



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

Devens Reserve Forces Training Area
31 Quebec Street
Devens, Massachusetts 01434-4424

AMIM-DEG-ZA

September 11, 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR Prospective Hunters

SUBJECT: Letter of Instruction (LOI) for the 2024 Fall Hunting Season

1. U.S. Army Garrison Devens Reserve Training Area (Devens RFTA) intends to open areas of South Post for hunting during the 2024 fall hunting season. If interested in participating, please review the information below for the anticipated schedule, current registration instructions, and important program rules.

2. In coordination with the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife (Mass Wildlife), Devens RFTA will additionally host the Paraplegic Sportsmen’s hunt on October 31, 2024, through November 2, 2024, and the Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW) hunt on December 2, 2024. Hunting will be closed to all others on these dates. These programs are coordinated by Mass Wildlife and Devens RFTA does not accept registration applications for these programs. To learn more or register for these hunts, visit mass.gov/masswildlife.

3. Anticipated Schedule: The following dates are currently available for participation by all others; however, Devens RFTA reserves the right to change or cancel any of the following dates or hours as needed. Cancelled hunts will be rescheduled if possible. The start and end times shown below are firm.

Hunt Type	Dates	Time	Max #
Small Game/ Turkey Archery Deer Archery	October 7-11, 15-18	0630-1600	1 pp 100 acres available
Small Game/ Turkey/Deer Archery	October 21-25, 28-30	0630-1600	1 pp 200 acres available
Small Game/ Turkey Archery/ Deer Archery	November 4, 6-8, 12-15, 18-22, 25-26	0630-1600	1 pp 100 acres available
Shotgun Deer	December 3-6, 9-13	0630-1600	1 pp 100 acres available
Primitive Firearms Deer	December 16-20, 23, 26-27, 30	0630-1600	1 pp 100 acres available

4. No person will be allowed onto Devens RFTA before the stated start time, and all participants must be back to Range Control to check-out no later than (NLT) the stated end time (unless specifically authorized for tracking wounded game). No additional time will be made available for scouting or tree stand construction / deconstruction. Hunters may use portable tree stands and portable ground blinds but do

so at their own risk. Tree stands must be installed upon arrival and deconstructed prior to departure. Authorized portable tree stands include ladders and strap on tree steps. Nails, spikes and screw in type tree steps are prohibited. Hunters shall always wear and properly use a Fall Arrest System/Full Body Harness that meets Tree stand Manufacturers Association (TMA) type standards. Persons authorized to hunt on consecutive days in the same Training Area may leave their stand/blind in place until their last successive day but do so at their own risk. Devens RFTA is not responsible for loss or damage of any sort.

5. Registration: Adults 18 years or older, that pass a background check and possess all required hunting licenses, stamps, tags, and weapon (firearm or bow) registrations are eligible to hunt on Devens RFTA. Authorized hunters may bring one accompanying minor child aged 12 to 17, but they will observe a single bag limit and share a single firearm/bow with the respective adult sponsor. To apply for the 2024 fall season, bring the enclosed Fall 2024 Devens RFTA Hunter Registration Application and the Privately Owned Weapons Registration FD Form 2759 to the DOD Police Station located at 47 Quebec Street, Devens, MA no later than September 23, 2024.

6. If you have previously registered the weapon, that you will be using for hunting with the DoD Police, you do not need to bring the weapon in to register it again; however, you will need to bring in the Fall 2024 Devens RFTA Hunter Registration Application and obtain an unescorted access pass and a copy of your firearms registration form if you do not already have it. Each prospective hunter must register individually. Except for accompanying minors, as noted above, hunters are not permitted to bring a guest to hunt with them.

7. Registration will be open from 6:30 am to 2:00 pm Monday through Friday (excluding federal holidays), or at other times by appointment only. The following items (a-g) must be presented at the time of registration:

- a. A complete and accurate Fall 2024 Devens RFTA Hunter Registration Application.
- b. A complete and accurate Privately Owned Weapons Registration for 2759.
- c. A valid, government-issued photo ID.
- d. A resident or non-resident MA hunting license.
- e. Any weapons (firearms or bows) to be used to hunt on the Garrison.
- f. All applicable documentation of firearm ownership (LTC, FID card, etc.).
- g. Military ID, if applicable.

