



STATE FOREST RULES

(REVISED 9/20/2021)

SECTION .1000 - STATE FORESTS



02 NCAC 60B .1001 SCOPE

(a) This Section coordinates the use of the North Carolina Forest Service's State Forests, State Recreational Forests, and Educational State Forests. In keeping with the North Carolina Forest Service's mission to protect, manage, and promote forest resources for the citizens of North Carolina, each State Forest, State Recreational Forest, and Education State Forest shall have a mission statement and shall be managed sustainably.

(b) All rules of this Section are effective within and upon all State Forests, State Recreational Forests, and Educational State Forests.

02 NCAC 60B .1002 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

As used in this Section the following terms have the following meanings:

- (1) "Bike Trail" means any road or trail maintained for bicycles.
- (2) "Bridle Trail" means any road or trail maintained for persons riding on horseback.
- (3) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.
- (4) "Department" means the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.
- (5) "Educational State Forest" refers to any State Forest property operated by the North Carolina Forest Service for the purpose of educating schoolchildren and the public.
- (6) "Emergency Aircraft" means aircraft operated by an emergency response agency.
- (7) "Forest Supervisor" means an employee of the North Carolina Forest Service who is a forest supervisor and provides supervision to other North Carolina Forest Service employees of the forest.
- (8) "Group" means a number of individuals related by a common factor, having structured organization, defined leadership, and activities directed by a charter or written bylaws.
- (9) "Hiking Trail" means any road or trail maintained for pedestrians.
- (10) "Multi-use Trail" means any road or trail maintained for use by the following: horseback riding, bicycle riding, and hiking or other foot traffic.
- (11) "Hunting" means the lawful hunting of game animals as defined by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission.
- (12) "Motorized vehicle" means any vehicle which is self-propelled, or which is pulled by a self-propelled vehicle, such as a camping trailer, fifth-wheel travel trailer, motor home, travel trailer, and truck camper. A self-propelled vehicle shall include passenger automobiles, mopeds, off-road vehicles (ORV), golf carts, motorcycles, mini-bikes, all-terrain vehicles, 2 or 3 wheeled personal transporters, battery assisted bicycles (E-Bikes), and go-carts. "Motorized vehicle" does not include accommodations made in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Chapter 168A of the North Carolina General Statutes.
- (13) "Registered Motor Vehicle" is any vehicle that has been legally registered and tagged from a state department of motor vehicles or department of transportation.
- (14) "Permit" means any written license issued by or under the authority of the North Carolina Forest Service or Department permitting the performance of a specified act or acts.
- (15) "Permittee" means any person, corporation, company, or association in possession of a valid permit.
- (16) "Person" means any individual, firm, partnership, corporation, company, association, public or private institution, political subdivision, or government agency.
- (17) "Public building" means a climate-controlled structure primarily for human habitation or use, and does not include barns, shelters, or sheds.
- (18) "Public nudity" means a person's intentional failure to cover with an opaque covering the person's genitals, pubic area, anal area, or areola on female breasts except for breastfeeding while in a public place.
- (19) "State Recreational Forest" is a State Forest designation that refers to any State Forest property operated by the North Carolina Forest Service primarily for natural resource preservation, scenic enjoyment and recreational purposes, while also managing for the purposes of education, demonstration, training, forest research, wildlife habitat, and forest products, including the DuPont State Forest.
- (20) "Rock climbing" means traversing a rock face that is steep enough to require the use of hands and feet to get up or down.
- (21) "State Forest" means any land owned by the State of North Carolina, under the jurisdiction of the North Carolina Forest Service, that is managed for the purposes of education, demonstration, training, forest research, wildlife habitat, forest products and recreation.

