

Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve MANAGED DEER HUNT PERMIT

2026 RULES AND REGULATIONS

The following information, rules and regulations apply to the managed deer hunt at Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve, Stafford County, Virginia. Any violation will result in revocation of this permit and elimination of your participation in any hunting programs sponsored by DCR's Division of Natural Heritage and possible criminal charges.

1. A Muzzleloader managed deer hunt will be held on November 10th, and 11th 2025 and a General Firearms managed Deer Hunt on November 17th and 18th 2025. A **Mandatory** orientation will take place at the preserve the morning of the hunts at 5:00 AM.
2. Check-in is between 4:30 am and 5:00 am at the Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve Raven Road trailhead parking lot. All hunters that have been selected and have not checked in by 5:00 am will lose their selected status and join the stand-by hunters. Stand-by spots will be awarded in order of arrival at 5:01 am to fill vacant stands. Stand-bys are required to pay \$15 reservation fee.
3. Hunter check-out is by 6:30pm. Hunters **MUST** check-in and check-out at the Raven Road trailhead parking lot. Address is 88 Raven Road, Stafford Virginia.
4. Hunters will be permitted to bring one guest to hunt in their designated zone. An additional permit will need to be purchased for the guest. The guest must also have proof of hunter education certificate, and a valid hunting license at check in.
5. Due to limited parking at the Raven Road trailhead, hunters accompanied by a guest **MUST** carpool. Only one parking spot per selected hunter will be available.
6. Participants must be 16 years of age, or if ages 12-15, accompanied by a responsible adult who has a hunter education certificate (only one weapon per child/adult combination is allowed).
7. Hunters are encouraged to scout their hunting area prior to the hunt, unarmed, and during normal preserve hours only. The Raven Road trail head is open Thursday through Sunday. The Raven Road entrance is closed on Monday through Wednesday.
8. Access to hunt zones varies. Some hunt zones will be accessible from pull offs along the entrance road, Raven Road, or a short walk from the check station. Some of the zones are remote and will require a longer hike-in from the check station. DCR staff **will** assist in retrieving deer as possible, if the hunter can get the deer to a drivable section of service road or trail. DCR staff **will not** assist hunters in reaching these more remote zones.
9. Hunters will be required to have taken and passed a hunter safety course. Proof of hunter safety certification must be presented on the day of the hunt. No hunter will be allowed to hunt without proof of having completed a hunter safety course.
10. All required Virginia hunting licenses apply to the Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve hunt and will be checked prior to hunting.
11. Every hunter and guest shall wear at least 500 square inches of solid blaze color in the form of a blaze orange or pink hat and blaze orange or pink upper body clothing that is visible from 360 degrees.
12. Only Muzzleloaders are permitted during the muzzleloader hunt; all other weapons are prohibited. Muzzleloaders, Shotguns (slugs only), and Rifles may be used during the General Firearms hunt. All other weapons are prohibited (including handguns). **The ammunition must be lead free.** If using a shotgun only slugs are allowed. Weapons will not be loaded prior to arrival at the assigned hunting zone and will be unloaded prior to leaving the zone.
13. Hunters will be allowed to use portable (climbing or ladder) tree stands, however, safety harnesses are required. Screw peg steps are not allowed. Trimming of trees for shooting lanes or to secure stands is prohibited

14. Hunters leaving their assigned hunt zone must unload their weapon prior to doing so. Unauthorized entry into adjacent hunt zones is prohibited. If you need to retrieve a deer from another hunt zone contact DCR staff.
15. Only deer may be killed in accordance with the Code of Virginia. No other wildlife species may be killed during this hunt.
16. Hunters may take a buck before taking a doe, but before taking a second buck the hunter must take a doe.
17. Deer may be field dressed no closer than 200 feet from hiking trails, structures or roads. All deer must be checked by DCR staff at the check station (trailhead parking lot). Information will be collected on each deer. All deer killed **by/before** 1 pm must be checked in by 2 pm.
18. Hunters must park off of roadways at their zone's assigned area. Vehicles must not be driven off road.
19. There will be no shooting from the road, across roads, or across water.
20. In accordance with state hunting laws, hunting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.
21. Use of bait is prohibited. Artificial deer scent is permissible. Dogs are prohibited. No drugs or alcoholic beverages. Only one weapon is allowed per adult hunter.
22. Direct any questions concerning the hunt to:

Officer James Watling, Northern Operations Steward
540-824-2019

or Michael Lott, Northern Region Supervisor
540-658-8690

23. The Division of Natural Heritage reserves the right to close the managed hunt or to close any zone in the event that the number of deer taken exceeds that which is needed for herd management purposes; or, for any other reason.

24. All Virginia Hunting Laws and Regulations are applicable during this managed hunt. Hunters who violate regulations will be subject to removal from the preserve and/or if the hunter is in violation of the Code of Virginia the hunter may be subject to a Virginia Uniform Summons.

"I have read and understand the above rules and regulations for participating in this controlled deer hunt. I understand that a violation of any of these rules and regulations is a violation of Virginia Administrative Code 4VAC5-30-40 and may result in the revocation of my hunting permit for this hunt, and the elimination of my participation in any hunting program sponsored by Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation for the remainder of this season and subsequent years. Any fees paid to date for such programs will be forfeited."

Signature

Printed Name

Date

Parent's Signature (if under 18)

Printed Name

Date