



RESOLUTION - APPROVAL OF 2025-2026 HUNTING PROGRAM IN THE TOWNSHIP OF FRANKLIN

WHEREAS, the Franklin Township Open Space Advisory Committee has determined that the large population of white-tailed deer in the Township of Franklin has a negative impact on the regeneration of the Township's forests; and

WHEREAS, in an ongoing effort to reduce the population of white-tailed deer, the Open Space Advisory Committee is opening several parcels of Township-owned open space land to hunting of white-tailed deer for the 2025 - 2026 season (September 13, 2025 – February 14, 2026); and

WHEREAS, in order to obtain a Franklin Township-issued hunting permit for the hunting of white-tailed deer on Franklin Township-owned open space, all applicants are required to hold a valid New Jersey Hunting License, sign a "Holds Harmless and Indemnification Agreement" and provide the Township with proof that said applicant has at least one million dollars in personal liability insurance; and

WHEREAS, Negri-Nepote Grasslands Preserve and the John Clyde Memorial Native Grasslands Preserve will be closed to the public beginning on the first day of the Six-Day Firearm Season (December 8, 2025) until the last day of Firearm Season (February 14, 2026), Mondays through Saturdays, to allow for adequate deer management and to provide for the safety of the public; and

WHEREAS, hunting is not permitted on Sundays, therefore non-hunters may enter and use all parcels of Township-owned open space on Sundays; and

WHEREAS, hunters are permitted to park only in the designated parking areas/lots, no earlier than 30 minutes prior to approved hunting times and must vacate the designated parking areas/lots no later than 30 minutes past approved hunting times.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Franklin, Somerset County, New Jersey that the schedule for several parcels of Township-owned open space for hunting of white-tailed deer for the 2025-2026 season, is as follows:

TOWNSHIP-OWNED OPEN SPACE PROPERTIES DESIGNATED FOR HUNTING

Bow/Firearm/Shotgun/Muzzleloader Allowed:

- Negri-Nepote Native Grasslands Preserve
- Ten-Mile Run Greenway (parts of John Clyde Memorial Native Grasslands Preserve/Bunker Hill Environmental Center, and 295 Bunker Hill Road)
- County Route 518 Property (located at 51 County Route 518, accessed from a newly constructed parking lot approximately 1,250 feet west from existing driveway)

Bow Only:

- Bunker Hill Natural Area (Part of Ten-Mile Run Greenway)
- Butler Road Natural Area
- DeMott Lane Open Space
- Elizabeth Ave Open Space
- Weston Road Open Space
- Willow Road Open Space
- Wilson Road Natural Area
- Hutcheson Memorial Forest (portion leased to Rutgers University)

Franklin Township



In Somerset County

DATES

Season 1: Bow-Only Season: September 13, 2025 – October 31, 2025

HUNTERS AND PUBLIC ACCESS - ALL LOCATIONS

During this bow-only season, bow hunters with Township-issued hunting permits will be permitted to hunt deer in the designated hunting areas. Hunters and non-hunters (hikers, cyclists, dog-walkers, etc.) will be utilizing the open space property simultaneously. For this reason, it is imperative that bow hunters familiarize themselves with the locations of the trails and are **strictly prohibited** from aiming their bow toward a hiking trail.

Season 2: Bow Season: November 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025 [Excluding November 27, 2025 (Thanksgiving) and December 25, 2025 (Christmas Day)]

HUNTERS AND PUBLIC ACCESS – ALL LOCATIONS

During the second bow-only season, bow hunters with Township-issued hunting permits will be permitted to hunt deer in the designated hunting areas. Hunters and non-hunters (hikers, cyclists, dog-walkers, etc.) will be utilizing the open space property simultaneously. For this reason, it is imperative that bow hunters familiarize themselves with the locations of the trails and are **strictly prohibited** from aiming their bow toward a hiking trail.

NOTE: FIREARMS (INCLUDING MUZZLELOADERS) ARE NOT PERMITTED DURING SEASON 2 (NOVEMBER 1, 2025 – DECEMBER 31, 2025, except during Six-Day Firearm Season 3A)

Season 3A: Six-Day Bow/Firearm Season: December 8, 2025 - December 13, 2025*

HUNTERS ONLY - NEGRI-NEPOTE NATIVE GRASSLANDS PRESERVE AND TEN-MILE RUN GREENWAY

****Six-Day Firearm Season is designated by the NJDEP, and important to note separately for Reporting purposes***

Season 3B: Firearm (Shotgun and/or Muzzleloader as permitted by State regulations) and Winter Bow: January 1, 2026 – February 14, 2026

HUNTERS ONLY – NEGRI-NEPOTE GRASSLANDS AND TEN-MILE RUN GREENWAY – FIREARM AND BOW (MONDAYS – SATURDAYS) PUBLIC ACCESS – SUNDAYS ONLY

Beginning on the first day of the Six-Day Firearm Season (December 8, 2025) and throughout this designated Firearm Season 3B (ending on February 14, 2026), **ONLY PERMITTED HUNTERS WILL BE ALLOWED ACCESS** to Negri-Nepote Native Grasslands Preserve and Ten-Mile Run Greenway (including portions of John Clyde Memorial

Franklin Township



In Somerset County

Native Grasslands Preserve and the trails at Bunker Hill Environmental Center) - **NO PUBLIC ACCESS** will be permitted at these properties from Mondays through Saturdays during the timeframe of December 8, 2025 – February 14, 2026. Negri-Nepote Native Grasslands Preserve and the John Clyde Memorial Native Grasslands Preserve will be accessible to members of the public on Sundays only during these designated periods.

