



# **Adventure Safely!**

Our public lands belong to all of us. Get out and explore! But first a few ground rules and tips for staying safe:

Most of the public land in New Mexico is remote country. It is accessible from unimproved; sometimes four wheel drive, roads and tracks. Be prepared to be self-sufficient with water, food, shelter, GPS, maps, and recovery tools and skills. There are NO services in these remote areas. Cell phone reception is rare.

Unless driving through on a county, state or federal highway, you must have prior written permission to be on tribal, military, state trust, or private land...even when crossing to get to public lands.

#### Maps

Maps showing the location of New Mexico public lands in color are available for free download. An index map can be found at: <a href="https://plia.org/pages/new-mexico-blm-public-lands-access-map">https://plia.org/pages/new-mexico-blm-public-lands-access-map</a>. These maps are a good start when looking for the best public lands in New Mexico for dispersed recreation.

Maps with much more detail may be downloaded here: <a href="https://www.blm.gov/maps/frequently-requested/new-mexico/hunting-maps">https://www.blm.gov/maps/frequently-requested/new-mexico/hunting-maps</a>. These free maps indicate land management status, backroads, terrain, water features, some gates, and other information. These are large downloads and require a strong internet connection. However, once downloaded, these maps may be used without internet.

# **Dispersed Camping**

Camping on public lands, away from developed recreation facilities is free, as long as it does not conflict with other authorized uses or in areas posted "closed to camping," or in some way adversely affects wildlife species or natural resources.

Dispersed campsites are located along unimproved roads and may not be marked. Popular locations can be recognized by the telltale flat disturbed area that has been used as a campsite before. Not all flat spots are sites. If possible, please use existing sites to avoid creating new disturbances.

Dispersed camping is generally allowed on public lands in New Mexico for no more than a period of 14 days within any period of 28 consecutive days. The 14-day limit may be reached either through a number of separate visits or through 14 days of continuous overnight occupation during the 28-day period. After this time period, you must relocate to another site at least 25 miles away. The purpose of this is to prevent damage to sensitive resources caused by continual use of any particular areas.

Camping is prohibited within 900 feet of any developed water source such as a guzzler or watering trough so that the water is accessible to wildlife and livestock. Please do not park your vehicles near these waters or take any actions that would disturb wildlife or livestock from using these waters.

The New Mexico Public Lands Information Center would like to remind you to be careful with fire! Campfires must be attended at all times and comply with all fire restrictions. Areas can be devastated by the thoughtlessness or indifference on the part of anyone - hunter, camper, local resident, or visitor. New Mexico often suffers from drought, making the risk of fire very high, and it is up to all of us to protect our lands. You can find a list of BLM's fire restrictions at: <a href="www.nmfireinfo.com">www.nmfireinfo.com</a>. No fireworks on public lands, ever.

When using a motorized vehicle for camping access, please park your vehicle near existing roads or existing undeveloped campsites.

Camping is permitted within all units of the National Wilderness Preservation System administered by the BLM in New Mexico. However, all motorized and mechanized vehicles and equipment are strictly prohibited in these areas.

Campers must not dispose of refuse, hazardous materials, sewage, or gray water, in any manner that would pollute the surrounding area. Please pack it out, and dispose of those materials properly.

Individual BLM Field Offices may have additional or supplemental special camping rules or guidelines. Please call our Field Offices or visit our individual recreation websites for this information.

#### **Trail Use on Public Lands**

Most BLM trails in New Mexico are multiple use – they accommodate hikers, bikers, and horseback riders. The majority of public lands in New Mexico are open to hiking and backpacking. Certain BLM lands provide opportunities for these activities, especially where they are combined with scenic landscapes. Some locations have designated trails, while others require visitors to find their way through the landscape. Mountain biking opportunities are outstanding in terms of scenery and variety of riding experiences. Trails on BLM lands offer challenge and reward for the beginner and expert, alike. Unless posted, all roads are available for mountain biking. Equestrian activities on public lands occur on existing roads and trails or in open country areas.

## Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Recreation on Public Lands

Numerous and diverse opportunities for off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation exist on BLM-managed public lands in New Mexico. Miles of trails and open areas await all types of OHV enthusiasts. Please obey all signs regarding the management of public lands and routes. Know where you are driving, respect private property, stay well away from livestock, and wildlife and their water sources. The BLM regulates the use of roads, trails, and land under its jurisdiction in order to meet specific land management objectives, to protect resources, and to provide public safety.

Anyone operating an OHV on BLM land shall do so in accordance with State laws and regulations concerning use, standards, registration, operation, and inspection of off-road vehicles. Unless you are exempted by the New Mexico Department of Motor Vehicles, you must register your off-highway motor vehicle and affix the registration plate to your vehicle.

Anyone operating an OHV on public land must have a valid State license or learners permit unless:

- a. the individual is under the direct supervision of a person 18 years of age or older who has a valid operator's license and who is responsible for the acts of the person being supervised; or
- b. the person is certified by State government as competent to drive OHVs after successfully completing a State approved operator's training program.

### Hunting, Fishing, and Target Shooting on Public Lands

Unless specifically prohibited, all federal lands managed by the BLM and the U.S. Forest Service are open to hunting, fishing, and target shooting in New Mexico.

It is your responsibility to know of any restrictions and where they apply. The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish regulates hunting and fishing on all public lands. Information related to hunting in New Mexico can be found at www.wildlife.state.nm.us.

Hunting, target shooting, and trapping near developed recreation sites and areas is not allowed. Remember, it is illegal to shoot within 150 yards of a dwelling or building without owner permission, from or across any graded or public road, or from any type of motor vehicle. On most public lands in New Mexico, you may not drive off existing roads and trails to hunt or target shoot, even to retrieve downed game animals.

If you are hunting or fishing with the aid of a commercial outfitter or guide, you should ensure that he or she has a permit from the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. You should also ensure that he or she is permitted by the BLM to conduct business on public lands.

Hunting or fishing licenses are required in New Mexico. In addition, the "Sikes Act" requires you to have a "Habitat Improvement Validation" stamp, as well as a hunting license, when hunting on BLM-managed lands in New Mexico.

Have a great time exploring the public lands of New Mexico.

For more information please contact us at:

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