



The Governor's "Stay Home, Stay Safe" addendum to the Emergency Declaration still allows us to enjoy Vermont's outdoors while staying close to home. We thank the public for their cooperation and understanding during the COVID-19 public health emergency. Keeping trails, parks, and other public outdoor spaces open for appropriate public use is challenging with limited staffing and all state and municipal agencies are doing their best to balance the requirements of the Governor's "Stay Home, Stay Safe" order with Vermonters' need for exercise and stress relief. We want folks to have healthy, close-to-home options and – in part -- the public's behavior will determine if that remains possible and prudent.

Here are tips to recreate locally and stay safe outdoors during this public health emergency:

**Recreate locally:** walk on your street or a local wood lot as opposed to hopping in the car to visit a favorite spot. If you must drive someplace, please limit the distance from home to ten miles, and only drive with members of your household. You can find information on local spots on <http://www.Trailfinder.info> and [www.vtfishandwildlife.gov](http://www.vtfishandwildlife.gov).

**Respect mud season conditions:** some trails may be closed as is common this time of year. Mud season closures will be updated regularly on [www.Trailfinder.info](http://www.Trailfinder.info). Please consult [www.Trailfinder.info](http://www.Trailfinder.info) prior to starting your hike. For general guidance, see <https://vtstateparks.com/hiking.html#mudSeasonHiking> for more information.

**Access State Lands:** Currently, state lands (State Parks, Forests and Wildlife Management Areas) remain open and accessible to the public for outdoor recreation, although most facilities like restrooms are currently closed and not being sanitized. Some roads and trails are gated this time of year and closed to all but foot traffic. The Long Trail System on state lands is currently closed. Visit [Green Mountain Club](http://www.GreenMountainClub.com) for more information and updates. Other trail closures may be necessary in the future. Please check [www.Trailfinder.info](http://www.Trailfinder.info) often for updates.

We do ask that you follow commonsense behaviors including honoring all signage, treating public areas with respect and giving people space at gathering points like parking areas and scenic overlooks, for example. Visitation and use will be monitored, with closures possible based on overcrowding or additional orders from health agencies. If a parking lot is full, or too many people are gathered at a location, please find an alternative place to recreate.

**Minimize risk to others:** Go out only if you're feeling healthy, have not been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, and/or have not recently traveled from a location with a CDC-issued travel advisory.

**Engage in low-risk activities:** Now is not the time to try something extreme and end up in the hospital, taxing an already overburdened health care system.

**Don't crowd:** Stay at least 6 feet away from others when in a public setting, including the outdoors. Outdoor crowding isn't any better than indoor crowding. Just because you're outside doesn't mean it's safe unless you are continuing to practice appropriate social distancing, good personal hygiene, and avoid touching your face until you can wash your hands. This includes finding an alternative place to recreate if the area you choose is already crowded.

**Practice good hygiene:** Wash hands often with soap and warm water for 20 seconds. If those aren't available, use a hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol. Avoid surfaces that are touched often, such as doorknobs, handrails, and playground equipment.

**Please leash your dog!** They are members of your household and need to keep their social distance as well (most standard leashes are 6 feet in length).

**Explore more recreation opportunities:** You can keep up to date on fishing and hunting opportunities through the Vermont Fish and Wildlife website or Facebook page, and you can purchase [hunting or fishing licenses](#) online. You can also join the Vermont State Parks [Venture Vermont](#) Outdoor Challenge, which provides additional ideas for outdoor activities and is a great way for kids to learn about their environment.

**Keep up-to-date on Vermont State Parks:** At this point, Vermont State Parks are planning to be fully operational later this spring and early summer. Some modifications to programs and services may be expected to ensure the safety and health of park visitors and staff. Check the website <https://vtstateparks.blogspot.com/2020/03/vermont-state-parks-covid-19-updates.html> for regular updates as this is likely to continue to change

**Off-season (now through official opening) camping in Vermont State Parks has been suspended** as a result of the [Governor's Executive Order](#) that went into effect on March 25, 2020 at 5 pm.

**For more info on COVID-19 and related guidelines, visit:**

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/infectious-disease/2019-novel-coronavirus>

- For outdoor recreation COVID-19 related links, visit:  
<https://fpr.vermont.gov/recreation/outdoor-recreation-and-covid-19>.
- For information on wildlife based recreational opportunities, visit:  
<https://vtfishandwildlife.com/>