

6 NYCRR Part 51: Public Use of Wildlife Management Areas (Effective 1/1/2022)

Repeal of 6 NYCRR Parts 51, 61, 75 and 84 and adoption of a new 6 NYCRR Part 51.

Parts 51, 61, 75 and 84 are repealed. A new Part 51 is added as follows:

§51.0 Applicability and Definitions

(a) Except as otherwise provided, the provisions of this Part shall apply to all persons entering upon or using State lands under the Department's jurisdiction that are administered by the Division of Fish and Wildlife, including but not limited to wildlife management areas, fish and wildlife management areas, and the following unique areas and multiple use areas: Bog Brook Unique Area, Seward's Island Unique Area, Junius Ponds Unique Area, Harwood Lake Multiple Use Area, and Carlton Hill Multiple Use Area. Additional area-specific regulations may also apply and will supersede the general regulations found in this Part in case of conflict.

(b) Definitions.

1. *Bicycle* shall mean a non-motorized vehicle with two or more wheels, a steering handle, a seat, or seats and is propelled solely by muscle power and/or gravity.

2. *Camping* shall mean using any form of temporary shelter, including but not limited to a tent, motor home, travel trailer, mobile home, or any vehicle used for overnight shelter or sleeping.

3. *Department* means the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

4. *Motorized vehicle* shall mean a device for transporting persons, supplies or material incorporating a motor or an engine of any type for propulsion, and with wheels, tracks, skids, skis, air cushion or other contrivance for traveling on or adjacent to land, water or ice. It shall include such vehicles as automobiles, trucks, jeeps, off-road vehicles, all-terrain vehicles, utility vehicles, golf carts, motorcycles, electric powered bicycles (e-bikes), snowmobiles, snowcats, bulldozers and other earth-moving equipment.

5. *Motorized equipment* shall mean machines not designed for transporting people, supplies or material, or for earth moving but incorporating a motor, engine or other nonliving power source to accomplish a task, such as, but not limited to, chain saws, brush saws, rotary or other mowers, rock drills, cement mixers, and generators.

6. *Off-road* shall mean on a trail, road or terrain other than a public road or parking area.

7. *Regional Manager* shall mean the Regional Wildlife Manager.

8. *Written Permission* shall mean a written permit (including but not limited to a Temporary Revocable Permit for Use of State Lands, abbreviated as TRP) issued at the sole discretion of the Department and signed by the Regional Manager authorizing temporary public use of applicable lands pursuant to the conditions cited in the document. Permits will only be issued for activities in compliance with all constitutional, statutory, and regulatory requirements.

9. *Watercraft* includes every motorized or non-motorized boat or vehicle capable of being used or operated as a means of transportation or recreation in or on water.

§51.1 Hunting, trapping and fishing

Hunting, trapping and fishing are permitted on wildlife management areas and other lands subject to Subchapter A of this Part, except as specifically restricted by posted notice.

§51.2 Boating

(a) No person shall operate a watercraft under mechanical power other than electric motor, except as specifically permitted by posted notice or under written permit by the Department.

(b) No person shall moor, anchor or store a boat overnight.

(c) No person shall transport or cause to be transported any aquatic invasive species.

1. No person shall launch, or attempt to launch a watercraft into any waterbody, or depart from a waterbody with any plant or animal, or parts thereof, visible to the human eye, in, on, or attached to any part of the watercraft, including live wells and bilges, the motor, rudder, anchor, or other appurtenances; any equipment or gear; or the trailer or any other device used to transport or launch a watercraft that may come into contact with the water, except under the written permission of the Regional Manager.

2. No person shall launch, or attempt to launch a watercraft into any waterbody, or depart from such waterbody without draining the watercraft, including bilge areas, live wells, bait wells, and ballast tanks, except under the written permission of the Regional Manager.

3. Exceptions.

The provisions of Part 51.2 shall not apply to:

- i. Plants not otherwise defined in law or regulation as invasive species or suspected of being or becoming invasive affixed to or transported in watercraft for use as camouflage for hunting or wildlife viewing purposes.
- ii. Bait, including baitfish, that can legally be used on a waterbody and is possessed consistent with Department regulations.
- iii. Legally taken game as defined in section 11-0103(2) of Environmental Conservation Law or fish as defined in section 11-0103(1)(a).