HUNTERS AND PUBLIC ACCESS – ALL OTHER DESIGNATED HUNTING LOCATIONS (BOW ONLY)

Bow-hunters with Township-issued hunting permits will be permitted to hunt deer in designated hunting areas. Hunters and non-hunters (hikers, cyclists, dog-walkers, etc.) will be utilizing these open space properties simultaneously (except for Negri-Nepote Native Grasslands Preserve, the John Clyde Memorial Native Grasslands Preserve, and Ten-Mile Run Greenway). For this reason, it is imperative that bow hunters familiarize themselves with the locations of the trails and are **strictly prohibited** from aiming their bow toward a hiking trail.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Franklin, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey that the 2025-2026 Deer Management Program is hereby approved, subject to the following rules, which conform to Regulation Set #8 promulgated by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Fish and Wildlife:

1. Hunting shall only occur at the location listed on the permit. (An exception to this requirement is during the Six-Day Firearms Season [Season 3A] as described in #25, below.)
2. Hunting is restricted to the designated portions of the properties (maps to be provided).
3. Hunters are only authorized to be on the property for which they have been issued a permit and are responsible for knowing the boundaries of the property, as well as the area designated for hunting, at all times.
4. Hunters are not permitted to hunt or possess a loaded firearm within 450 feet of any building or school playground, or any posted safety zone area. It should be noted that some trails located on Township Open Space are posted as safety zones.
5. To ensure the safety of any non-hunters who may inadvertently enter the open space during this period, hunters must familiarize themselves with the location of all trails on the property and they shall not aim in the direction of the trail whenever their stand is within 450 feet of that trail.
6. Only hunters who have obtained a Franklin Township-issued hunting permit are permitted to hunt on Township-owned land.
7. All State and local regulations pertaining to parks, open space and hunting apply, including specific season dates and bag limits. (See: <https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/hunting/deer-seasons-and-regulations/> - Regulation Set #8)
8. Hours of hunting: ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset at all designated locations.
9. Hunting is prohibited on all Township-owned open space properties on Sundays.
10. All tree stands must be portable and be removed within two weeks of the close of hunting season.
11. **One non-antlered deer must be taken from your approved Township-owned hunting area before a buck may be taken from the area (except during the Six-Day Firearm Season [Season 3A]).**
12. A licensed adult must accompany all hunters under the age of 16.

Franklin Township



In Somerset County

13. The Hunters Summary Report (attached to the Permit) must be accurately completed and submitted by each permit-holder no later than Friday, March 20, 2026. These results will determine invitations to hunt for the following seasons.
14. Vehicles are restricted to public roads and designated parking areas (map will be provided).
15. Only deer may be hunted; hunting of any other game is strictly prohibited.
16. Each hunter's permit must be prominently displayed whenever the hunter is on the property.
17. Target practice is prohibited.
18. Use or possession of alcoholic beverages while on the property is strictly prohibited.
19. Littering is prohibited (includes leaving empty shotgun shells on the ground).
20. Violation of any special condition or any applicable State law or local regulation will result in the immediate revoking of hunting privileges on the property for the remainder of the hunting season and will also subject the hunter to any applicable penalties.
21. Hunting Parking Permit must be displayed on the dashboard of the hunter's vehicle.
22. Hunting Permit Number must be clearly displayed on any tree stand. Failure to display the permit number will result in the removal and the discarding of the stand.
23. Fires of any kind are prohibited.
24. Hunters must carry cell phones when on the Township property.
25. Six-Day Firearm Season (Season 3A: December 8, 2025 – December 13, 2025): Non-hunters are not permitted on the property for this six-day season and those issued permits for firearm hunting may hunt from ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset during these six days. To ensure the safety of any non-hunters who may inadvertently enter the open space during this period, hunters must familiarize themselves with the location of all trails on the property and they shall not aim their firearm in the direction of the trail whenever their stand is within 450 feet of the trail. During this Special December hunting-only season, the requirement to take one antlerless deer prior to taking a buck is waived.

CERTIFICATION

I, Ann Marie McCarthy, Clerk of the Township of Franklin, in the County of Somerset, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution duly adopted by the Township Council at a Work Session/Regular Meeting held on 6/24/2025.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said Township this 6/24/2025.

Ann Marie McCarthy
Township Clerk