

**AVON PARK AIR FORCE RANGE
PUBLIC RECREATION REGULATIONS
2011 - 2012**

1. Introduction

The Avon Park Air Force Range is 106,000 acres in size. It has been an active military training complex since 1941, providing realistic training to all branches of the military. To ensure safety, the Public Recreation Area is divided into 18 Management Units with certain portions permanently closed and other areas temporarily closed to public access. Access is allowed only in open Management Units. Approximately 78,000 acres are available for public recreation, Thursday through Monday, depending on the military mission and the general hunting seasons. Please call 863-452-4254 or visit our website at www.avonparkafr.net to see if the installation is open to general recreation (non-hunting).

2. Permit Requirements

- a. An Outdoor Recreation Permit is required by all individuals (18 years of age) except Hunt Permit Holders during the posted hunting seasons. Permits may be purchased for a day, a weekend, or a year.
- b. An Individual Outdoor Recreation Permit allows the holder to use all open Management Units for all forms of legal recreation except hunting, and he/she may bring one (1) underage child (under 18 years old) to participate in outdoor recreation activities.
- c. A Family Outdoor Recreation Permit allows the holder to use all open Management Units for all forms of legal recreation except hunting, and bring their spouse and up to five (5) underage children (under 18 years old) to participate in outdoor recreation activities.
- d. All non-dependent underage children must have a signed parental consent form to recreate with the Permit Holder. The Permit Holder is responsible for the actions of all individuals entering the installation under their permit. Failure to properly escort/supervise these individuals may result in the suspension of recreation privileges for the Permit Holder.

3. Access Procedures (Permit Holder)

The following procedures must be observed by all Permit Holders:

- a. Recreational Permit Holders must enter the installation at the Main Gate or the Frostproof Gate, when these gates are open to the public access, and either sign-in at the Outdoor Recreation Office or the Frostproof Gate, if it is open.
- b. All users must then:
 - (1) Check the status map located at all sign-in locations. This map identifies which Management Units are open.
 - (2) Check the Forecast Sheet and read all recreational notes. The Forecast Sheet gives the estimated opening and closing times of each Management Unit and is intended to help the Permit Holders plan their weekend. Recreational notes provide important information such as prescribed burns, timber sales, road closures, etc. Since schedule changes may occur, it is the Permit Holder's responsibility to check the Management Unit status each day. Information kiosks are provided at the Outdoor Recreation Office and Willingham and Morgan Hole Campgrounds.
- c. All Permit Holders must sign-in and sign-out each time they enter or leave the installation. If for some reason you fail to sign out, call the office immediately at (863) 452-4254 and let them know that you have left the installation.
- d. All users should complete a Weekend Report Form and leave it at the Outdoor Recreation Office at the end of their stay.

4. Access Procedures (Permit Needed)

a. If an individual does not have an Outdoor Recreational Permit, they must enter the installation through the Main Gate and proceed directly to the Outdoor Recreation Office to purchase the proper permit and take the required safety briefing.

b. All users must then:

(1) Check the status map located at all sign-in locations. This map identifies which Management Units are open.

(2) Check the Forecast Sheet and read all recreational notes. The Forecast Sheet gives the estimated opening and closing times of each Management Unit and is intended to help the Permit Holders plan their weekend. Recreational notes provide important information such as prescribed burns, timber sales, road closures, etc. Since schedule changes may occur, it is the Permit Holder's responsibility to check the Management Unit status each day. Information kiosks are provided at the Outdoor Recreation Office and Willingham and Morgan Hole Campgrounds.

c. Yearly Individual and Yearly Family Permits may be purchased and are good for one year from date of purchase. There are also daily and weekly individual and family permits. The Permit Holder is liable for the actions of all individuals entering the installation under their permit. Failure to properly escort/supervise these individuals may result in the suspension of recreation privileges for the Permit Holder.

d. All Daily and Weekend Permits must be returned to the Outdoor Recreation Office at the end of their stay. If for some reason you forget to return your permit, call the office immediately at (863) 452-4254 and let them know that you have left the installation.

e. All users should complete a Weekend Report Form and leave it at the Outdoor Recreation Office at the end of their stay.

