

INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS OF  
OUTFITTER and GUIDE SPECIAL USE PERMITS ON THE  
GREEN MOUNTAIN and FINGER LAKES NATIONAL FORESTS

**Do I need an Outfitter-Guide Special Use Permit?**

A special use permit is required for any outfitting or guiding use taking place on National Forest land. Outfitting is the providing of any saddle or pack animal, vehicle or boat, tents or camp gear, or similar supplies or equipment for monetary remuneration or other gain. Guiding is defined as providing, for monetary remuneration or other gain, services or assistance such as supervision, protection, education, training, packing, transportation, subsistence, interpretation, or otherwise assisting individuals or groups in their pursuit of a natural resource based outdoor activity. Hiking, ski touring, and backpacking trips are examples. Guiding includes commercial guiding, and organizational camps, private camps, and school or institutional activities, wherein the operator or guide furnishes personal services or serves as a leader, teacher, or counselor, and receives compensation for such services (including not-for-profit organizations). Permits are required regardless of the duration of the trip. No outfitter-guide use may occur on the National Forest without a valid permit.

**Will my request for a permit be granted?**

Permits for Outfitting and Guiding operations are issued only when the proposed use is compatible with approved resource plans and provides a needed public service. Other criteria used to evaluate outfitter-guide permit applications may include the impacts of the proposed activities on resources such as water, soil, wildlife, timber, and recreation; the degree of conflict with other users; effects on public liability, health and safety; and the previous performance of an outfitter-guide. A permit will not be granted simply to provide a commercial profit-making opportunity. The Forest Service is not obligated to issue a permit to accommodate the desire of an individual applicant. Availability of funds and personnel to process applications is also a limiting factor.

**Commercial use of the Appalachian or Long Trails by for-profit entities may be approved on a case-by-case basis only if there is a strong educational or service component to the proposal. Use by non-profit 501c(3) entities is allowed.**

If you are proposing to use a designated Wilderness, ask yourself if the activity really needs to be done there. If it can be done outside a Wilderness, it should be, and a permit will not be granted for the Wilderness.

**How do I apply for a permit?**

An application for a special use permit is made on the Special Use Application FS-2700-3f, or the SF-299, and the Operating Plan which will become part of your permit. A complete application must include: a description of the locations where use will occur (be as specific as possible, include trail names and starting and ending points); the number of trips to be made to each destination; the number of persons per trip; the percent of time spent on the National Forest; the per-day client charge (including documentation of these rates); and a description of the proposed activities (i.e. hiking, fishing, rock-climbing, etc.). Be sure to follow the instructions. Incomplete applications will be returned unprocessed. Note the Trail Restrictions form is now part of the operating plan, and you are to complete it by initialing the specific items and returning it with the rest of your application.

Completed applications may be sent to the Green Mountain National Forest, 231 North Main Street, Rutland, Vermont, 05701, Attn: Carol Burd, or electronically to [cburd@fs.fed.us](mailto:cburd@fs.fed.us). Applications should be received no later than 60 days before your use is proposed to begin.

**Is there a fee?**

A flat fee for temporary use permits based on the amount of use allocated in service days is charged as follows:

Number of Service Days	Flat Fee	Maximum Gross Revenue, for each Bracket of Service Days
1 to 50	\$150	\$10,000
51 to 100	\$300	\$20,000
101 to 150	\$450	\$30,000
151 to 200	\$600	\$40,000

If the gross revenue of the permit holder is higher than the maximum listed above, the fee will be assessed based on the total number of service days (service days equals the total number of trips multiplied by the number of persons per trip), the service-day client charge (daily client charge), and the percent of time spent on the National Forest. It is important that applicants furnish documents reflecting their planned customer rate schedules for the use season. Documents shall include advertising material, brochures, or a signed letter to an authorized officer reflecting customer rates. Average service-day client charges may be adjusted downward if an advertised daily rate includes payments by the holder to others for long distance transportation or lodging services. All other customer charges for services provided and reflected in the advertised daily rate are included in the adjusted service-day client charge. The applicant must provide documents to support transportation or lodging adjustments.

Applicants will be billed for the amount of the fee at the time a permit is issued. Permit fees must be received within 30 days after billing and prior to the starting date of use. If a permittee exceeds the total number of service days indicated on the permit, the Forest Service must be advised so an adjustment may be made. Permits may be cancelled at the request of the permittee at any time.

**Users of trail shelters operated and maintained by caretakers of the Green Mountain Club, under an agreement with the USDA-Forest Service, are subject to a separate fee for each night's occupancy.**

### **Are there any other requirements or restrictions?**

Use may generally take place on any part of the National Forest, subject to the general rules and regulations for use and protection of National Forest land, or regulations governing occupancy and use of special areas. Use of developed recreation areas will not be permitted except by special authorization. Use of a designated Wilderness must be for Wilderness-dependent activities; that is, those which require a Wilderness setting. Requests for Wilderness use will be reviewed by the Forest's Wilderness managers. Use of shelters on the Appalachian and Long Trails (AT/LT) will be on a first come-first served basis. There is a maximum stay of two consecutive nights at any shelter or camping spot along the AT/LT. Use in some areas of the National Forest may be restricted or minimized in order to prevent resource damage and a diminished recreational experience due to the large number of visitors. All game laws including seasons, licenses, and bag limits are the responsibility of the State and additional information is available in the annual hunting and fishing guide available at most any Natural Resource office as well as sporting goods stores.

Individual group size should be limited to ten persons **including** the leaders and guides. Larger groups are encouraged to divide into small groups and to remain separate to distribute use in separate areas.

**Liability insurance will be required in amounts dependant on the type of use proposed.** For backpacking and nature hikes, the amount is a combined single limit of: \$300,000/\$300,000 Liability Coverage.

Check with the Forest Supervisor's Office for the appropriate amounts for other uses. **Each policy shall carry an endorsement naming the United States as additionally insured and provide for thirty (30) days notice to the Forest Supervisor in the event the policy is changed or cancelled. A copy of the policy or endorsement will be sent to the Forest Supervisor prior to the starting date of use.**

**Applicants are cautioned that considerable areas of private and State-administered lands are within the Proclamation Boundary of the National Forest. The Forest Service has no jurisdiction on these lands and users are advised to observe the rights of these other landowners. The State has its own permit requirements; please contact the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation at (802) 241-3693. Applicants should determine landownership and contact the appropriate party. The Green Mountain Club can also assist in this task in regard to the Long Trail. They can be reached at [groups@greenmountain.org](mailto:groups@greenmountain.org) or (802) 244-7037. Ask for the Group Outreach Coordinator.**

Additional requirements and restrictions may be made part of the permit. For further information on Outfitter-Guide Special Use Permits, call Carol Burd at (802) 747-6749, or write to the Green Mountain National Forest, 231 North Main Street, Rutland, Vermont, 05701, Attn: Carol Burd, or e-mail at [cburd@fs.fed.us](mailto:cburd@fs.fed.us).