

The Nature Conservancy is a private, nonprofit conservation organization that owns and manages lands in Vermont and we are dedicated to protecting the lands and waters on which all life depends. We encourage the public to visit and enjoy our lands, but limit use to activities that are compatible with our mission and conservation goals. Please respect of these policies when visiting our preserves so that future generations can continue to enjoy the great places of Vermont.



Uses that are generally allowed

Hiking, Walking, Snowshoeing and Cross-Country Skiing— Some trails are seasonally closed or re-routed to minimize detrimental impacts and to protect sensitive habitats. While our preserves are open in the winter, trails and parking areas are often not maintained.

Canoeing, Kayaking, Other Non-Motorized Boating, and Swimming – Many water bodies on Conservancy preserves are accessible for the public use, although The Nature Conservancy does not actively maintain boat access.

Hunting and Fishing – Hunting and fishing are allowed on most Conservancy lands in Vermont, though some may require prior permission. For more information on our hunting policies:
www.nature.org/vermont/hunting

Harvesting of wild edibles – Harvesting/foraging of berries or other plentiful wild edibles in small quantities for individual personal use is permitted.

Uses that are generally prohibited

The following uses are generally inconsistent with The Nature Conservancy’s mission, goals, or policies and procedures, and are not allowed on Conservancy preserves.

Pets and Domesticated Animals – Pets are generally prohibited except for trained ADA service animals. Pets are inappropriate visitors to Conservancy preserves because they can disturb wildlife, impede enjoyment of the preserve by other visitors, spread diseases to wildlife, or leave stools that may create sanitation problems or contain seeds from non-native plants. Horseback riding, pack animals and dog sledding are not allowed.

Motorized Vehicles and Watercraft – All motorized vehicles are prohibited. Exceptions include snowmobile use on approved VAST trails, use of motorized vehicles for Conservancy management purposes, and use of motorized vehicles in emergencies.

Wheeled Vehicles Including Bicycles – Our trails are not designed or maintained for wheeled vehicles, which can have detrimental effects on trail conditions, especially on steep slopes and erodible soils, and so are prohibited.

Camping and fires – In general, Conservancy preserves are only open from dawn to dusk and camping and fires are prohibited. An exception is made at Barr Hill Natural Area in Greensboro, where fires are allowed in designated fire pits, but camping is prohibited.

Rock/Ice/Mixed Climbing – Rock, ice, “mixed” climbing and bouldering are prohibited.

Trapping, target shooting, baiting or feeding of wildlife – Trapping requires the permission of the landowner by Vermont statute. Currently, trapping, target shooting and baiting/feeding wildlife is not generally permitted on Conservancy preserves.

Commercial Harvest or Collection – Collection of plant, animal, mineral or other specimens is prohibited, except for approved scientific purposes. Commercial collecting of any kind is prohibited.

For-profit, Commercial Trips or Guiding – Because we are non-profit organization and our lands are open to the public for free, any paid, commercial trips are prohibited.

Hang Gliding, Personal Aircraft, Ultralights and Drones – All self-propelled or other aircraft are prohibited from taking off, landing or being operated by a person on any Conservancy preserve unless it is associated with Conservancy management purposes or pre-approved research.

Adventure Racing or Orienteering Competitions – Our preserves and trails are not designed or maintained for trail running or large group activities. Additionally, these activities can negatively impact the experience of other visitors and are not allowed.

Group Sports/Games – Paintball, capture the flag, and other types of group games are prohibited.

Uses that are generally allowed with prior permission

The following activities require advance permission. Please call 802-229-4425 or contact vermont@tnc.org to find out how to obtain permission.

Research and Field Study – Individuals from educational, research, academic, governmental or other recognized institution can conduct non-destructive field study and research on Conservancy preserves with prior written permission.

Educational Programs and Field Trips – Many non-profit organizations and school groups use Conservancy preserves for environmental programs and educational field trips. Interested parties larger than 8 people should contact The Nature Conservancy for general permission, and should notify the Conservancy prior to each use to ensure compliance with management guidelines and to avoid conflict with any other events or management activities.

Uses that may be allowed on a case by case basis

Please call 802-229-4425 or contact vermont@tnc.org to find out whether the activity you are interested in is permitted on a particular preserve.

Snowmobiling – Snowmobiling established VAST trails is allowed on some Conservancy preserves. VAST clubs are required to enter into use agreements for any trails on Conservancy property and must carry liability insurance.

Hunting with Dogs – Use of trained retrieving or pointing dogs may be allowed to aid in hunting of upland birds or waterfowl. Hunting with hounds or coursing dogs is prohibited.

Geocaching, letterboxing, earth caching – Geocaches are considered on a case-by-case basis and must be placed in a location and manner that avoids disturbance or alteration to any significant natural feature or area of ecological concern.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Lynn McNamara, Director of Stewardship, at lmcnamara@tnc.org.