Note that registration for a hunting season is an expression of interest and does not guarantee access to the Garrison. Authorization to hunt on Devens RFTA property will be allocated on a first- come, first-served basis, and lottery system for any remaining slots.

8. Rules and Requirements: **Hunting on Devens RFTA is a privilege, not a right.**

The Garrison Commander and his authorized representatives reserve the right to refuse entry to any person at any time and for any reason. Administrative authority is delegated by the Commander to the Natural Resources Branch and the Hunting Trapping Fishing and Review Board (HFTRB) for any administrative suspension or action (see Hunter Standard Operating Procedure SOP). The intent of the review board is to ensure fair and unbiased decision making on major administrative violations. Any violation will result in an automatic suspension of hunting privileges until the violation is reviewed. Penalties for common violations are listed in the Hunter SOP. Failure to abide by all state and federal laws/regulations, Garrison Policies, current Hunter SOP and this LOI, or verbal instructions from any staff person may result in administrative suspension or loss of hunting privileges on Devens RFTA and/or penalties levied by the State. This includes, but is not limited to bag limits, requirements for reporting harvested game, mandated attire, safety gear, and restrictions on the type/caliber of firearms. All hunters are required to comply with all Devens RFTA Conservation Law Enforcement Officers (CLEO's) legal orders and directives. Hunting participants are subject to on-the-spot and random compliance checks. Failure to comply with CLEO's orders may result in administrative or legal penalties.

9. Specific Rules and Requirements: All harvested game must be reported at Range Control and to Mass Wildlife. Hunters must Report Deer Harvest to 978-857-1098 as soon as possible to inform the biologist (if available) for Fort Devens biological data collection, leave a detailed message with training area, name, and phone number if biologist is unavailable. If a Devens RFTA biologist is unavailable and you need assistance, please call the Devens RFTA Conservation Law Enforcement branch at 978-615-6848 and a Conservation Officer will help you in filling out the provided data collection card.

a. If Devens RFTA biologist is unavailable, please fill out provided data collection card. This is for Devens RFTA wildlife management purposes only.

b. Hunters must still report harvest to Mass Wildlife (official check station/onlineMass FishHunt).

c. Bag limit is one turkey of either sex or two antlered deer per year. Hunters with antlerless deer permits will be allowed to take as many antlerless deer as they have permits for in Zone. Hunters are required to show antlerless deer permits when registering. Only one weapon (firearm or bow) is allowed per authorized hunter per day.

d. All weapons are subject to inspection by the Devens RFTA Conservation Law Enforcement Officers at any time; failure to comply will result in administrative or criminal penalties. The purpose of these inspections is to ensure compliance with safety regulations and to prevent the illegal possession or use of weapons. Shotguns no larger than 10 gauge and muzzleloaders no larger than .775 caliber are the only firearms permitted for possession and use by hunters on Devens RFTA. Repeating shotguns must be "plugged" to ensure a maximum loaded capacity of three shells (one in the chamber and two in the magazine). Safety sticker must be applied for turkey hunters.

e. The only ammunition authorized for deer hunting is a single projectile (slug). Use of buckshot is not permitted on the Garrison. The only ammunition authorized for turkey hunting is #4 - #7 shot.

f. Archery means bow-and-arrow. Use of a crossbow is permitted only by permanently disabled persons who have obtained a crossbow permit from Mass Wildlife. Poisoned arrows, explosive tips, air bows and bows drawn by mechanical means are prohibited.

g. Harassment of other hunters, government employees or contractors involved in natural resources management or biological collection duties is prohibited and may result in loss of hunting privileges or criminal penalties. The use of inappropriate, crude, offensive or threatening language directed at others is prohibited. To report violations, please contact the Devens RFTA Conservation Law Enforcement branch.

h. Unauthorized excavation or digging is prohibited. The collection of any artifact (such as Native American artifacts, old bottles, coins, etc.), disturbance of any feature related to human activity, and the collection of paleontological specimens is prohibited. The use of detectors is strictly prohibited.