02 NCAC 60B .1003 PERMITS

- (a) Any violation of a permit constitutes grounds for its revocation by the Department. In case of a permit revocation the permit holder shall forfeit to the Department all monies paid for the permit. Furthermore, the Department shall consider the permit holder, together with the permit holder's agents and employees who violated such terms, jointly and severally liable to the Department for all damages suffered in excess of money so forfeited. However, neither the forfeiture of such money, nor the recovery of such damages, relieves such persons from statutory punishment for any violation of a State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest rule.
- (b) Applications for permits shall be submitted to the North Carolina Forest Service's office during business hours. Applications may be found at <https://ncforests.service.gov/>. The permit application shall include the company or organization name, address, contact with title, phone number, email address, description of the activity or the event with the location to be permitted, access areas to be used, timeframe of the activity or event, estimated number of participants, liability insurance, and medical plan. Applications shall be approved by the Forest Supervisor or designee in advance of the act permitted.
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02 NCAC 60B.1004 ROCK OR CLIFF CLIMBING AND RAPPELLING

A person shall not engage in rock climbing, cliff climbing, or rappelling within the boundaries of a State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest except at designated areas and only after obtaining a permit.

02 NCAC 60B.1005 BATHING OR SWIMMING

- (a) A person shall not dive, jump, or slide from any waterfalls or rocks or overhangs into any body of water within any State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest.
- (b) Wading, bathing, and swimming is allowed at a person's own risk in any body of water in and upon any State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest, except such activities are prohibited within 300 feet upstream of the top of a waterfall or areas designated as non-swimming.
- (c) Public nudity is prohibited in and upon all State Forest, State Recreational Forest, and Educational State Forest lands or waters. This Rule does not apply to the enclosed portions of bathhouses, restrooms, tents, and recreational vehicles.
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02 NCAC 60B.1006 HUNTING

- (a) Hunting in and upon all State Forests, State Recreational Forests, and Educational State Forests shall be by permit or license only, or a combination thereof, depending on the requirements of the individual State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest. Interested parties shall contact the State Forest office, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest in question. The contact and additional information for each State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest office can be found at <https://www.ncforests.service.gov/>.
- (b) A person hunting in and upon State Forests, State Recreational Forests, or Educational State Forests under the Game Lands Program shall first obtain a license from a North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission designated licensing agent and shall obey all State hunting laws set forth in Chapter 113 of the North Carolina General Statutes and rules in effect for the applicable Game Land, pursuant to 15A NCAC 10.
- (c) For State Forests, State Recreational Forests, and Educational State Forests that are not in the Game Lands Program, hunting shall be allowed only if a person first obtains a permit from the Forest Supervisor's office and complies with all State hunting laws and rules in effect, including Chapter 113 of the North Carolina General Statutes and 15A NCAC 10.
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02 NCAC 60B .1007 FISHING

Except in areas designated as non-fishing, a person may fish in any waters in State Forests, State Recreational Forests, or Educational State Forests provided the person obeys all State fishing laws as set forth in Chapter 113 of the North Carolina General Statutes and 15A NCAC 10.

02 NCAC 60B .1008 ANIMALS AT LARGE

- (a) No person shall have any dog, cat, or other pet upon a State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest unless the animal is on a physical leash and under the control of the owner or person possessing the animal.
- (b) Hunting dogs used in accordance with North Carolina Wildlife Commission Game Land Rules pertaining to State Forests pursuant to 15A NCAC 10, shall be exempt from Paragraph (a) of this Rule.
- (c) No dog, cat, or other pet shall be allowed to enter any public building on State Forests, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest, or designated swimming areas, except service animals for persons with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Chapter 168 of the North Carolina General Statutes.

(d) Any owned animal or pet causing a threat or nuisance as determined on a case-by-case basis within any State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest shall be removed.

02 NCAC 60B .1009 BOATING

(a) Except in areas designated as non-boating, boats, canoes, kayaks, and other watercraft, including flotation devices, shall be allowed on the waters of State Forests, State Recreational Forests, and Educational State Forests, provided they are operated or propelled by means of oars, paddles, or electric trolling motors.

