

## VERMONT GUIDE TO PRIMITIVE CAMPING ON STATE LANDS

Many areas of state land are available for primitive, or “no trace” camping, free of charge. Primitive camping means camping in a forest with no developed facilities and leaving the site with little or no evidence of human visitation.

Lands designated for primitive camping are usually in areas with difficult access. No facilities are provided, and there are no designated water supplies. Primitive camping is a remote camping experience in a forested setting, not a wilderness experience. Expect to find evidence of human activity ranging from recreational trails, to past logging activity, to remnants of the land’s past use.

Primitive camping is also available during the winter. Extra precautions and planning are necessary to address cold weather concerns. Access restrictions apply to most primitive camping areas due to unplowed roads and lack of plowed parking areas. Contact District Offices for information.

No amount of regulation will protect our state forest land unless each of us makes a personal effort to lessen our impact. Practicing “no trace” primitive camping techniques and being thoughtful about your camping activities are a good way to start.

### Primitive Camping Practices

- Primitive camping is allowed only within **designated areas** of selected state lands.
- Within designated areas, camping must be at least 100 feet away from any stream or body of water, 200 feet away from any trail or property line, and 1,000 feet away from any traveled road.
- Camping is limited to not more than three consecutive nights in the same area.
- Groups of eleven or more individuals must obtain a permit in order to primitive camp.
- Only dead and down trees or branches may be used for firewood.
- Camping above 2,500 feet in elevation is prohibited unless otherwise designated.
- There shall be one responsible adult for every 4 campers under the age of 14.

**Rubbish** – If you carry it in, carry it out! Leave your campsite so clean that no one else can find it.

**Campfires** – The use of backpacker stoves with self-contained fuel is urged when primitive camping. Leave no fires unattended and remove all evidence of campfires before leaving the site. Use only dead and down wood for firewood.

**Water** – During backcountry travel it is safest to assume that all water is contaminated. Boil drinking water at least five minutes before use. Do all washing, including dishes, away from water sources.

**Human Waste** – Select a site at least 100 feet away from any stream or body of water. Dig a hole at least 6 inches deep and cover completely with dirt after using.

**Remote Shelter** – Some areas have remote lean-tos for overnight camping. At these facilities, campfires are restricted to fireplaces or fire rings. Contact District Offices for information.

**Park Use** – Occasionally a primitive camping area is adjacent to a developed state park. Primitive camping does not entitle the user to use a campground’s toilets, showers, beach, vehicle parking area, or other facility unless the user pays the appropriate park fees.

*“When you camp, never camp where anyone else has camped. When you move on, leave no trace that you have been there”*

**Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation District Offices**

Primitive camping is allowed within designated areas of the following public lands. Contact the appropriate District Office for maps and additional information.



<p><b>District I – Southeastern Vermont</b>            100 Mineral Street, Suite 304            Springfield, VT 05156-3168            Contact: (802) 289-0603</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Coolidge State Forest</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Dorand State Forest</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Mollie Beattie State Forest</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Okemo State Forest</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Arthur Davis Wildlife Management Area</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Les Newell Wildlife Management Area</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>District II – Southwestern Vermont</b>            271 North Main Street, Suite 215            Rutland, VT 05701-2423            Contact: (802) 786-0060</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Aitken State Forest</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">West Rutland State Forest</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Plymbsbury Wildlife Management Area</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>District III – Northwestern Vermont</b>            111 West Street            Essex Junction, VT 05452-4695            Contact: (802) 879-6565</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Camel’s Hump State Park</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>District IV – Central Vermont</b>            5 Perry Street, Suite 20            Barre, VT 05641-4265            Contact: (802) 476-0171</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Mt. Mansfield State Forest</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">L.R. Jones State Forest</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">C.C. Putnam State Forest</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Roxbury State Forest</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Washington State Forest</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Pine Mountain Wildlife Management Area</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>District V – Northeast Kingdom</b>            374 Emerson Falls Road, Suite 4            St. Johnsbury, VT 05819            Contact: (802) 751-0110</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Darling State Park</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Groton State Forest</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Mathewson State Forest</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Victory State Forest</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Willoughby State Forest</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Bald Hill Wildlife Management Area</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Bill Sladyk Wildlife Management Area</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Roy Mountain Wildlife Management Area</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Steam Mill Brook Wildlife Management Area</a></li> </ul>

**Additional Opportunities**

Other land management organizations offer primitive camping opportunities and information. For additional information, contact:

**[Green Mountain National Forest](#)**

U.S. Forest Service  
 231 North Main Street  
 Rutland, VT 05701  
 (802) 747-6700

**[The Green Mountain Club](#)**

4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road  
 Waterbury Center, VT 05677  
[gmc@greenmountainclub.org](mailto:gmc@greenmountainclub.org)  
 (802) 244-7037