

Moose Hill Farm Hunting FAQ

Describe the specifics of the new hunting program at Moose Hill Farm (MHF)?

As a new pilot program this year, controlled hunting is allowed at MHF by permission only. Hunting at MHF is restricted to bow hunting only and requires permission by the MHF Superintendent. This season, a small group of licensed hunters have been granted permission to hunt on the property. All hold state permits and licenses and are required to follow strict state laws and Trustees policies.

What are the reasons for allowing hunting on the MFH and other Trustees' properties?

Our primary reason for permitting hunting at MHF, as well as on other Trustees properties is to help reduce and control the deer population and improve the overall habitat health of our properties and surrounding areas. With few natural predators in the region, the deer population in Massachusetts is well beyond its natural level. It is well documented that an overabundance of deer negatively impacts the health and resiliency of our woodlands, both hindering forest re-growth and endangering certain rare plants and flowers. The Trustees consider hunting as part of a program of best management practices for managing deer at our properties.

How have deer negatively impacted the MHF property?

Overabundant deer populations can negatively impact the ecological integrity of an area. Research has shown that when deer become abundant, overbrowsing of vegetation can alter ecosystems by preventing forest regrowth or eliminating plant species altogether. Overbrowsing can threaten rare and endangered plant species and reduce the overall biological health of our reservations. This has been the case at MHF.

Why didn't you allow hunting on the MHF property before?

The Trustees have been monitoring the overpopulation of deer at MHF for several years and have included controlled hunting for consideration in the property management plan. After several years of systematically implementing deer hunting regionally, MHF was identified as a priority for 2014.

How do I inquire about hunting on the MHF property?

Contact the Superintendent of the Neponset Management Unit of The Trustees of Reservations, Dennis Camp at 781.821.2996 or dcamp@ttor.org.

Who is permitted to hunt on the MHF property?

Only licensed hunters who have been given permission by The Trustees' Superintendent of the Neponset Management Unit.

Do you allow hunting on other properties?

Yes. Half of The Trustees' 112 properties allow hunting with no restrictions; one-quarter allow hunting with restrictions, and one-quarter do not allow hunting.

How do I inquire about hunting on those?

Please visit the website at www.thetrustees.org. Search for a particular reservation and look for a hunting symbol to learn where hunting is permitted. Details about any regulations governing hunting on that reservation are provided on the reservation's web page.

When is hunting season on the MHF property?

The controlled bow hunt will take place during the regular hunting season which runs October 20 – December 31, 2014.

What are the hunting hours at MHF?

Authorized hunting is permitted from ½ hour before sunrise all day until ½ hour after sunset. No hunting is allowed on Sundays.

How do you promote visitor safety on the MHF property during hunting season?

Our goal is to promote public safety on our properties at all times. The Trustees manage public safety where hunting occurs through a variety of approaches, including the following: on-site and website property advisories; property or trail closures; distance requirements for hunting activity from residences and trails; and limits on the types of hunting allowed. Signage is posted on and around the property listing safety precautions, requirements, and rules.

What are the specific safety rules and regulations for bow hunters at MHF?

- All hunters must provide a copy of their hunting license, license plate number, and contact information to superintendent
- Written permission from the Superintendent should be carried at all times while hunting at MHF and produced upon request from Trustees staff and visitors.
- Hunters will receive a property map to be carried at all time while hunting at MFH.
- All hunting will take place from elevated tree stands within designated areas (see map) and locations approved by the Superintendent.
- Tree stands will be placed a minimum of 25 yards away from marked trails and their general location must be approved by the property Superintendent.
- Hunters that fail to follow state hunting regulations and The Trustees' rules will be prohibited from hunting at the MHF reservation.
- Hunters must report any deer taken to superintendent within 24 hours. Those numbers are recorded annually by The Trustees Superintendent using an Annual Hunting Log.
- Care and discretion for other property users should be used when field dressing and removing deer from property.
- Tree stands will be removed within 30 days of the close of hunting season.
- Hunters must be courteous to all property users and make a genuine effort to inform others about the hunting program when encountered. The Trustees must be notified of negative encounters with visitors as soon as possible.
- The Trustees must be informed as soon as possible about any injured deer that are not relocated.
- Hunters need to report approximate hours spent hunting at end of season to superintendent. Hours can be counted as volunteer hours.

Did you consider specific hunting regulations in Sharon before deciding to allow bow hunting at MHF?

Yes, the Town of Sharon has been consulted and we are operating within the town's bylaws and ordinances.

What should I do if I want to bring my dog to MHF?

All dogs are required to be on-leash at MHF.

On what Trustees properties do you permit hunting?

There are 10 reservations in Greater Boston and 24 total reservations statewide where The Trustees permit controlled hunting at select times by permission only. An additional 19 properties, mainly in the Western part of the state, are open to the general public during state-regulated hunting season.

On what Trustees properties do you permit bow hunting only?

The Trustees currently permit authorized bow hunting on select properties statewide. Locally, in addition to Moose Hill Farm in Sharon, bow hunting is also permitted on the following reservations including: Peters Reservation, Chase Woodlands, Powisset Farm, and portions of Noanet Woodlands in Dover, and on Shattuck Reservation, Medfield Rhododendrons, Noon Hill, Fork Factory Brook, and portions of Rocky Woods in Medfield.

Will deer hunting at MHF help control the deer tick population?

Several diseases are transmitted to humans by deer ticks, which depend on deer for a part of their life cycle. Lyme disease is typically the best known but others include ehrlichiosis and babesiosis. Research has shown that reducing deer densities may help reduce the population of deer ticks.

What is your hunting policy for any given property? Please refer to the following link: <http://www.thetrustees.org/places-to-visit/before-you-visit/hunting.html>.