



# RECREATING IN BEAR COUNTRY

## DO



- Keep dogs on leash at all times
- Make sure food/trash (anything with an odor) is stored in bear resistant containers. Other options include:
  - Trunk of car
  - Hang out of reach away from camp
  - Electric fence (portable kits)
- Cook away from tent, don't sleep in clothes you wore while cooking
- Make noise while hiking
  - Hiking at dawn or dusk may increase your chances of meeting a bear.
- Look for bear sign
- Hike in groups of 2 or more – stay together!
- Think about investing in bear spray
- If you see a bear and it hasn't seen you, leave the area calmly.
  - While moving away, talk to help the bear discover your presence.
  - Give the bear plenty of room to escape
- If you have a close encounter, back away slowly while facing the bear.
- If on a trail, step off on the downhill side and slowly leave the area.
- If a bear makes contact, fight back

## DO NOT



- **Run from a bear!**
  - Running may prompt the bear to chase
  - No human can outrun a bear
- Approach a bear for a selfie (or any other reason)
- Feed bears or allow bears access to any human related food sources
- Throw backpack of food at bear
- Leave coolers, food, camp stoves, trash, etc. out when not on site
- Leave coolers, food, camp stoves, trash, etc. in vehicle with windows open
- Put food, trash, lotions, cosmetics, etc. in tents
- Burn food/leftovers in fire pit

**Keep Bears Wild!**

[www.dgif.virginia.gov/wildlife/bear/](http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/wildlife/bear/)