

## SUBCHAPTER 10J - WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREA REGULATIONS

### 15A NCAC 10J .0101 DESIGNATION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREAS

- (a) For purposes of this Subchapter, the following definitions shall apply:
- (1) "Wildlife Conservation Area" means lands owned, leased, controlled, or cooperatively managed by the Wildlife Resources Commission primarily for the conservation of nongame wildlife resources including those areas designated and posted as Wildlife Conservation Areas and those designated and posted as Waterbird Nesting Areas.
  - (2) "Other materials" means metals, minerals, rocks, soil, organic debris, buildings, fences, archeological resources as defined in G.S. 70-12, and water.
- (b) The Wildlife Resources Commission has identified and posted the following areas on Wildlife Conservation Areas that have additional restrictions on entry or usage:
- (1) "Safety Zones" are areas where hunting is prohibited. No person shall hunt or discharge a firearm or archery equipment as defined in 15A NCAC 10B .0116 within, into, or across a posted safety zone on any Wildlife Conservation Area. Falconry is exempt from this provision.
  - (2) "Restricted Zones" are areas closed to use by the public, and entry upon such an area is prohibited without written approval from the Wildlife Resources Commission. The Commission may authorize entry when the primary purpose for the Restricted Zone shall not be compromised, and the persons requesting entry can demonstrate a valid need or official business of the Commission is being conducted by a contractor or agent of the Commission. Valid needs may include access to private property, scientific investigations, surveys, or other activities in the public interest.

*History Note:* Authority G.S. 113-134; 113-264; 113-291.2; 113-305; 113-306;  
Eff. February 1, 1990;  
Readopted Eff. August 1, 2023.

### 15A NCAC 10J .0102 GENERAL REGULATIONS REGARDING USE OF CONSERVATION AREAS

- (a) Entry on areas posted as Wildlife Conservation Areas for purposes other than wildlife observation, hunting, trapping, or fishing shall be as authorized by the landowner.
- (b) Entry is prohibited above the high tide waterline from March 1 through September 15 on areas designated and posted as Waterbird Nesting Areas.
- (c) No person shall deposit litter, trash, garbage, or other refuse on a Wildlife Conservation Area. No garbage dumps or sanitary landfills shall be established on a Wildlife Conservation Area by a person, firm, corporation, county, or municipality, except as permitted by the landowner.
- (d) No person shall discharge:
- (1) a weapon from a vehicle;
  - (2) a weapon within 200 yards of any building or designated camping areas;
  - (3) a weapon within, into, or across a posted "safety zone;" or
  - (4) a weapon within, into, or across a posted "restricted zone."
- No person shall hunt with or have in their possession a shotgun shell containing lead or toxic shot while hunting waterfowl on an area designated as a Wildlife Conservation Area, except shotgun shells containing lead buckshot may be used while deer hunting.
- (e) Dogs shall not enter a Wildlife Conservation Area designated and posted as a Waterbird Nesting Area from March 1 through September 15 above the high tide waterline.
- (f) Subject to the restrictions contained in 15A NCAC 10B .0302, .0303, and .0306 trapping of fur-bearing animals is permitted on an area designated and posted as a Wildlife Conservation Area during the applicable open seasons, except that trapping is prohibited:
- (1) on the Nona Pitt Hinson Cohen Wildlife Conservation Area in Richmond County; and
  - (2) in posted "safety zones" located on a Wildlife Conservation Area.
- (g) The following is prohibited on areas designated as Wildlife Conservation Areas or on waters within their boundaries:
- (1) driving a motorized vehicle on an area posted against vehicular traffic;
  - (2) camping, unless designated by the landowner. On the coastal islands designated Wildlife Conservation Areas, camping is allowed except on areas designated and posted as Waterbird Nesting Areas;
  - (3) swimming, except for the waters adjacent to coastal island Wildlife Conservation Areas;

