pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Additional State Forest Roads Opening Across the State For Hunting Seasons, Other Outdoor Activities

Harrisburg, PA - Hunters and other outdoors enthusiasts heading into Pennsylvania's state-owned woodlands this autumn will find additional roads open in 18 of the 20 state forest districts, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources announced today.

"We know improved accessibility and DCNR's promotion of deer hunting where needed benefits forest regeneration and the overall ecosystem," said DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn. "As a result, the Bureau of Forestry is opening more than 540 miles of state forest roads normally open only for administrative use. They again will be available to hunters, hikers, foliage viewers and others visiting state forestlands this fall."

More than 3,000 miles of state forest roadways will be open during the statewide archery deer season, which opens Saturday, Oct. 1, and closes Saturday, Nov. 12. They will continue to stay open through other hunting seasons continuing into January, 2017.

"Regardless of whether they seek deer, bear, turkey or small game, hunters in our state forests will find more than 90 percent of that land now is within one-half mile of an open road," said Dunn.

With the hunter in mind, DCNR continues to update a new interactive map of state forestlands across Pennsylvania that offers details on newly opened roads, timber harvesting activity, forestry office contact numbers and more.

Meanwhile, top-quality hunting is offered at many state parks -- especially those in the 12.5-county Pennsylvania Wilds region -- where state forestland often surrounds them. Inexpensive camping can be found at many of those parks.

Primitive camping on state forestlands is also an option, giving hunters a backcountry camping or hunting experience. Camping permits, issued by the managing forest district, are required when camping on state forestlands on designated sites.

Many of these campsites are close to state parks and forestlands enrolled in the Pa. Game Commission's Deer Management Assistance Program, permitting hunters to take one antlerless deer or more when properly licensed. Hunters are advised to check with state forests district headquarters or state park offices about availability.

Hunters traveling to some north central areas of the state are reminded some hunting areas and travel routes may be impacted by Marcellus Shale-related activities. Some state forest roads may be temporarily closed during drilling operations or other peak periods of heavy use to reduce potential safety hazards.

Some state forest roads only will be opened for the second week of the traditional rifle season because they cannot withstand the expected heavy traffic of the first week of that season. Two- or three-month long openings will be in effect only where there is minimal threat of damage or deterioration to road surfaces or forest surroundings.

For more information on Pennsylvania's 20 state forest districts and 120 state parks, visit www.dcnr.state.pa and select "Find a Forest" or "Find a Park."

The new interactive state forest map can be viewed at http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/deer/openroads/index.htm.

Marcellus Shale information can be found on Bureau of Forestry pages under "Natural Gas Drilling on State Forests." Camping opportunities and details can be found on both the "Forestry" and "State Park" pages.

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