(b) Boats and other watercraft with gas motors attached are prohibited on any waters of State Forests, State Recreational Forests, and Educational State Forests, except for use by rescue squads, diving teams, or similar organizations conducting training or emergency operations or by the Department or the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission.

02 NCAC 60B .1010 CAMPING

a) No person shall spend the night or maintain a camp in a State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest, except in designated areas or under permit.

b) A person camping in a designated area shall not stay more than one 24-hour period without a valid permit.

02 NCAC 60B .1011 SPORTS AND GAMES

No games or athletic contests shall be allowed in a State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest, except in designated places or under permit.

02 NCAC 60B .1012 HORSES

(a) No person shall use, ride, or drive a horse except to, from, or along a designated bridle path, multi-use trail designated for horses, or designated watering point.

(b) Each person bringing a horse in or upon any State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest shall remove from designated parking areas, sidewalks, covered bridges, paved surfaces, and wooden surfaces all residues, including manure, generated by his or her horse.

(c) Anytime a horse is constrained in a State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest, it shall be done in a manner so as to prevent damage to trees or plants nearby.

(d) Horses shall be steered or led across rivers and streams using preexisting crossings along designated trails.

(e) Horses shall not be allowed to wade in lakes.

(f) A person bringing a horse in or upon any State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest shall possess valid negative Equine Infectious Anemia test, also known as a Coggins test for each horse and make them available for inspection upon request by North Carolina Forest Service employees or employees of the Department.

(g) No horse-drawn carts, carriages, or other apparatus shall be allowed in or upon State Forests, State Recreational Forests, or Educational State Forests except by permit.

02 NCAC 60B .1013 BICYCLES

(a) No person shall use or ride a bicycle in or upon State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest grounds except on a road or trail authorized for public use by motor vehicles or designated as a bike trail or multi-use trail.

(b) Persons riding bicycles shall cross rivers and streams using preexisting crossings along designated trails.

(c) Motorized bicycles or battery assisted bicycles, also known as E-Bikes, are allowed only on motor vehicle roads open to public vehicular traffic and not allowed on bike trails, bridle trails, hiking trails, or multiuse trails.

02 NCAC 60B .1014 SKATES, BLADES AND BOARDS

No person shall use or ride roller skates, in-line skates, roller blades, skateboards, or any similar device in or upon any State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest.

02 NCAC 60B .1015 EXPLOSIVES

No person shall carry or possess any explosives or explosive substances including fireworks in or upon State Forests, State Recreational Forests, or Educational State Forests.

02 NCAC 60B .1017 FIRES AND GRILLS

- (a) No person shall build or start a fire in any area of a State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest, unless that area is designated for such purpose.
- (b) Tree planters and logging crews may build warming fires if they obtain a permit and confine the fire to an area designated for such purpose.
- (c) Prescribed burning conducted by the North Carolina Forest Service or approved by the North Carolina Forest Service pursuant to G.S. 106-966 is exempt from this Rule.
- (d) Except in designated areas, cooking fires, grills, ovens, stoves, burners, or other devices that ignite natural gas or other petroleum products are prohibited. Likewise, the burning of wood, charcoal or paper is also prohibited except in designated areas.
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02 NCAC 60B .1018 DISORDERLY CONDUCT

- (a) No person visiting a State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest shall disobey a lawful order of a Forest Ranger, law enforcement officer, or any other Department official or endanger him or herself or endanger or disrupt others, as defined in G.S. 14-288.4 and G.S. 14-132.
- (b) No person shall use, walk, or run on or along a road or trail that is designated closed for maintenance, tree removal or any other purpose, nor shall he or she enter an area that is designated "No Entry," "Do Not Enter," or "Authorized Personnel Only," except for North Carolina Forest Service employees, contractors working under the direction of the North Carolina Forest Service, volunteers under the direction of the North Carolina Forest Service, and individuals or groups under permit.
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02 NCAC 60B .1019 INTOXICATING BEVERAGES AND DRUGS

