



Green Mountain *National Forest*

Caring for the Land and Serving People

Outdoor Safety-Fall/Winter

Autumn in the Green Mountain National Forest brings out many outdoor enthusiasts. Polar high pressure systems bring clear, bright skies, leaves are changing color, temperatures are cooler, and wildlife are more active as they prepare for winter. Special considerations should be kept in mind by all recreationists as they share the woods and streams of the National Forest.

Hunting:

Hunting is permitted throughout the Green Mountain National Forest, with the exception of areas in and around campgrounds and other developed recreation areas. Hunters are responsible for ensuring they are on National Forest land, which is generally marked by red blazes. Maps may be obtained at any National Forest office. Hunting seasons for 2012 are as follows:

| | | | |
|----------------------|---|----------------------------|--|
| Black Bear | 9/1 – 11/14 | Turkey | 5/1 – 5/31, Fall seasons vary by wildlife management units |
| Gray Squirrel | 9/1 – 12/31 | Turkey (Youth) | 4/28 – 4/29 |
| Ruffed Grouse | 9/29 – 12/31 | Raccoon | 10/13 – 12/31 |
| Hare, Rabbit | 9/24/11 – 3/11/12 & 9/29/12 – 3/10/13 | Deer (Youth) | 11/3 – 11/4 |
| Fox | 10/22/11 – 2/12/12 & 10/27/12 – 2/10/13 | Deer (Muzzleloader) | 12/1 – 12/9 |
| Crow | 3/14 – 4/30 & 8/16 – 10/29 | Deer (Rifle) | 11/10 – 11/25 |
| Moose | October, Dates Set Annually | Deer (Archery) | 10/6 – 10/28 & 12/1– 12/9 |
| Coyote | No Closed Season | Bobcat | 1/10 – 2/7 |

These are general season dates. Read the 2012 “Vermont Guide to Hunting, Fishing & Trapping,” issued by the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, for more information.

Weather:

Weather plays a more important role in autumn as temperatures are cooler and weather changes occur more frequently. Hypothermia, the rapid loss of body temperature which can lead to death, becomes a greater concern even when temperatures are well above freezing. This condition is promoted by cool, wet, windy weather and a depletion of the body’s energy reserves. Before leaving for your outdoor trip, obtain



U.S. Department of Agriculture

Green Mountain & Finger Lakes National Forests

231 North Main Street, Rutland, VT 05701



Forest Service

(802) 747-6700 Phone

(802) 747-6766 FAX

Website: www.fs.fed.us/r9/gmfl

r9_gmfl_webmaster@fs.fed.us

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the most up-to-date weather forecast and prepare your clothing and equipment accordingly. Remember that higher terrain may have more extreme weather. Rain in the valley may be snow on the ridgeline and an event which is a minor mishap in the summer can become a serious crisis in the fall. National Weather Service forecasts are available on the Internet at www.nws.noaa.gov/.

Clothing:

Dress in layers of clothing that will wick perspiration to the outside and which include wind and waterproof garments and headgear. The ability to add or remove layers of clothing helps to maintain a normal body temperature without undue overheating or chilling. Sturdy footwear is essential for hiking and hunting because the ground surface may be wet or even icy. During hunting seasons wear bright colors, with blaze orange being most visible. Carry dry socks and gloves in a plastic bag.

Trip Planning:

Pace yourself; don't try to fit too much into one day. Keep track of your time on the trail and give yourself approximately as much time to get back as you took to hike in.

Fire:

With autumn leaf fall and the accumulation of dead, dry herbaceous litter on the forest floor, fire danger will increase. Holdover drought conditions from summer, coupled with long spells of warm "Indian Summer" weather, may make conditions problematic. If there should be extreme fire danger and/or bans on campfires, signs will be posted at campgrounds, trailheads, and throughout the National Forest. As part of the "Leave No Trace" principles, the use of camp stoves is preferred over campfires wherever possible.

Roads:

Unless individual towns maintain them for residents, Green Mountain National Forest roads are not plowed of snow. An early heavy snowfall may close roads to cars or strand vehicles that attempt to pass through. Many Forest Roads become snowmobile trails in the winter and are closed to wheeled vehicles after December 15th.

Other Resources:

- Hiking Recreation Opportunity Guides
- Outdoor Safety Recreation Opportunity Guide
- Leave No Trace Recreation Opportunity Guide
- Vermont Digest: Hunting, Fishing & Trapping Laws – Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department
- www.nws.com – National Weather Service

For More Information:

Manchester Ranger District, 2538 Depot St., Manchester Center, VT 05255, (802) 362-2307

Middlebury Ranger District, 1007 Route 7 South, Middlebury, VT 05753, (802) 388-4362

Rochester Ranger District, 99 Ranger Rd., Rochester, VT 05767, (802) 767-4261

Rutland Supervisor Office, 231 North Main St., Rutland, VT 05701, (802) 747-6700

This Recreation Guide is Available in Large Print at Forest Service Information Centers

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