a valid hunting license and appropriate permits in your possession for the species you intend to hunt.
- Firearms must be legal for hunting the species in season at the time of your national forest visit.

Motorized Trails – ATVs and OHVs

- All-terrain vehicles (ATVs) must be 50" wide or less, have a seat designed to be straddled, and the vehicle must be controlled by handlebars.
- An off-highway vehicle (OHV) is defined as any motorized vehicle designed for or capable of cross-country travel, including but not limited to 2WD and 4WD vehicles, motorcycles, dirt-bikes and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs).
- Virginia law requires:
 - ATVs over 50 cc's and purchased as new on or after July 1, 2006 must be titled.
 - All riders must wear safety helmets.
 - No one under 16 may operate an ATV, except that children between the ages of 12 and 16 may operate ATVs of no more than 90 cc's.
 - ATV use on public highways is prohibited, except to cross roads.
- On the GW&JNFs, operating any vehicle under the following conditions is prohibited:

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- Without a valid operator's license or learner's permit as required by the law of the state in which the vehicle is being operated.
- On any trail not specifically designated for motorized travel.
- Traveling cross-country by not staying on the roads and trails.
- Using any vehicle without a muffler and spark arrestor or one that exceeds a noise limit of 99 db at 20 inches at test rpm.
- Double riding unless the vehicle was designed and manufactured for double riding.
- Possessing any beverage which is defined as an alcoholic beverage by state law or while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- In a careless or reckless manner or in a manner that may endanger any person or property.
- No child under the age of 12 is allowed to operate an ATV or OHV on any of the designated motorized trails on the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests.
- A Motorized Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) is available on this website and in GW&JNFs offices. It provides locations and seasons of use for low maintenance (typically high clearance) Forest Service roads that can be enjoyed by OHV operators.

Operation of Vehicles

- State traffic laws apply to the national forest unless otherwise specified.
- When operating vehicles of any kind, do not damage the land or vegetation or disturb wildlife. Avoid driving on unpaved roads when they are wet or muddy.
- Park only in areas designated for parking.
- Do not block, restrict, or interfere with the use of roads or trails. Do not block gates.
- Obey area and trail restrictions for the use of off highway vehicles and all terrain vehicles. Off-road driving is prohibited on the George Washington & Jefferson National Forests.

Pets and Animals

- Pets must always be on a leash. In campgrounds, keep your pet within your designated campsite unless walking the pet. Leashes cannot exceed 6' in length.
- Clean up after your pet, removing all manure, pet food, and litter.
- Owners of barking and/or threatening dogs or other pets that disturb visitors may be asked to leave the recreation area.
- Pets (except guide dogs) are not allowed on beaches or in swimming areas.
- Saddle or pack animals are allowed in recreation sites only where authorized and posted on site. Saddle and pack animals are allowed in designated horse campgrounds.
- Virginia and West Virginia laws require that where horses belonging to different owners may come into contact with each other, they must be accompanied by a report of an official negative test for equine infectious anemia (Coggins report).

Property

- Protect natural areas. Do not carve, chop, cut, or damage any live trees.
- Do not abandon any property on national forest lands. Do not litter.

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- Enter recreation areas, roads, buildings, structures or enclosed areas in national forests only when they are expressly opened to the public.
- Native American sites, Civil War encampment sites, old cabins and rock furnaces, and other structures and artifacts associated with them, have historic or archaeological value. Do not damage or remove any historic or archaeological resource.

Public Behavior

- The following are prohibited:
 - Fighting.
 - Causing public inconvenience, annoyance or alarm by making unreason-ably loud noise.
 - Becoming intoxicated in public.
- Most day use recreation areas and some campgrounds prohibit the possession and use of alcohol. Details are posted on the recreation area's on-site information board.

Sanitation

- Put garbage in containers provided for this purpose, or take it with you.
- Garbage containers, where provided, are for use solely by visitors to the national forest.
- Wash food and personal items away from drinking water supplies. Use water faucets only for drawing water.
- Keep garbage, litter and foreign substances out of lakes, streams and other water. Do not disperse camp within 200' of open water.
- Use toilets properly. Do not throw garbage, litter, fish cleanings or other foreign substances in toilets and plumbing fixtures.

Shooting Ranges

- Ranges are open during daylight hours only - sunrise to sunset. The Blacksburg shooting range is closed on Mondays for cleaning.
- All firearms must be open and unloaded when entering and exiting the range.
- Use stationary paper targets only, except where clay targets are allowed. See range-specific information on this website to determine where clay targets and trap shooting are allowed. Provide your own targets. Don't use bottles, cans, household objects, or other breakable targets.
- Shooters under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult.
- No tracer or incendiary type ammunition is allowed.
- Shoot only at the target directly in line with your position. Never shoot across the range.
- Limit your time to one hour or less per shooter if others are waiting to use the range.

Swimming Beaches and Picnic Areas

- SWIM AT YOUR OWN RISK. There are no lifeguards on duty at the swimming areas.

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- Obey posted operating hours of day use areas. These are typically sunrise to sunset, but may vary by recreation site.
- At swimming beaches, water-play is allowed only within the designated swimming area outlined by buoys. Do not wade or swim outside of the buoys.
- Boats, including kayaks and canoes, are not allowed within the designated swimming area.
- No glass of any kind is allowed on the beach.
- No dogs or other pets (except service dogs) are permitted on the beach or in the swimming area.
- For food preparation, use picnic tables or lawn area. Do not prepare food on the beach.
- Use grills or fire rings provided for cooking. Do not light fires except in grills and fire rings.
- Please remove all leftovers and trash. Use trash receptacles if provided; otherwise, pack-it-in and pack-it-out.
- Alcohol is prohibited at swimming beaches and in many other day use areas. Please read the on-site information board to see if alcohol is prohibited within recreation site you are visiting.

Wilderness

- Motor vehicles and motorized and mechanized equipment, including bicycles, are prohibited in Congressionally Designated Wilderness.
- Wheelchairs are allowed in wilderness. As defined for use in wilderness, a wheelchair is a device designed solely for use by a mobility impaired person for locomotion, and that is suitable for use in an indoor pedestrian area.
- There is a group size limit of 10 people within designated wildernesses on the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests.
- Practice “Leave No Trace” (LNT) principles when visiting wilderness or general forest areas. LNT information is available at <http://www.lnt.org/>.