

Recreational Shooting and Hunting

The California Desert Conservation Area offers a variety of recreational activities, including hiking, camping, off-highway vehicle use, hunting, and recreational shooting. A questions often asked is, "Where can I legally go target shooting or hunt in the desert?"



Shooting of any kind is not permitted in the Stoddard Valley OHV Recreation Area (except shotgun use during hunting season) and in the El Mirage OHV Recreation Area. These areas are heavily used by off-highway vehicles. What might be a great backstop for recreational shooters may be a rider's favorite hill climb or descent route.

A zone has been established where shotgun use only (with shot no larger than half the bore diameter) is allowed. The general area just south of State Route 58 and Interstate 40, north of the San Bernardino National Forest, west of the Twentynine Palms Marine Corps Air/Ground Combat Center and east of the Los Angeles County line is designated as shotgun-only by San Bernardino County Ordinance.

There is absolutely no shooting at El Mirage OHV area, Rainbow Basin, Sawtooth, and Afton Canyon. The "Shotgun Only" zone does not prohibit lawful skeet shooting.

RECREATIONAL SHOOTING ON THE PUBLIC LANDS

Target shooting is allowed on land managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The legal target shooting area is the area north, northwest, or northeast of Barstow, taking into consideration any private land, posted signs, and other rules and regulations that would apply. It is the responsibility of the shooter to know the laws for the area where they are shooting.

Please see the overview map for the specific "**shotguns only**" area involved. This ordinance is in effect due to scattered homes and recreational users sharing the area.

For a detailed map, call the San Bernardino County Special Districts office at (909) 387-5940 (157 W. 5th Street, 2nd Floor, San Bernardino, CA 92415-0451).

Remember:

- Find a safe backdrop. Shots fired across open desert can travel more than a mile.
- Shoot only retrievable, freestanding targets. It is illegal to shoot at trees, bottles, or other objects. Take all used targets with you.
- Do not shoot within 150 yards of any man-made object, camp, domestic livestock, or occupied dwelling.
- Check with local sheriff or land management agencies before using



- an area for shooting. Do not shoot on Private Land without the owner's permission.
- Many assault-type weapons are banned in the State of California. For information on California firearms laws and policies, please visit the **Firearms Division, California Department of Justice** web site.
- Play safe and use caution. Shooting has a great risk for injuring people at great distances.

HUNTING ON THE PUBLIC LANDS

All hunting in the desert is regulated by the California Department of Fish and Game. You must have a valid hunting license. It is your responsibility to know all laws and regulations related to the use of firearms in California.

Is legal hunting permitted on public lands within the Barstow field region? Yes. You must have a valid hunting license.

Are there areas on the public lands which are closed to legal hunting? Yes. You may not hunt near BLM campgrounds or within Off-Highway Vehicle Areas, except for the hunting of upland game birds in season in the Stoddard Valley, Johnson Valley, Dumont Dunes, and Razor Off-Highway Vehicle Areas. Hunting of any kind and discharge of firearms of any kind is prohibited in the El Mirage Off-Highway Vehicle Area.

Does the BLM have hunting maps? No. Hunting maps are available from the California Department of Fish and Game and from sporting goods stores and gun shops.

Where can I get topographic maps? Topographic maps are for sale from engineering firms and sporting goods stores. BLM does not have topographic maps for sale.

Does BLM have other maps for sale? Yes. The BLM maps, known as "Desert Access Guides" are for sale in the California Desert District office, in Riverside, and in each of the field offices, including the Barstow Field Office. They sell for \$4.00 each, show public and private land ownership, and are at a scale of one-half-inch to the mile.

Can I drive anywhere I care to on public lands when I am hunting? No. Vehicles are restricted to designated routes of travel as posted and as shown on BLM maps. Vehicles are prohibited in all wilderness areas. Cross-country travel is permitted only in the off-highway vehicle areas. No hunting or use of firearms is permitted in the El Mirage Off-Highway Vehicle Area.

Where can I get more information on hunting in California? From the California Department of Fish and Game. By reading their publications, by asking for information by telephone or in person, or by visiting their web site.

For California hunting seasons and regulations, please visit the **California Department of Fish and Game** web site.