

Hunting on Tax Law Land

Frequently Asked Questions

The public may use Managed Forest Law– Open (MFL-Open) lands for hunting, fishing, hiking, sight-seeing and cross-country skiing. Only hunting and fishing are allowed on Forest Crop Law (FCL) lands. All DNR hunting and fishing regulations and seasons apply. All other uses are prohibited unless permitted by the landowner.

How can I find MFL-Open or FCL lands?

To locate MFL-Open or FCL lands visit dnr.wi.gov and search keywords ‘open tax law land’ or contact your local DNR tax law forestry specialist. To find DNR tax law forestry specialist contact information visit dnr.wi.gov and search keyword ‘forester’.

Can landowners deny access to MFL-Open or FCL lands?

No, landowners cannot deny access to MFL-Open or FCL lands, including limiting the number of hunters on the land or restricting access to a certain hunting period or season.

Landowners can post signs indicating the preferred access route for the public to access the open lands. The public must follow access routes or may be subject to trespass violations.

Anyone denied access to or asked to leave open MFL/FCL lands should report that information to a local DNR tax law forestry specialist or call the DNR call center toll free at 1-888-WDNRINFO (1-888-936-7463).

If the MFL-Open lands are not on a public road, how can I access the property?

All land designated as MFL-open must be accessible to the public on foot by public road or from other land open to public access. Other land open to public access may include public land (county, state, federal) or other MFL open land. If access is only available by crossing land not open to public access, the landowner is responsible for ensuring access. If a specific access point or route is identified, signs indicating its location are required and the route should be generally shown on the MFL map. The MFL map can be found by visiting dnr.wi.gov and searching key- words ‘open tax law land’. The public should contact landowners to ask where the access is if it is not readily apparent.

Can a landowner prevent hunting during the 9-day gun deer season?

No, landowners must allow all types of hunting and seasons on MFL-Open and FCL lands, including hunting during the 9-day gun deer season.



Can I use motorized vehicles on Open MFL & FCL lands?

No, access to and use on MFL-Open and FCL lands is allowed for foot travel only. Vehicular traffic, including trucks, ATVs, UTVs, pickups, ORVs, snowmobiles, motorcycles or other motorized vehicles are not allowed unless the landowner gives permission.

If I shoot a deer and it dies in the landowner's crop field, do I have the right to walk in the landowner's field to retrieve my deer?

No, not unless you have the landowner's permission. Landowners who have MFL-Open and FCL lands are required to provide access to those lands only. Crop fields are ineligible for enrollment in the MFL program, so therefore the expressed permission for access does not apply to these crop fields. It is important for all hunters to speak with landowners to gain permission to retrieve deer in crop fields or other areas in which permission to access is not obtained.

Is trapping allowed on MFL-Open and FCL lands?

No, trapping is not considered to be hunting and therefore not allowed on MFL-Open or FCL lands unless the landowner gives permission.

Can I use a tree stand on MFL-Open and FCL lands?

Yes, tree stands can be used for hunting; however you or the tree stand cannot cause damage to trees or the land without landowner permission. Cutting of shooting lanes, branches or shrubs or screwing in tree steps is considered to be causing damage to trees or land.

Can I use a trail camera on MFL-Open and FCL lands?

No, it is illegal to use trail cameras on lands enrolled in the Open MFL or FCL programs without the permission of the landowner.

Can I leave my tree stand on Open-MFL or FCL lands overnight?

No, you are not allowed to leave tree stands overnight unless you have landowner permission. On August 1st, 2017 deer regulations were changed to allow tree stands to be left overnight on department properties that are open to hunting located north of Hwy. 64 (s. [NR45.09](#) Wis. Adm. Code). MFL-open and FCL, while are considered open to hunting, are not considered department properties. Therefore, tree stands placed on MFL-open or FCL lands must be removed every night unless there is landowner permission.

What type of deer tag do I need for hunting on tax law land?

A public land tag is required on MFL-Open and FCL lands. Land designated as MFL-closed is considered private, so a private land tag would be required on MFL-closed lands. For MFL land enrolled in the Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP), the DMAP tags are issued to the landowner, regardless if the property is open or closed.

Where can I find additional rules and regulations on hunting in Wisconsin?

For additional information on hunting in Wisconsin, visit dnr.wi.gov and search keyword 'hunting'.

To locate MFL-Open or FCL lands visit dnr.wi.gov and search keywords 'open tax law land' Contact your local DNR tax law forestry specialist by visiting dnr.wi.gov, search keyword 'forester'.