- (a) No person shall possess, consume, use, or be under the influence of any malt beverage, fortified wine, unfortified wine or spirituous liquor as defined in G.S. 18B-101, while in or upon a State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest.
- (b) No person shall possess, consume, use, or be under the influence of any non-prescribed controlled substance as defined in G.S. 90-87, including marijuana, while in or upon a State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest.
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02 NCAC 60B .1020 DAMAGE TO BUILDINGS, STRUCTURES AND SIGNS

No person shall injure, deface, disturb, destroy, or disfigure any State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest building, structure, sign, fence, vehicle, machine, equipment, road, parking lot, or any improvements.

02 NCAC 60B .1021 COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES

- (a) No person shall sell or offer for sale, hire or lease, any object or merchandise, property, privilege, service or any other thing, or engage in any business in or upon a State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest except under permit.
- (b) Sales by the Department or sales that are contracted by the Department or by an entity that is under agreement with the Department are exempt from this Rule.
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02 NCAC 60B .1022 NOISE REGULATIONS

- (a) The production or emission of noises, speech, music, or other sound, that is unreasonably loud or disturbing in or upon a State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest by a person or animal under the control of a person is prohibited.
- (b) For the purposes of this Rule, the following definitions apply.
- (1) "Unreasonably loud" means a noise which is incompatible with the time and location where created to the extent that it creates an actual or imminent interference with peace, order, or calm of the area, or which is obnoxious to, or unreasonably disturbing to, a person whose residence, work, or commercial enterprise is within a reasonable proximity to the point, place, or person from whom the noise is emanating, or emanated, and the noise is of such a kind, nature, duration, or extent that a reasonable person would consider the noise to be unreasonably loud or disturbing.
 - (2) "Disturbing" means a noise which is perceived by a person of reasonable and ordinary firmness and sensibilities as interrupting the normal peace, order, and calm of such person, or persons, or tending to annoy, disturb, or frighten such persons in such proximity to the point, place, or person from whom the noise is emanating, or emanated.

02 NCAC 60B.1023 MEETINGS AND EXHIBITIONS

A person, except for Department employees in performance of official duties, shall not hold any meetings or exhibitions, perform any ceremony, or make any speech on a State Forest, State recreational forest, or Educational State Forest without a permit.

02 NCAC 60B .1024 ALMS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

A person shall not solicit contributions for any purpose in or upon a State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest, unless permitted by the Department and such contributions are used to benefit the State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest.

02 NCAC 60B .1025 AVIATION

(a) Except as provided in Paragraphs (b) and (c) of this Rule, a person shall not voluntarily bring, land, or cause to descend or alight, ascend, or take off within or upon any State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest any airplane, flying machine, balloon, parachute, glider, hang glider, unmanned aerial vehicle ("UAV"), drones, or other apparatus for aviation. "Voluntarily" for this Rule means anything other than a forced landing.

(b) Where aviation activities are part of the planned forest activities or military, law enforcement, or rescue training, a permit for aviation use shall be required.

(c) North Carolina Forest Service and emergency aircraft are exempt from this Rule.

02 NCAC 60B .1026 EXPULSION

For violation of any rule in this Subchapter, Department law enforcement officers, other sworn law enforcement, or Forest Rangers shall withdraw the right of the violator to remain on a State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest, and shall verbally direct the violator to leave the premises. If the violator does not or is not able to comply, then the violator shall be escorted off the premises.

02 NCAC 60B .1027 MOTORIZED VEHICLES

(a) Motorized vehicles shall not be operated in or upon a State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest hiking trail, bike trail, bridle trail, multi-use trail, fire trail, service road, or any part of the forest not designated for such purposes, except by permit.

(b) Emergency responders and construction or service vendors are exempt from Paragraph (a) of this Rule.