§51.3 Camping

No person shall camp on lands subject to this Part except under the written permission of the Regional Manager.

§51.4 Roads, trails and parking areas

(a) No person shall operate a bicycle or motorized vehicle on roads posted by the Department against such uses.

(b) No person shall operate a motorcycle, motor scooter, moped, e-bike, snowmobile or any other motorized vehicle off-road except as specifically permitted by posted notice or as otherwise permitted in writing by the Regional Manager.

(c) No person shall operate a motorized vehicle on any road, trail or parking area maintained by the Department at a speed in excess of 25 miles per hour.

(d) Where required by posted notice, parking shall be confined to designated parking areas or spaces

(e) No person shall operate a bicycle or ride, drive, or lead a horse on lands subject to this Part except:

1. on roads and parking areas, and those trails designated and posted by the Department as open to the activity. ;
2. on other areas posted or otherwise designated as open; or
3. with written permission of the Regional Manager.

(f) No person shall possess or operate a snowmobile except:

1. on routes designated and posted by the Department ; and
2. following the close of the regular big game hunting season until March 31 of the following year; and

3. when the route is covered with a minimum of three inches of snow and/or ice.

§51.5 Reserved.

§51.6 Structures

(a) No person shall erect, construct, occupy or maintain a permanent structure, blind, stand or platform without the written permission of the Regional Manager.

(b) No person shall erect, construct, occupy or maintain any structure that is affixed to a tree by nails, screws, or other means that injure or damage the tree without the written permission of the Regional Manager.

§51.7 Dogs

Pursuant to Environmental Conservation Law sections 11-0529 and 11-0923, no owner or trainer of a dog shall allow that dog to enter lands subject to this Part without being leashed and under immediate physical control at all times except:

1. dogs may be allowed off-leash during open hunting seasons when legally used for hunting and accompanied by an appropriately licensed hunter and under the control of the hunter or handler;
2. when being legally trained for hunting in a designated dog training area or during designated training seasons as governed by Part 66 of this Chapter and accompanied by an appropriately licensed hunter;
3. when participating in a licensed field trial permitted in writing by the Regional Manager, or;
4. with written permission of the Regional Manager.

§51.8 General provisions

(a) Fires

- (1) No person shall ignite or maintain a fire except for cooking or warmth.
- (2) No wood, except from dead and down trees, shall be used for fuel
- (3) No person shall ignite a fire until all flammable material surrounding it has been removed to the extent necessary to prevent its spread.
- (4) No person shall leave a fire unattended.

- (b) No person shall swim in waters subject to this Part.
- (c) No person shall possess or operate any motorized equipment while afield without the written permission of the Department except for equipment commonly employed in hunting, trapping, or fishing when being used for these activities. These exceptions are limited to:
1. Drills or augers used for ice fishing.
 2. Battery-powered drills used for setting traps.
 3. Any motorized decoys legally permitted for hunting.
- (d) No person shall deface, remove, cut or willfully damage, destroy or otherwise injure in any manner whatsoever any tree, flower, shrub, fern, moss, fungus or other plant organism, or other living or dead vegetation of any kind, found or growing on State lands, except for immediate personal consumption, or with the written permission of the Regional Manager.
1. No person shall erect, construct, maintain, occupy or use any tree stand that is used, operated, accessed or reached by methods or means which injure or damage a tree, and no person shall gain access to any structure in a tree by means that injure or damage the tree.
- (e) No person shall deface, remove, destroy or otherwise injure in any manner whatsoever any rock, soil, fossil or mineral except under written permit from the Department.
- (f) No person shall deface, remove, or damage, destroy or otherwise injure in any manner whatsoever any object of archaeological or paleontological interest found on State land, except under written permit from the Department and the Commissioner of Education, pursuant to section 233 of the Education Law.
1. No person shall use or possess a metal detector afield, except under written permit from the Department. Licensed surveyors using a metal detector to locate survey markers shall not be prohibited.
- (g) All personal property shall be removed from the area at the time of leaving the area. No person shall erect, construct, install, maintain, store, discard or abandon any structure or any other property or subsequently use such structure or property, except under the written permission of the Regional Manager. This subdivision shall not apply to:
1. a legally placed trap or appurtenance that is placed and used during the appropriate trapping season;
 2. a tree stand or hunting blind that does not injure a tree, is properly marked or tagged with the owner's name and address or valid hunting license identification number and is placed and used for the duration of the big game season, migratory gamebird season or turkey season; or
 3. a wildlife viewing blind that is placed for a duration not to exceed ten (10) days in one location per calendar year, does not injure a tree, and is properly

