

# Harriman State Park

## Recreational Deer Hunting – Frequently Asked Questions

***\* Please check the Harriman State Park webpage for the most up to date information on hunting. \****

<https://www.parks.ny.gov/parks/145/harriman-state-park>

### **1) Why is deer management necessary in the park?**

- Harriman State Park suffers from decades of over-browsing by white-tailed deer that has resulted in severely degraded forests. Over-browsing has led to a lack of tree and shrub regeneration, the loss of habitat for other wildlife, greater impacts by invasive species, and poor nutritional health within the deer population.
- In 2018, a study conducted by SUNY Environmental Science and Forestry and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) compared Harriman State Park to nearby forests where deer hunting is allowed (Sterling Forest State Park, Black Rock Forest, and West Point Military Reservation). The study showed that forests with hunting experienced substantial recovery from the effects of overabundant deer. They also showed that the poor condition of Harriman's forests could improve with sustained deer management in the park. The full study is available here: <https://pubs.usgs.gov/of/2019/1116/ofr20191116.pdf>

### **2) What is the goal of the deer management program?**

- The goal is to manage white-tailed deer populations at a level appropriate to allow for forest regeneration and support resilient natural communities; enhance habitat for forest-dependent wildlife; and provide for safe and enjoyable recreational and educational opportunities.
- Recreational hunting was selected as the most viable mechanism to control deer populations on the landscape scale, which is consistent with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's "Management Plan for White-Tailed Deer in New York State, 2021-2030." The full plan is available here: [https://extapps.dec.ny.gov/docs/wildlife\\_pdf/deerplan21.pdf](https://extapps.dec.ny.gov/docs/wildlife_pdf/deerplan21.pdf)

### **3) Will hunting for other species be allowed?**

- No, the program allows deer hunting only.

### **4) What are the hunting season dates in the park?**

- Deer hunting in the park is restricted beyond New York State regulated seasons, as follows:
  - Hunting is weekdays only. No hunting will be permitted on weekends or holidays.
  - No hunting will be permitted in September and October.

- The hunting season will occur from November 3<sup>rd</sup> to December 16<sup>th</sup> and December 26<sup>th</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> (excluding all weekends, official state holidays, and state regulated season closures, as outlined below).
- The calendar at the end of this document shows the hunting season dates.

**5) Which holidays are closed to hunting?**

- Veterans Day (Tuesday, November 11<sup>th</sup>)
- Thanksgiving Day (Thursday, November 27<sup>th</sup>)
- Christmas Day (Thursday, December 25<sup>th</sup> – already excluded per New York State regulations)
- New Year's Day (Thursday, January 1<sup>st</sup>)

**6) What areas will be open to deer hunting?**

- Hunting will only be permitted in designated areas within the northern third of the park, as outlined on the official park hunting maps.
- Hunters will be distributed across five zones.
- The five new deer hunting zones account for around 35% of the park, approximately 17,000 acres.
- Hunting is not permitted within 150 feet of roads or within 500 feet of any building, Group Camp, shelter, or parking lot.

**7) What implements will be allowed?**

- Allowed implements include bow, crossbow, shotgun, and muzzleloader.
- Rifles and handguns are prohibited.

**8) How can hikers share the woods with hunters?**

- Check out the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's "How to Share the Woods During Hunting Season" video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jEndeX0p1KU>
- Stay on designated trails.
- Consider wearing bright colors. Fluorescent orange and fluorescent pink are recommended, but any bright colors will work. This not only helps hikers to be seen by hunters but also helps in case of unforeseen emergencies like getting lost or injured.
- Keep pets leashed at all times, as per park regulations.
- Consider attaching a brightly colored vest or bandana on leashed dogs.
- Be aware of hunting season dates and areas and plan accordingly. Hunting area notifications will be posted at park tailheads and other key access points.

**9) Is wearing fluorescent orange or pink required of hikers?**

- Hunters using firearms are required to wear fluorescent orange or pink, as outlined in New York State hunting regulations.
- Hikers are not required to wear fluorescent orange or pink. However, wearing bright colors is recommended to help hikers be seen in the woods by hunters or in case of an emergency, like getting lost or injured.

**10) How will hunting affect Group Camps?**

- Most Group Camps will already be closed for the season by October.
- Hunting will not be permitted within 500 feet of buildings and parking lots, including Group Camp areas. Hunting is not allowed within 150 feet of roads.
- Group Camp members can follow the recommendations above during the hunting season.

**11) How is hunting compatible in areas with high trail density?**

- Deer hunting safely occurs in 65 State Parks and Historic Sites statewide, including in areas with trail densities similar to sections of Harriman State Park.
- Hunters prefer to avoid trails and other busy areas where deer are likely to be spooked by human activity.

**12) What if I am uncomfortable hiking in areas open to hunting?**

- Harriman State Park encompasses approximately 48,910 acres. For all but 34 days of the year, hunting is not allowed in the deer management area. During the limited season, 61% of the park (approximately 30,000 acres and 118 miles of marked hiking trails) remains closed to hunting.
- During the limited hunting season, hikers may easily opt to select trails in areas of the park closed to hunting, and/or within the hunting area, consider hiking on weekends and holidays when no hunting is permitted. Hunting is restricted to select weekdays in November and December; please see the calendar at the end of this document.

**13) Where can I find more information and maps of the hunting areas?**

- All hunting information and maps will be posted to the Harriman State Park webpage on the "Hunting" tab: <https://www.parks.ny.gov/parks/145/harriman-state-park>

**14) How many permits will be issued and how will hunters be chosen? Is there a fee?**

- 350 hunting permits will be issued.
- A random lottery system will be used to select hunters from all who applied. All applicants will have an equal chance of being selected.
- For hunters who are awarded a permit, there is a \$5 fee to be paid in person upon permit pickup. If hunters do not pick up their permit by the specified date, they forfeit their permit and the next randomly chosen applicant will be awarded the permit.

**15) How do I find the hunting permit application?**

- In order to enter the lottery to receive a hunting permit, you must fill out an application. The application will be available online and in person at the Lake Tiorati Office in Harriman State Park at 3200 Seven Lakes Drive, Southfields, NY 10975.
- The application and associated information will be posted to the Harriman State Park webpage on the “Hunting” tab: <https://www.parks.ny.gov/parks/145/harriman-state-park>
- Applications are anticipated to be available starting in mid-September and will be open for two weeks.

**16) Where can I find information about the lead-free ammunition rebate program?**

- Through a partnership with Hunters for Eagle Conservation and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, hunters in New York are eligible for a rebate of up to \$60 for 1 box of factory loaded lead-free ammunition or a box of lead-free bullets. To learn more about the impacts of lead ammunition, rebates, and lead-free ammunition availability, visit <https://huntersforeagleconservation.org/new-york/>.

**17) How does this Deer Management Program affect hunting in Harriman State Park west of the NYS Thruway?**

- Approximately 1,800 acres of Harriman State Park west of the NYS Thruway have been open to hunting since 2009 and that area is managed separately by Sterling Forest State Park. See <https://parks.ny.gov/parks/sterlingforest/hunting.aspx> for more details.

## HARRIMAN STATE PARK 2025 DEER HUNTING DATES

November							December						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1		1	2	3	4	5	6
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31			
30													

KEY: Bow Regular\* Late Bow & Muzzleloading

*\* Rifles and handguns prohibited*