i. All hunting areas are utilized for military training and dangers inherent to such training are present. Hunters hunt at their own risk. It is possible to find unexploded ordnance (UXO) anywhere. If a UXO is found, hunters are not to touch or disturb the UXO and are to carefully leave the area the way they entered and report from a safe distance. Remember to Recognize, Retreat and Report. Once at a safe distance report to Range Operations at 978- 615-6071.

j. Hunters must park adjacent to or within assigned training area. Vehicles must be safely parked on the road shoulder adjacent to an approved drivable road no further than 15 yards from the road shoulder in such a manner that it does not create a hazard, prohibit through traffic, or block gates or any trails. Hunters must drive the most direct route possible, on an approved road, to assigned area. Hunters must drive the most direct route possible, on an approved road when leaving their assigned area to the Range Control building. All hunting access to Devens RFTA must be from within the installation after traveling through an approved access point and from interior roads. No

vehicles may be parked on exterior state roads to gain access. Hunting pass must be displayed on driver's side dash.

k. Assigned Training Area. Hunters must hunt within their assigned training area. Hunters will be allowed to switch training areas once per day if another training area is available, but hunters must go back to range control to swap out their area hunting pass and must annotate their new location on the sign in sheet. This is for accountability, so we know where folks are in case of an emergency. Failure to do so will result in this privilege being taken away.

l. Hunters must make every effort to recover and track wounded game. Hunters tracking wounded deer afterhours must coordinate with the Natural Resources Branch and Conservation Law Enforcement to track game past final check-out time, or to access/utilize an unauthorized road. Tracking wounded game in the Impact Area is strictly prohibited. Hunters must fill in data collection card upon arrival to Range Control.

m. It is strictly prohibited to:

i. Discharge a firearm or bow from a vehicle.

ii. Discharge a firearm or bow when standing on a paved or gravel road or rail.

iii. Discharge of any firearm or release of any arrow upon or across any state or hard-surfaced highway, hard compacted roadway that is maintained, or within 150 feet of any such roadway.

iv. Possession of a loaded firearm, discharge of a firearm, or hunting on the land of another within 500 feet of any dwelling or building in use.

v. Discharge a firearm or bow across a paved or gravel road or trail.

vi. Discharge a firearm or bow or into any area other than the hunters assigned Training Area.

vii. Discharge a firearm for purposes other than hunting. Improper handling or misuse of a firearm is prohibited.

viii. Hunt deer using bait, dogs, electronic calls, or rifles to hunt deer.

ix. To use motorized or mechanical turkey/deer decoys. The practice of reaping or fanning is prohibited.

x. Possess a handgun while hunting.

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xi. Photograph installation facilities, training equipment, or troops while Devens RFTA.

xii. Trail camera use is also prohibited.

xiii. Drive on any roads that are closed to vehicles.

xiv. Use a stand or blind without the owner's permission.

xv. Cut or remove live branches, live or dead standing trees.

xvi. Enter Impact Area or any unauthorized area.

xvii. Use a UTV or ATV on Devens RFTA property.

xviii. Transport or store a loaded firearm or a bow with a nocked arrow in any vehicle.

xix. Hunt on Devens RFTA if your hunting license/permit is suspended in another State.

xx. Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or any other controlled substance [Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) products, including those prescribed for medical purposes, are illegal on Federal property] while on the Garrison. Any person suspected of being under the influence of a controlled substance will be denied access to or immediately escorted from the property.

10. Applicants that are selected to hunt in the Fall 2024 season will receive confirmation via email identifying which dates they are permitted to hunt on Devens RFTA. The email will include detailed instructions of the check in and check out procedures to be followed the day of the hunt.

11. For general questions about the program, please contact Kyle Crafts, Natural Resources Manager, via email DRFTAEnvironmental@army.mil, or by phone at 978-615-6551. For registration-specific questions or to set-up an appointment, contact the DOD Conservation Law Enforcement Officer, 978-615-6848.

CARLOS M. POVENTUD-ESTRADA
LTC, LG
Commanding