(c) Unless otherwise posted, the speed limit is 20 miles per hour on graveled forest roads and 10 miles per hour on dirt forest roads.

02 NCAC 60B.1028 FLOWERS, PLANTS, MINERALS, ETC.

(a) A person shall not remove, destroy, cut down, scar, mutilate, take, gather, or injure any tree, flower, artifact, fern, shrub, rock, fungi, or other plant or mineral in or upon any State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest.

(b) A person shall not collect plants, animals, minerals, fungi, or other artifacts from any State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest without first having obtained a permit from the Forest Supervisor or designee.

(c) No person shall use a metal detector on a State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest without a permit.

02 NCAC 60B .1029 TRASH AND DEBRIS

(a) A person shall not deposit paper or plastic products, bottles, cans, or any other refuse, or debris in or upon a State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest except in receptacles designated for the materials. Where trash receptacles are not provided, persons shall take their trash out of the forest.

(b) No one shall dispose of household or business trash or garbage in any State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest.

02 NCAC 60B .1030 FEES AND CHARGES

- (a) The required admission fees or related activity fees at State Forests, State Recreational Forests, and Educational State Forests, including permits, facility use, special events, or the removal of firewood or vegetative material, may be obtained online at <https://www.ncforestservice.gov/> or by contacting the office of each State Forest. The contact information for each State Forest, State Recreational Forest, and Educational State Forest may be found online at <https://www.ncforestservice.gov/>.
 - (b) Payment of the required fees shall be a prerequisite for the use of the public service facility or convenience provided.
 - (c) The number of persons camping at a particular site may be limited by the forest supervisor or designee depending upon the size of the group and the size and nature of the campsite.
 - (d) Reservations shall be canceled 30 days prior to the event in order to receive a refund. Activity fees are non-refundable.
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02 NCAC 60B .1031 HOURS OF OPERATION

- (a) Hours of operation for each State Forest, State Recreational Forest, and Educational State Forest shall be posted at the forest entrance, the forest office, and on the North Carolina Forest Service's website at <https://www.ncforestservice.gov/>. Hours are subject to change depending on seasonal, emergency, and natural resource protection by the Forest Supervisor or designee.
 - (b) No person except Department employees and authorized persons shall be allowed in or upon State Forests, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest between closing and opening hours except in designated areas or under permit.
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02 NCAC 60B .1032 ENFORCEMENT

Departmental law enforcement officers, other sworn law enforcement, and Forest Rangers may enforce the rules of this Section.

02 NCAC 60B .1033 PARKING

- (a) There shall be no parking in State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest areas designated as "No Parking" and "Authorized Vehicles Only." Additionally:
 - (1) vehicles shall be parked in areas designated for that vehicle type; and
 - (2) visitors shall not park a vehicle, trailer, or other object in a manner that blocks, or restricts access, ingress, or egress to a parking area, road, gate, or access point.
 - (b) Vehicles, trailers, or other objects blocking or restricting emergency or Department personnel or visitors' access, ingress, or egress to any parking area, road, gate, or access point shall be removed at the owners' expense and without notice.
 - (c) Vehicles parked in areas not designated for that vehicle type or in areas designated as "No Parking" or "Authorized Vehicles Only" shall be removed at the owners' expense and without notice.
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02 NCAC 60B .1034 ABANDONED PROPERTY

Any property left unattended for a period of 24 hours or more on a State Forest, State Recreational Forest, or Educational State Forest shall be considered abandoned property and shall be subject to removal at the owner's expense, or in the case ownership cannot be established, disposed of by the Department without notice.

02 NCAC 60B .1035 MINORS

Parents, guardians, and custodians, of minor children shall ensure the minor comply with all North Carolina Forest Service rules.

02 NCAC 60B .1036 FIREARMS

All applicable federal, State, and local laws regarding firearms shall apply in or upon State Forests, State Recreational Forests, and Educational State Forests.