



FIREARMS USE

Sierra National Forest

Welcome to the Sierra National Forest. These public lands are enjoyed by tens of thousands of people each year in a variety of activities. Regulations for safe shooting are to provide for safety, protection, and enjoyment of all forest visitors and for the natural surroundings.

Definition

The California Penal Code 12001 defines firearms as "rifles, shotguns, revolvers, pistols or any other device designed to be used as a weapon from which a projectile is expelled by the force of any explosion or other form of combustion."

Where Can I Use My Firearm?

Visitors are free to scout the public lands under our jurisdiction to find suitable sites for plinking. It is your responsibility to be aware of the location of private property within forest boundaries and to not trespass. Permission from the private landowner must be obtained to cross private lands to access public lands. Refer to the Sierra National Forest recreation map to determine surrounding trails, roads, and campgrounds prior to shooting. Maps can be obtained at Forest Service offices and online at:

www.fs.usda.gov/visit/maps.

Things To Know

- Current Road Information. From late fall to spring most dirt roads are closed to vehicle travel. Obtain a motor vehicle use map from a local office.
- Safe Shooting Area: A good shooting area has legal access, an effective backstop that absorbs bullets without producing ricochets, an unobstructed view so that no one can wander into the line of fire without being seen, and no nearby buildings, especially campgrounds and camping areas.
- Targets: You must provide your own targets, preferably paper targets only. It is illegal to deface or destroy trees, signs, outbuildings, or other objects on federal lands.
- Clean up after yourself (and others if you can). Pack home and remove "ALL" target materials, shells, clay pigeons, and boxes.

Regulations

As a recreation shooter using the Federal Lands, it is your responsibility to conduct your sport safely. You must be aware of and comply with all state, county, and federal laws pertaining to the possession and transportation of firearms and to do it without damage to other forest users and to the natural environment.

The following is **PROHIBITED under Federal regulations**:

- ◆ Discharging a firearm or any other implement capable of taking human life, causing injury or damaging property *36CFR261.10(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.
- ◆ Shooting in an area that has been closed to the use of firearms.
- ◆ Damaging any natural feature or property of the United States. *36CFR261.9(a)* (includes trees).
- ◆ Firing any tracer bullet or incendiary ammunition. *36CFR261.5(b)*.
- ◆ Failing to dispose of all garbage (this includes spent cartridges and targets). *36CFR261.11(d)*.
- ◆ Using explosives, fireworks, or operating an engine without an appropriate spark arrestor. Exploding targets (binary explosives) falls under this prohibition. *36CFR261.52(b)* *Regional Order 15-01*.

Be Legal

All shooters are expected to follow the principles of firearms safety, and to obey California State laws on the use of firearms. California Firearms Laws Summary can be found on the web at: <https://oag.ca.gov/firearms>

Hunting

- ◆ **Know and follow** all California Department of Fish and Wildlife rules and regulations. You can check online at: www.wildlife.ca.gov for hunting and fishing information and related State regulations.
- ◆ **Your valid California hunting license and appropriate tags must be in possession** when hunting on National Forest lands and you should be prepared to show them upon request.
- ◆ **California Department of Fish and Wildlife**
1416 9th Street, 12th Floor,
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 445-0411
www.wildlife.ca.gov

Thank you for your help in making forest visits enjoyable and safe! Plan ahead by obtaining a National Forest map at one of the following offices:

Sierra NF Forest Supervisors Office

1600 Tollhouse Road
Clovis, CA 93611
(559)-297-0706

High Sierra Ranger District

29688 Auberry Road
Prather, CA 93651
(559)-855-5355

Bass Lake Ranger District

57003 Road 225
North Fork, CA 93651
(559)-877-2218

State Law Does Apply to National Forest Lands

A few of the related State Firearm s laws are listed below. **Your local Sheriff's Office** is the best place to ask questions regarding these laws. (CAPC=California Penal Code).

- ◆ **CAPC 25400: Concealed Carry.** It is illegal for any person to carry a handgun concealed upon his or her person or concealed in a vehicle without a license issued pursuant to CAPC 26150. A firearm locked in a motor vehicle's trunk or in a locked container carried in the vehicle other than in the utility or glove compartment is not considered concealed within the meaning of the CAPC 25400; neither is a firearm carried within a locked container directly to or from a motor vehicle for any lawful purpose (CAPC 25610).
 - ◇ The prohibition from carrying a concealed handgun does not apply to **licensed hunters or fishermen** while engaged in hunting or fishing, or while going to or returning from the hunting expedition (CAPC 25640). Notwithstanding this exception for hunters or fishermen, *these individuals may not carry, or transport loaded firearms* when going to or from the expedition. The unloaded firearms should be transported in the trunk of the vehicle or in a locked container other than the utility or glove compartment (CAPC 25610).
- ◆ **CAPC 25850: Open carry of a loaded firearm in public.** It is illegal to carry a loaded firearm on one's person or in a vehicle while in any public place, on any public street, or in any place where it is unlawful to discharge a firearm. (Note: does not apply to any person while hunting in an area where possession and hunting is otherwise lawful or while practice shooting at target ranges (CAPC 26005, 26040).
- ◆ **CAPC 26350: Open carry of an unloaded handgun in public.** It is generally illegal for any person to carry upon his or her person or in a vehicle, an exposed and unloaded handgun while in or on:
 - ◇ A public place or public street in an incorporated city or city and county; or
 - ◇ A public street in a *prohibited area* of an unincorporated city or city and county.
- ◆ **CAPC 30500-30530: Assault Weapons.** These penal code sections define the regulations that govern the possession, manufacture and use of assault weapons. These regulations and prohibitions apply on National Forest lands.