

Target Shooting on Public Lands

Target shooting can be a fun and challenging activity when you do your part to think of others and protect natural resources. Responsible use of firearms is permissible on most public lands within Idaho except in developed recreation sites or areas. Target shooting may also be restricted or closed in certain areas to ensure public safety and prevent resource damage. Please contact the BLM Field Office you plan to visit for specific questions on areas that may be appropriate for target shooting.

Read below to learn more about how you can shoot safely and responsibly on public lands while helping protect yourself and the environment.

- **Safety First:** Always maintain a safe line of fire. Shoot towards a high, dirt backstop. Never shoot towards other people, vehicles, structures, roads, trails, or livestock. Respect private property and posted signs.
- **Natural Resources:** Help protect and respect natural features, native plants, cultural resources, historic structures or government/private property. This includes using any vegetation or structure as a target, backstop, or target holder.
- **Fire:** Target shooting can cause fires under certain conditions. Check current fire conditions with BLM. Don't shoot near rocks or dry vegetation. Avoid shooting on hot, windy days. Do not shoot at metal objects. Be prepared; keep a shovel, fire extinguisher and extra water on hand. While legal in many locations, it is illegal to use exploding targets, incendiary or tracer ammunition and fireworks on public lands from May 10 to October 10 every year, per the Idaho Fire Prevention Order. Violations of the Order may bring up to one year in jail and/or up to a \$100,000 fine, and violators who start wildfires can also be liable for the costs of damage and suppression.
- **Targets:** Use paper, cardboard, or clay targets. Don't shoot at glass, metals, plastics, home appliances, electronic components, or furniture.
- **Stop Trigger Trash:** Shoot over a tarp for easy cleanup of spent cartridges and shells. Remove all targets, trash, and debris after shooting. Dumping or littering on public land is never permissible.
- **Vehicles:** Keep vehicles on existing roads and trails. Don't drive or park on vegetation; you could cause damage or a wildfire.
- **Permits:** Commercial, competitive, or organized group activities require a BLM permit. Check with our office for details.

Safety Tips

- ALWAYS keep the gun pointed in a safe direction
- ALWAYS keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot
- ALWAYS keep the gun unloaded until ready to use
- Know your target and what is beyond
- Know how to use the gun safely
- Be sure the gun is safe to operate
- Only use the correct ammunition for your gun

- Wear eye and ear protection as appropriate
- Never use alcohol or over-the-counter, prescription or other drugs before or while shooting
- Store guns so they are not accessible to unauthorized people