



Fact Sheet: Firearms in National Parks

Key Points

- On February 22, 2010, a new federal law allows people who can legally possess firearms under federal and state law in the state in which the national park is located to possess firearms in that park.
- Prior to February 22, firearms have generally been prohibited in national parks – except in some Alaska parks and those parks that allow hunting.
- The new law does not affect existing laws and regulations regarding the *use* of firearms or hunting in national parks.
- More than 30 parks are located in more than one state; visitors must be aware of what state they are in and the laws that apply.
- Federal law continues to prohibit possession of firearms in designated “federal facilities,” for example, visitor centers, offices, or maintenance buildings.

Background

Sec. 512 of P.L. 111-24, a provision of the Credit Card Accountability Responsibility and Disclosure Act of 2009, was passed by Congress and signed by the President in May 2009. It directs the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to follow the applicable state and local laws regarding the possession of firearms – open and concealed carry – in national parks and national wildlife refuges.

Current Status

- Superintendents and park staffs are ensuring they have a clear understanding of state and local firearms laws.
- Regional offices and headquarters are working to ensure there is consistency in NPS administration of a law across parks within a state, and in similar laws across states.
- Parks are working with friends groups, concessioners, volunteers, tour operators, and other park partners so they understand any effects of the new law on their activities.
- “Firearms prohibited” signs are being posted at public entrances to federal facilities.
- Park websites are being updated to provide visitors information and links to state firearms laws.

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