



2018 Bear Hunt Rules & Regulations

Public bear hunting by shotgun is permitted on the Refuge on hunting dates listed below and in hunting areas shown on the map. A print-out of your Refuge Bear Hunt permit, a compass, and a valid Virginia hunting license and tags shall be carried when hunting on the Refuge. Purchasing the permit means you agree to abide by all terms and conditions of that permit including all federal and state applicable laws, rules, regulations, maps, and signs. Each hunter must have their own permit. Violations of regulations will result in the cancellation of your hunt permit and may lead to prosecution in Federal Court.

Hunters utilizing the refuge are subject to inspections of permits, licenses, equipment, bag limits, vehicles and their contents during compliance checks by Refuge Officers, State Wildlife Officers, and other state/local law enforcement officers. Inspections are to ensure compliance of refuge regulations and the safety of hunters, staff, and wildlife.

SPECIAL NOTICE: BEAR HUNT DAYS CO-INCIDE WITH REFUGE DEER HUNT DAYS. PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO LEGAL HUNT ZONES FOR THE BEAR HUNT.

SEASON AND BAG LIMITS

November 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 2018
Permittee hunts maximum 6 days.

Bag Limit: One bear per hunter per season statewide; must be greater than 100 lbs. No sows with cubs.

SCOUTING

A scouting day will be held on November 2, 2017, 8:00 am to 2:00 pm. Only hunters with signed permits and a compass will be allowed access into the refuge hunting areas on the scouting day. The refuge office will be open from 8:00am-4:00pm with staff available to answer your questions on scouting day. Guest are not allowed.

HUNTING HOURS

Hunters will be admitted into the refuge approximately one hour before legal hunting hours. Hunters should not arrive at the entrance gates before 5:00 am. Hunters must leave the refuge and sign out no later than one hour after legal hunting hours, unless the hunter is in the process of dragging a bear.

CANCELLATIONS AND CLOSURES

Unless there is unprecedented high fire danger or extreme weather conditions warranting cancellations, hunts will be open. Specific hunt areas may be closed

due to management activities, emergencies, or inclement weather that renders refuge roads unsafe to travel. Some roads may be closed to vehicles, but open to foot traffic. If any hunt dates are cancelled or areas are closed, no other rain "make-up" dates will be provided.

Critical updates may come by text from Virginia Department of Game or can be seen on our Facebook page @greatdismalswamp.

REFUGE CHECK-IN/CHECK-OUT

Access to the bear hunt areas will be provided only through the two designated entrances: Railroad Ditch Road and Jericho Lane. All hunters must sign in and sign out at one of the two designated entrance points each time they enter and leave the refuge. Failure to sign in and out results in unnecessary search and rescue proceedings.

HARVEST LIMIT

The refuge harvest limit will be a maximum of 20 bears. The take will be monitored and if more than 10 bears are harvested, various parameters will be evaluated and subsequent hunt days may be cancelled.

HARVEST CHECKS

Virginia hunting laws require bear harvest to be checked. ALL BEARS MUST BE CHECKED BY REFUGE OFFICER Call (757) 630-4001.

FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION

Hunters must use slugs to hunt bear. Only 20 gauge shotgun or larger.

HUNTER ORANGE

All hunters are required to wear a minimum of 400 square inches of solid-colored blaze orange on their chest, shoulders, back, and head during the hunt. Camouflage hunter orange does not meet this requirement. A hat alone does not meet this requirement - a vest or other upper body garment is recommended to meet the requirement

TREE STANDS

Tree stands must be removed from the refuge at the end of each hunt day. Hunters will not be permitted to return for any part of their stand. The use of nails, screws, or any other material that damage trees are not allowed.

CARTOP BOATS

Car top boats may be used only to cross ditches, and only within the hunt zones.

PROHIBITED

- Access to refuge at any location other than through designated entrances to hunt areas at Jericho Lane, and Railroad Ditch Roads.
- Hunting in the Disabled Hunting area without an additional refuge Disabled Hunters permit. Contact refuge office to obtain special permit.
- The use of boats on Lake Drummond, the Feeder Ditch, or the Dismal Swamp Canal for any reason while in the refuge on your hunt permit.
- Hunting on any area that is not designated as part of the refuge bear hunt area by signs or current hunt map. Area Closed signs mean area closed to all access, even to hunting.
- Discharging a firearm from a vehicle.
- Discharging a firearm from, across, or within 50 feet of a refuge road including roads closed to vehicles.
- Hunting, pursuing, capturing, chasing, stalking, injuring, destroying, or attempting to do the same for bear on or within 50 feet of a refuge road, including roads closed to vehicles.
- Driving motorized vehicles off the roads and/or on roads closed to vehicles.
- Parking vehicles in any manner which block roads (including roads closed to vehicles).
- The use of permanent markers, such as paint, to locate stands or trails.
- Baiting or hunting over bait.
- Use or possession of alcoholic beverages..
- Camping and all overnight use.
- Possession of dogs on the refuge during any designated hunt date while in the refuge on a hunt permit.
- Discharging or hunting with a rifle, handgun, pistol, or bow.
- Handling, harassing or collecting anything, littering, fires and the use of boat trailers.

SAFETY AND OTHER REGULATIONS

1. In case of an emergency call 911.
2. As a requirement of your permit, you must carry a compass in your possession at all times. Know how to use it!
3. Refuge wide speed limit is 25 mph on all refuge roads unless otherwise posted. Radar and other speed measuring devices are used to enforce speed limits.

Great Dismal Swamp NWR

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www.fws.gov/refuge/Great_Dismal_Swamp
Facebook @greatdismalswamp