

# NEW MEXICO STATE LAND OFFICE

## HUNTER CAMPING POLICY

Hunting Season 2023-2024

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### Purpose

The goal of the Hunter Camping policy is to provide guidance on the use of established camp sites and dispersed camping areas on New Mexico state trust land to allow hunters increased access to areas rich in wildlife and natural beauty. This policy describes the New Mexico State Land Office (NMSLO) policy regarding the stipulations and requirements for licensed hunters to camp on state trust lands pursuant to NMSLO's agreement with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF).

### Background

The New Mexico State Land Office and New Mexico Game Commission signed an agreement that provides access to 8.8 million acres of state trust land for hunters and anglers who hold a valid NMDGF license. Under this agreement, the Commissioner of Public Lands (Commissioner) may create programs to expand camping opportunities in areas of the state designated by the Commissioner. For example, the NMSLO developed the White Peak Dispersed Camping Program to enable dispersed camping in White Peak (GMU 48; Mora and Colfax counties). This Program resulted from recommendations received from NMSLO working groups comprised of sportspeople, agriculture lessees, and NMDGF.

### Applicability

This policy only authorizes camping by holders of a valid NMDGF hunting license during the dates for which their license is valid, inclusive of the 14-day advanced scouting period.

### Policy

- A. Camping and parking are allowed only in those areas indicated as established campsites or dispersed camping areas in the NMDGF easement and on NMSLO maps.
- B. All campers must also comply with the terms and conditions of:
  - 1. their NMDGF license; and
  - 2. the NMDGF New Mexico Hunting Rules & Info publication, including the pages regarding state trust land, found at:  
<http://www.wildlife.state.nm.us/home/publications>.
- C. Campers are required to adhere to all applicable laws and regulations, including but not limited to those dealing with plant and animal species and cultural resources.
- D. Campers must adhere to NMSLO rules regarding motorized traffic and only operate motorized vehicles, including Off Road Vehicles, on established roads. Established roads are often rough and primitive, requiring high clearance. Many areas are not suitable for bringing a trailer. For questions about access, please call the NMSLO at (505) 827-5760 or the NMDGF at (505) 476-8000.
- E. Access problems or other issues of concern should be reported through the NMSLO's Multiple-Use Incident Reporting Form that can be downloaded from our website at <https://bit.ly/MUIRform>. Emergencies should be reported to 911.

- F. Campers should leave no trace and respect private property. “Pack it In, Pack it Out” –Trash MUST be packed out and disposed of properly. Permittee is required to protect State Trust Land from environmental degradation. All trash must be hauled out of State Trust Land, not buried or burned. This includes the proper disposal of human waste: dig a hole (or ‘cat hole’) 6 to 8 inches deep and at least 300 feet from any water source to bury human waste; remove used toilet paper from State Trust Land; and if sanitary portable toilet systems are used, they are acceptable provided all waste is removed from the area and disposed of properly. For more information visit <https://lnt.org/why/7-principles/>
- G. Campers are allowed up to 14 consecutive days of camping for the license term of their permitted hunt.

## **Campfires**

- A. Campfires are prohibited except as currently permitted by the New Mexico State Forester. Campfires are only permitted in designated camping areas or dispersed camping areas with a current and valid NM hunting license. The Commissioner reserves the right to impose restrictions more limiting, as warranted, than those from the State Forester. It is the hunter’s responsibility to obtain current information and to comply with any restrictions in place. Information is available by accessing <https://www.emnrd.nm.gov/sfd/>, <http://www.nmfireinfo.com/fire-restrictions/> or by calling the Fire Restrictions Hotline at 1-877-864-6985. Should the Commissioner impose additional restrictions, they will be posted online at [www.nmstatelands.org](http://www.nmstatelands.org).
- B. If campfire restrictions are not in place, campers must still take care to prevent forest fires. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - 1. never leaving a campfire or other heat source unattended and ensuring campfires are dead out and cold to the touch before leaving the area. Use the “drown, stir and feel” method: drown the fire with water, then stir around the fire area with your shovel to wet any remaining embers and ash;
  - 2. having a shovel and water available;
  - 3. maintaining a distance of five feet cleared to bare soil and free of any overhead flammable materials in all directions around the campfire; and
  - 4. keeping your campfire small.
- C. The use of a propane fire pit or fire pan or other device with a spark arrestor is encouraged. Campers may pack in fire wood or may use downed wood but may not cut standing trees, even if those trees are dead. If campers observe a fire that has spread out of control, whether or not they started that fire, they must immediately call 911 and then report the fire to the NMSLO.

## Prohibited Activities

The following are prohibited activities:

1. Disturbing, dislodging, damaging, destroying or removing native plants, standing timber wood products, flowers, growing crops, or any other plant life other than pinon nuts gathered non-commercially;
2. disturbing, dislodging, damaging, defacing, destroying or removing historical, archaeological, paleontological or cultural sites, or artifacts;
3. disturbing, dislodging, defacing, damaging or destroying any improvement, fixture, item, object, or thing placed or located in, under, or upon the land;
4. driving off of established roads;
5. bringing unrestrained (unleashed) animals to state trust lands;
6. discarding refuse, waste, or litter of any kind;
7. igniting fireworks;
8. conducting any type of commercial operation;
9. violating any applicable law, statute, regulation, ordinance, or rule;
10. fishing or hunting without a valid New Mexico license;
11. trapping;
12. mineral exploration, development, or mining, or collecting valuable rocks or minerals; and
13. interfering with the authorized activities of other land users.

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Stephanie Garcia Richard  
Commissioner of Public Lands

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