

## ***Western Montana Forest Lands - Open Lands Policy***

December 2020

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) allows responsible use of its **Forest Lands in Western Montana** for public recreation, such as hunting, hiking and camping – **see map on reverse**. **Note that** other TNC-owned lands around the state have different regulations. Hazards exist, so recreationists must use caution and enter at their own risk. Logging and land management activities are ongoing, and may pose a danger. The following regulations must be adhered to when using TNC's Forest Lands:

- **Non-motorized public access is allowed** on all lands, at all times of the year, unless otherwise posted.
- **Wheeled motorized access is allowed BUT limited to open, established roads. Electrically-powered bicycles and other powered wheeled vehicles are considered motorized vehicles.**
- **No unauthorized wheeled motorized use** of closed roads or trails is allowed. Closed roads and trails are often posted as such. However, a closed gate or other closure device (such as a rock barricade or earthen berm) with no sign is closed to all wheeled motorized vehicles. Road restrictions apply even if a sign, gate or closure device has been removed, vandalized or damaged.
- **Gates Must Not Be Blocked.** Administrative, contractor, or emergency traffic may need to pass through.
- **No off-road** or off-trail wheeled motorized use is allowed by the general public.
- **Snowmobiles are allowed from December 1 to April 1, except where signed closures exist.** To reduce impacts to soils, vegetation and wildlife, TNC requests that snowmobilers stay on groomed or signed snowmobile routes, or the forest road system.
- **Hunting, fishing** and all forms of legal animal harvest in accordance with relevant state laws are allowed. TNC reserves the right to close its lands to specific forms of animal harvest at TNC's sole discretion.
- Hunting or transportation of hunters or game by administrative or commercial vehicles is prohibited behind a closure.
- **The use of Exploding Targets in NOT allowed on TNC lands.** Areas may be closed to Recreational Shooting at TNC's sole discretion. Recreational Shooters are required to clean up all shooting waste.
- **Personal-use** plant, Christmas tree, berry and mushroom harvesting are allowed; commercial harvesting is not allowed.
- **Permitted Personal-use Firewood** gathering of dead or down wood is allowed **from June 1 to December 31**. A **\$20.00 permit** is required, allowing for 5 cords per permit. Vehicles must stay on established, open roads for wood retrieval. Commercial firewood harvesting is not allowed, except as specifically permitted.
- **Camping is limited to 16 days per campsite.** During this time the campsite must not be left unattended for more than 3 consecutive days. Camping beyond 16 days requires relocating to a new site at least 5 miles from the original site. To minimize conflicts with bears and other wildlife: **Human, pet and livestock food, garbage and all other attractants must be acceptably stored at all times** (see Lolo Nat'l Forest Food/Wildlife Attractant Storage Special Order #F11-005-Lolo-Forest). During campsite occupation, firewood may be cut only for use within that campsite. No live trees may be cut by campers. TNC reserves the right to close campsites at its sole discretion.
- The use of **Certified Weed-Seed-Free** livestock hay, forage, and bedding is required for all livestock users and animal handlers. Do not tie livestock to trees; instead use a post, high-line or hitch-rail.
- **Pack Out All Waste!** Leave TNC lands as clean as or cleaner than you found them.
- Do not pollute with human waste. Pack out or bury all human waste at least 6" deep. Toilets located within 300 feet of water must be self-contained.
- All activity on TNC lands is at the individual's OWN RISK. TNC assumes no liability or responsibility of any kind with respect to any of the activities described above or otherwise.
- Any use of TNC lands not consistent with these regulations shall be considered trespassing (and/or any other applicable crime) and shall be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.
- TNC reserves the right to close off access to all or any portion of its lands, or to require anyone to leave its lands, at any time, for any reason.
- TNC Forest Lands in Western Montana are managed in collaboration with Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

It is your responsibility to know whose property you are using and that property's regulations. Avoid trespassing on private property.

**Please report violations or vandalism to: Montana FWP at 1-800-TIP-MONT.**

For more information, or to purchase a firewood permit, contact TNC at 443-0303 or 543-6681.

***THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!***

# Montana Forests Project

