

Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge

2020 Bear Hunt Rules & Regulations



Bear hunting is governed by applicable federal, state, and local regulations unless otherwise noted below.

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 and signed copy of your Refuge Bear Hunt permit, and a valid Virginia hunting license and tags shall be carried when hunting on the Refuge. Signing 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. 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.

SEASON AND BAG LIMITS

November 6, 7, 13, 14, 20, 21, 2020.

NOTE: Bear hunt days coincide with refuge deer hunt days. Pay close attention to legal hunt zones.

One bear per hunter per season statewide; must be greater than 100 lbs. No sows with cubs. The total refuge harvest limit will be a maximum of 20 bears. **All bear harvests must be checked with the Refuge.**

DISABLED HUNTERS

Hunting is allowed in the Disabled Hunting area with an additional refuge Disabled Hunters permit. Contact refuge office to obtain special permit.

HUNTING HOURS

- Hunting hours are per state regulations
- 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.

REFUGE ACCESS

- 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 either of the two designated entrance points each time they enter and leave the refuge.
- Refuge-wide speed limit is 25 mph on all refuge roads unless otherwise posted.
- 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.

TREE STANDS

Tree stands are allowed according to state regulations but must be removed by the last day of the Refuge hunt season (Nov. 21). Hunters will not be permitted to return for any part of their stand after the last hunt day. Government is not responsible for lost or stolen property. The use of nails, screws, or any other material that damage trees are not allowed.

WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION

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

HUNTER ORANGE

All hunters are required to wear hunter blaze orange or pink according to state regulations.

PROHIBITED

- The use of boats on Lake Drummond while in the refuge on your hunt permit.
- 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.
- The use of trailers, or 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, fires, and all overnight use.
- Possession of dogs on the refuge during any designated hunt date while in the refuge on a hunt permit.

Great Dismal Swamp NWR

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