- (4) operating a vessel powered by internal combustion engine; and
  - (5) operating motorized land vehicles not licensed for highway use, except that persons who have obtained a permit issued pursuant to G.S. 113-297 shall comply with permit conditions;
  - (6) open fires.
- (h) Releasing animals or birds, domesticated animals, or feral animals on Wildlife Conservation Areas is prohibited except for:
- (1) hunting dogs and raptors when permitted for hunting and training purposes; or
  - (2) with prior written authorization of the Wildlife Resources Commission.
- (i) No living or dead nongame wildlife, fungi, invertebrates, eggs, nests, animal parts, plants, plant materials, or other materials may be possessed on or removed from Wildlife Conservation Areas without written permission from the Commission. Minimal amounts of animal parts, plant parts not removed from live plants, and other materials may be collected by hand and removed from Commission lands without written permission, except in violation of rules, general statutes, or federal law. Collection of animal parts and plant parts not removed from live plants for commercial use or sale is prohibited. For purposes of this Subparagraph, "minimal amounts," are quantities that fit within a cubic foot of space, except for firewood to be used at posted camping areas. Collection of firewood sufficient to build and maintain a fire during the Wildlife Conservation Area user's stay at the campground is permitted.

*History Note:* Authority G.S. 113-134; 113-264; 113-270.3; 113-291.2; 113-291.5; 113-296; 113-297; 113-305; 113-306;  
 Eff. February 1, 1990;  
 Amended Eff. January 1, 2013; January 1, 2012; August 1, 2010; May 1, 2007; May 1, 2006; June 1, 2005;  
 Readopted Eff. August 1, 2023.

#### **15A NCAC 10J .0103 HUNTING ON WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREAS**

- (a) No person shall be under the influence of an impairing substance, as defined by G.S. 20-4.01(48b), while hunting on a designated Wildlife Conservation Area.
- (b) Erecting or occupying a tree stand or platform attached by nails, screws, bolts, or wire to a tree for the purpose of hunting on a designated Wildlife Conservation Area is prohibited. This prohibition shall not apply to lag-screw steps or portable stands that are removed after use with no metal left remaining in or attached to the tree.
- (c) Hunting on designated Wildlife Conservation Areas during the open season for game or furbearing species is permitted, except where the area is closed to hunting or limited to specific dates by the rules of this Chapter.
  - (1) waterfowl hunters shall not enter Wildlife Conservation Areas earlier than 4:00 a.m. on the permitted hunting dates, and hunting is prohibited after 1:00 p.m. on such hunting dates; decoys may not be set out prior to 4:00 a.m. and must be removed by 3:00 p.m. on each date.
  - (2) game may be taken during the open seasons and hunting is limited to Mondays, Wednesdays, Saturdays and Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.
  - (3) deer may be taken with archery equipment, as specified in 15A NCAC 10B .0116, on the opening day of the archery season.
- (d) The following shall be prohibited while hunting on Wildlife Conservation Areas:
  - (1) operating a vessel or vehicle powered by an internal combustion engine;
  - (2) attempting to obscure the sex or age of a game bird or game animal taken by severing the head or other part thereof, or possess a bird or animal that has been mutilated;
  - (3) placing salt, grain, fruit, or other foods without prior written authorization of the Commission or its agent; or attempting to take game birds or game animals attracted to such foods;
  - (4) using an electronic calling device for the purpose of attracting wild birds or wild animals; and
  - (5) removing live wild animals or wild birds, except with the written permission of the landowner.
- (e) The Nona Pitt Hinson Cohen Wildlife Conservation Area - Richmond County is closed to hunting.

*History Note:* Authority G.S. 113-134; 113-136; 113-264; 113-291.2; 113-305;  
 Eff. February 1, 1990;  
 Amended Eff. August 1, 2021; October 1, 1994.  
 Readopted Eff. February 1, 2025.

#### **15A NCAC 10J .0104 FISHING ON WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREAS**

- (a) Designated Wildlife Conservations Areas are open to public fishing except restocked ponds posted against fishing.
- (b) No special device specified in 15A NCAC 10C .0404, except archery equipment, may be used in the impounded waters or free-running streams on designated Wildlife Conservation Areas.

*History Note:* Authority G.S. 113-134; 113-264; 113-272; 113-292; 113-305;  
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Amended Eff. October 1, 1994.  
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