5. Use of Vehicles, Decals, and Passes

a. Each Recreation Permit Holder will be issued a Vehicle Decal. This decal is to be applied to the inside of the driver's side of the windshield. If the vehicle bearing the Vehicle Decal is sold or transferred to another individual, the Vehicle Decal must be removed before the vehicle leaves the Permit Holder's possession.

b. If a Permit Holder wishes to bring a vehicle on the installation that does not have a Vehicle Decal, they must enter at the main gate and proceed directly to the Outdoor Recreation Office to obtain a Temporary Vehicle Pass. Vehicles may not enter the Public Recreation Area without a Vehicle Decal or Temporary Vehicle Pass. Justified requests for one additional Vehicle Decal must be submitted in writing to the Outdoor Recreation Office. Forms are available at the Outdoor Recreation Office or at www.avonparkafr.net. A fee of \$10.00 will be charged for any additional or replacement vehicle decals or permits.

c. Any vehicle entering the installation must have a current license plate and insurance, meet all federal and state laws, and be operated by a licensed driver.

d. Vehicles must be operated only on improved and unimproved roads as designated on the Public Recreation Map.

e. No airboats, ATVs, or motorized cycles of any type are allowed except under special circumstances as designated by the Installation Commander. Only rubber-tired vehicles are permitted.

f. Vehicles may not be parked in such a manner as to obstruct traffic flow on any roads or fire lanes.

g. The use of vehicles is prohibited in the Public Recreation Area between 10:00 p.m. and 4:30 a.m. except on Frostproof and Kissimmee Roads or during verifiable emergencies.

h. During Archery and Spring Turkey Seasons, vehicular traffic is prohibited between one-half hour before sunrise and one and one-half hours past sunrise in Management Units 10A and 13 except on Van Eeghen and Kissimmee Roads.

i. Persons may ride in the bed of a pickup truck, but they must remain seated. The only exception is that persons under the age of 18 may not be in the bed of any pickup truck while traveling on Kissimmee, Frostproof, Smith, and Old Bravo Roads.

j. By accepting an APAFR Recreational Permit and Vehicle Decal/Temporary Vehicle Pass, users are giving consent to search their vehicles while on the installation. If a vehicle is towed or impounded, users agree to reimburse the towing agent on behalf of the vehicle owner/operator.

6. Dogs and Pets

a. Dogs, including pets, are allowed in all campgrounds. Dogs creating disturbances must be removed from the installation if requested by the Outdoor-Recreation-Program or law-enforcement employees.

b. All dogs must wear a collar bearing the name, telephone number, and address of the owner. All dogs must have a current rabies vaccination and have the rabies vaccination tag attached to their collar.

c. No dogs may be free-roaming.

d. Recreationists who have lost a dog must report this information to the Outdoor Recreation Office before leaving the installation. Every effort should be made to locate the dog before leaving.

e. Reactionists finding lost dogs must take them to the Outdoor Recreation Office to be placed in a pen. Outdoor Recreation personnel must be notified that the dog is there. Dogs not claimed within 24 hours or dogs without appropriate tags will be turned over to the Polk County Animal Control.

7. Camping

Willingham, Morgan Hole, and Fort Kissimmee Campgrounds are the only designated campgrounds for general public use. Campground boundaries are shown on the map. All campgrounds are equipped with non-potable water, picnic tables, and portable toilets. All campgrounds have large group pavilions and cold-water showers.

a. Generators are allowed in Willingham Campground west of Frostproof Road, Morgan Hole Campground north of Kissimmee Road, and in Ft. Kissimmee Campground north of the boat landing. Generators are restricted from all other camping areas. Generators may be used 24-hours-a-day where allowed.

b. Campground quiet hours are 11:00 p.m. - 4:30 a.m. People and/or their dogs creating excessive noise or behavior that disturbs other recreationists will be removed from the installation and may have their recreation privileges revoked.

c. No camping is allowed within 25 feet of a picnic pavilion, water pump, latrine (port-a-potty), or shower.

d. Campfires may not be left unattended at any time. Fire bans must be observed when in force.

e. Dumpsters at campgrounds are for trash accumulated while camping. They shall not be utilized for any household trash, tires, propane bottles, live coals, or ashes. The discharge of contaminants or human wastes is prohibited. No trash of any sort shall be left in the campground.

8. Fishing and Boating Regulations

Fishing is available in numerous small ponds and lakes on the installation, as well as along Arbuckle Creek and the Kissimmee River. All state fishing regulations are enforced.

a. There is a daily bag limit of five bass for Tomlin Hammock Lake.

b. There is a daily bag limit of ten catfish at all catfish ponds.

c. All persons shall comply with state and federal fishing laws.

d. Boats are restricted to a maximum engine size of ten horsepower on Tomlin Hammock Lake, Submarine Lake, and Little Lake. Gas or electric trolling motors may be used.

