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Dec 10, 2011

Dear Game Management Unit 48 Hunters and Trappers:

This letter is to help you and your companions better understand state laws regarding the use of state trust lands and to have a safe and enjoyable hunting trip.

Included with this letter is a map showing private and state trust land boundaries and main roads in Unit 48. This map is available on the Department of Game and Fish and the State Land Office web sites (www.wildlife.state.nm.us; www.nmstatelands.org). Many roads and property boundaries are not marked. Each visitor to state trust lands is responsible for using maps and other information to comply with rules pertaining to access.

As a licensed New Mexico hunter or trapper, you are allowed to enter state trust lands for limited purposes under an easement for access between the state game commission and the commissioner of public lands. Permitted activities under this easement are limited to hunting, fishing, or trapping by licensed hunters, anglers, or trappers and do not include camping, sightseeing, woodcutting, or other activities on state trust land. State Land Office lessees are required to prevent unauthorized use of state trust land (§19-6-3 and §19-6-5 New Mexico Statutes Annotated 1978 and 19 NMAC 2.8.8). The easement is available on the Department's and the State Land Office's web sites. The right of entry to state trust land is assured if access is available by public road or across other public lands or trails. If you are wrongly denied access please call the State Land Office at 505-827-5760 or the Department of Game and Fish at 575-445-2311.

Camping on state trust land

Agricultural lessees may authorize camping on state trust lands. **Agreements between the Department, the Commissioner, and lessees for camping in designated areas in Unit 48 during hunting seasons have expired.** Contact the agricultural lessee regarding camping anywhere on state trust lands in New Mexico.

Vehicular access to state lands in GMU 48

Naranjos Road: The Naranjos Road Open Gate agreement expired December 10, 2011. Access across any private land is allowed with landowner permission only.

Black Lake: At the intersection of State Road 434 and State Road 120 there is vehicle access to state trust lands west of Logger's Ridge.

Aspen Hill: There is public access via the west end of historic State Road 199. The road crosses CS Cattle Company private property and enters state trust lands north and west of Aspen Hill.

Red Hill: There is public access to state trust lands from Mora County Road 009 west of Ocate. The road crosses Stanley Ranch private property in Mora and Colfax counties. Please observe and comply with posted signs. Where public roads pass through private property, public access is limited to the roadway itself and access to the property off road is prohibited except as allowed by landowner permission.

Sweetwater: There is public access via the east end of historic State Road 199.

GMU 48 Sportsman Watch – Operation Game Thief

You are encouraged to call Operation Game Thief (1-800-432-GAME) if you witness a wildlife violation. The OGT program pays rewards for information that results in apprehension of wildlife violators. The more detailed the information, the more likely a successful prosecution will be made. Do not contact violators or take any unnecessary risks while observing violations. Simply get as much information as you safely can and report it to the OGT phone number.

Off road travel

Per New Mexico state statute 17-2-7 NMSA and rule 19 NMAC 31.10.13.G, it is unlawful to drive or ride in a motor vehicle which is driven off an established road when the vehicle bears a licensed hunter, trapper, or fisherman, except to retrieve lawfully taken game in an area not closed to vehicular traffic. **Off-road driving is prohibited on state trust lands even for retrieval of game, except for game retrieval by a doctor-certified mobility impaired hunter.** An established road is one that was built or maintained by equipment and which shows no evidence of ever being closed to vehicular traffic by such means as berms, ripping, scarification, reseeding, fencing, gates, barricades or posted closures. Rule 19 NMAC 30.10.13.H makes it unlawful to drive on closed roads.

We appreciate your understanding of the efforts to protect and conserve Unit 48. If you have any questions about these issues or need further clarification, please contact the Department's Northeast Area office at 575-445-2311, P.O. Box 1145, Raton NM 87740. You can also contact the New Mexico State Land Office at 505-827-5760, 310 Old Santa Fe Trail, Santa Fe, NM 87504.

Good luck and have a safe outing,

Chris Neary
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