



Town of Reading Massachusetts

Town Forest Committee

Town Forest Regulations
September 2014

Approved by the Board of Selectmen
September 23, 2014

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Reading Town Forest

A Carry-In, Carry-Out Facility

Mission Statement

The Town Forest is a multi-use resource created by the people of Reading in 1930 for the protection of plants, animals and the natural environment and for the enjoyment by individuals and groups for nature study, walking and camping. Users of the Town Forest must respect each other and the natural environment as they enjoy the Town Forest in their own way.

Rules and Regulations - Effective September 23, 2014

- 1 Everyone is welcome to enjoy the Reading Town Forest at no charge from dawn to dusk.
- 2 Any alteration, construction, or other work in the Town Forest shall require prior written permission from the Town Forest Committee.
- 3 Permission must be approved by the Fire Chief for any fires, BBQ grill, and camp stove use. Smoking is prohibited as per town by-law.
- 4 No person shall cut, break, remove, deface, defile, or ill-use any structure, fence, sign, or map, or have possession of any part thereof. No plants (including trees, bushes, grasses, or flowers) shall be defaced, cut or removed without prior approval of the Town Forest Committee. Firewood may not be brought into or out of, the Town Forest. Those with permitted fire use are limited to collecting dead wood from the forest floor or from the Town Compost area consistent with Town regulations.
- 5 Discharge of firearms is prohibited in the Town of Reading, including in the Town Forest. Discharge or carrying of BB guns, pellet guns, paintball guns, airsoft guns, and similar non-lethal weapons is prohibited in the Town Forest.
- 6 No hunting is allowed in the Town Forest.
- 7 The Town Forest is closed to motor-powered vehicles except:
 - for emergency response by the Reading Police and Fire Departments,
 - for maintenance of the Town Forest or wells, or
 - with prior written permission of the Town Forest Committee.Motorized wheelchairs are allowed. Snowmobiles, ATVs, motorcycles, and other off-road vehicles are prohibited.
- 8 Responsible bicycle use is allowed in the Town Forest. The Town Forest Committee may close trails to bicycle use temporarily, seasonally, or permanently to prevent overuse or to protect natural resources.
- 9 Alcoholic beverages are prohibited. Glass containers for any purpose are prohibited in the Town Forest.
- 10 Dumping, littering, filling or any other deposition of imported materials--including but not limited to garbage, debris, earth, leaves or brush-- is prohibited in the Town Forest.
- 11 Users must carry out everything that they carry in.
- 12 Dogs may enter the Town Forest provided that they are accompanied by, and under the effective voice control, of some person. The person accompanying the dog shall promptly remove feces deposited by the dog in the Town Forest. Dogs must be leashed within 200 feet of paved roads or parking areas.
- 13 The Town Forest Committee cannot assume liability for injuries, damage to property, or other loss to persons within the Town Forest or its vicinity; such visitors assume all associated risks.

Additional Notes for Group Use

Note: Group defined as 20 or more people

- 14 Camping, cook-outs, any group use is allowed by non-commercial, Reading-based groups, or by groups authorized by the Reading Town Forest committee.
- 15 Town police must be notified in advance of group use.
- 16 Approved vehicles shall follow designated roads only. Vehicle speed must not exceed 5 miles per hour. Vehicle parking shall be in designated areas only, and accessed by designated routes. Parking shall allow access by emergency vehicles at all times.
- 17 A portable toilet must be on site for overnight group use. It must be removed within four days of the event.
- 18 Violation of any Town Forest rule or violation of conditions imposed for group use may result in denial of future use of the area by that group.