9. Hiking

There are 32 miles of hiking and nature trails available: Lake Arbuckle Hiking Trail (16 miles), Arbuckle Nature Trail and Boardwalk, Sandy Point Wildlife Refuge (6 miles), and the Kissimmee River section of the Florida Natural Scenic Trail (12 miles). There is no charge for using the Lake Arbuckle Hiking Trail. For more information on hiking, contact the Outdoor Recreation Office.

10. Horse Back Riding

Horses are allowed only in Management Units 1 and 2 during non-hunting periods and during the Quail/Small-Game Season. They may be used only on designated roads and trails in these units. An up-to-date Coggins test is required in order to bring horses on to the installation. Camping with and feeding horses is allowed only at the Willingham Campground.

11. General Regulations

a. Plants, animals, or historic or cultural artifacts shall not be taken or collected. No plants or animals of any sort shall be left on the installation.

b. Members of the public may not feed or bait wildlife in any manner.

c. Live trees or standing dead trees may not be cut. Only wood lying on the ground may be cut and used for firewood while camping.

d. Driving metal into any tree is prohibited.

e. Destroying, damaging, or vandalizing any infrastructure is prohibited.

f. All closed gates must be kept closed. If you open a gate, you must close it. Gates found open may subsequently be locked without notice.

g. Littering is prohibited.

h. Recreating while intoxicated or possession of open alcoholic-beverage containers in a moving vehicle is prohibited. Public intoxication in general is prohibited. Good order and discipline must be maintained at all times while a guest of Avon Park Air Force Range. Failure to comply with this policy will result in suspension or barment from the installation.

i. All personal possessions must be removed from the installation at the end of each weekend. The Air Force is not liable for the loss or vandalism of any items, such as camping equipment, tree stands etc. Items left are subject to being confiscated.

j. All persons 16 years or older must carry some form of current photographic identification while on the installation.

k. No ordnance or any other military material shall be tampered with, handled, or removed from the installation. Sightings of such objects are to be reported to the Outdoor Recreation Office.

l. Spotlighting of wildlife at night is not permitted except with special authorization by the Installation Commander.

12. Violations

a. A written report will be filed on any individual apprehended/detained by law enforcement or Outdoor Recreation Program personnel for violation of any federal, state, or installation law or regulation. A report on all violations will be made to the Installation Commander, who will decide whether or not to suspend the recreation privileges of the individual for a period ranging from 1 to 15 years. The individual will be informed of this decision by mail. Violation of some regulations may result in the immediate confiscation of permits and vehicle passes and your being escorted from the installation.

b. Archeological and historical resources on Avon Park Air Force Range are protected under federal law, and it is a crime to remove or disturb them from their original location. Removal of protected materials is punishable by a fine of \$10,000.00 and/or one year in federal prison for the first offense; punishment is a fine of \$100,000.00 and/or five years in a federal prison for the second and other subsequent offenses. Additionally, any equipment and vehicles used in the removal of archaeological materials will be confiscated.

13. General Information

a. To get general information about the status of the range for an upcoming weekend, call the recorded message at (863) 452-4254 after 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday mornings. You may also check the web site at www.avonparkafr.net. If you need additional information, call the Outdoor Recreation Office at (863) 452-4254.

b. If someone needs to contact you in case of an emergency, have them call the Outdoor Recreation Office at (863) 452-4254 with your recreation permit number, type of vehicle, tag number, and the campground you will be using.

c. If any kind of emergency occurs while you are on the range, call the Avon Park Air Force Range Fire and Emergency Services Office at (863) 452-4117. The telephone at Morgan Hole Campground may be used to call the Outdoor Recreation Office (dial 452-4254) or the Fire and Emergency Services Office (dial 452 - 4 117).

d. These regulations are subject to change at any time. Special exceptions may be requested, but they must be approved by the Installation Commander.

14. Commander's Comments

The mission of Avon Park Air Force Range is to provide the Department of Defense with a realistic air-to-ground training facility. Any other use of the facility, to include hunting and recreation, is on a non-interference basis. The Outdoor Recreation program is a self-revenue-generating operation. The fees recreationists pay directly support the cost of operations and the expenses incurred. The Outdoor Recreation Program is not for profit.

Good order and discipline are essential to all military operations; therefore, adherence to the posted rules and taking direction from Air Force employees/agents, as well as state and federal officials, is paramount. Avon Park Air Force Range is an active military training site and, as such, a potentially dangerous environment. Failure to comply with the rules puts not only your privilege to access this facility at risk but that of others as well.