



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY News Release

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A change in federal law effective February 22, allows people who can legally possess firearms under federal, state/commonwealth (North Carolina or Virginia), and local laws to possess those firearms in the Blue Ridge Parkway. The new law (Sec. 512 of P.L. 111-24) was passed by Congress and signed last May by the President.

The new federal law makes possession of firearms in national parks also subject to the firearms laws of the state/commonwealth and communities where the parks are located.

Visitors who wish to bring firearms to the park are responsible to know what state/commonwealth they are in and are subject to the laws of the different state or commonwealth and counties, depending on their location.

“We have been working closely with local, state, commonwealth, and federal officials to ensure that we clearly understand the provisions of the laws that will now apply to our visitors when they are in the park,” said Blue Ridge Parkway Superintendent Phil Francis. We encourage every visitor who may wish to bring firearms to the park to do their research ahead of time and ensure that they are aware of and abide by the laws that apply. Our goal is to provide safe, enjoyable park visits for everyone, and to preserve this very special place for people today and future generations.”

The new federal law has no effect on existing laws and regulations regarding the possession of other weapons, the use of firearms in national parks or hunting. Hunting still is not allowed in the Blue Ridge Parkway. Federal law continues to prohibit firearms in federal facilities, such as park visitor centers; these facilities are posted with appropriate notices at public entrances. In addition, firearms are not allowed in concession managed facilities that are posted with firearms prohibited signs, in accordance with state or commonwealth law.

National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis said, “We will administer this law as we do all others – fairly. For nearly 100 years, the mission of the National Park Service has been to protect and preserve the parks and to help all visitors enjoy them. The parks belong to all Americans, and our commitment to the American people is to ensure the safety of our visitors and the special places that have been entrusted to our care.”

For more information about firearms laws that apply to the Blue Ridge Parkway, please visit <http://www.vsp.state.va.us/Firearms.shtm> and <http://www.ncdoj.com/Files/About-DOJ/Law-Enforcement-Liaison/2007-NC-Firearms-gun-Laws.aspx>. For more information about the Blue Ridge Parkway visit www.nps.gov/blri.

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The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.