marked with the owner's name and address or valid hunting or fishing license identification number.

- (h) No person shall enter, remain upon, or use any access road, truck trail, road, trail, facility or any other area that is posted or designated by the Department as closed to public use, except under the written permission of the Regional Manager.
- (i) No person shall discard or deposit any trash, waste or litter on lands or waters, except in waste receptacles provided for such purpose.
- (j) No person shall use any lands for agricultural purposes, including but not limited to growing crops or grazing by domestic animals, except with the written permission of the Department.
- (k) No person under 21 years of age shall possess alcoholic beverages, unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. All persons who possess alcoholic beverages must produce adequate identification and proof of age upon demand of any peace or police officer.
- (l) No person shall fail to comply with the instructions contained on a sign of the Department.
- (m) No person shall remove, deface, mutilate or destroy any Department sign, structure, barrier or object.
- (n) No person shall:
 - 1. intentionally obstruct, prevent or attempt to prevent any officers or employees of the Department from performing their legal duties, by means of intimidation, physical force, interference or disobedience of any lawful order or by means of any independently unlawful act;
 - 2. engage in any activity which violates the Penal Law.
- (o) No person shall discharge firearms unless legally engaged in the act of hunting or trapping.
 - 1. Except that target shooting may occur in areas designated and posted by the Department as open to such use, and;
 - 2. No person shall possess or use breakable targets, including but not limited to clay pigeons, and
 - 3. No person shall target shoot at objects other than paper targets with a safe and sufficient earthen or other suitable backstop.

- (p) No person shall possess paint balls or paint ball guns, and no person shall sponsor, conduct or participate in any activities associated with the discharging of paint balls.
- (q) No person shall sponsor, conduct or participate in any organized event of more than twenty people without the written authorization of the Regional Manager. Examples of organized events include but are not limited to sponsored hikes; archery and fishing tournaments; dog trials or training events; bicycle, horse and orienteering races, runs, races, rides or competitions; encampments; re-enactments. weddings, funerals and other ceremonies.
- (r) No person shall sponsor, conduct or participate in any research project except under written permit from the Department. Examples of research include, but are not limited to, population studies, collection of scientific samples, placement of scientific instruments, seismic exploration and archaeological studies. This subdivision shall not apply to observation-only population data collection such as, but not limited to, Audubon's Christmas Bird Count, the USGS Breeding Bird Survey and Cornell Lab of Ornithology's e-Bird database or other studies where animals or specimens are not caught or handled; nor shall it apply to any other research exempted by the Department in writing on a case by case basis.
- (s) No person shall sponsor, conduct or participate in: advertising, weddings, funerals, commercial film making activities or film making activities that exclude other public use of the area, and other similar events, except under the written permission of the Regional Manager.
- (t) No person shall conduct any business, buy, sell, offer or expose for sale, hire, lease, or vend any article or merchandise of any kind without a written permit from the Department. This subdivision shall not apply to recreational activities undertaken in connection with the services of a licensed outdoor guide, to landscape or wildlife photography (products not offered for sale on-site), or wildlife observation activities that do not otherwise violate any subdivisions in this Part.

§51.9 Severability

If a provision of this Part or its application to any person or circumstance is determined to be contrary to law by a court of competent jurisdiction, such determination shall not affect or impair the validity of the other provisions of this Part or the application to other persons and circumstances.