



Private Lands and New Mexico's Outdoor Heritage

The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish understands how important private lands are to our outdoor heritage, and we recognize the important role private landowners play.

By opening their gates landowners help provide hunters, anglers and trappers more access to quality outdoor experiences. Participating landowners also can receive monetary payment to help manage their lands and foster fish and wildlife habitat.

Who Pays for Open Gate?

Funds for Open Gate leases are provided solely from hunters, anglers and trappers when they purchase Habitat Management and Access Validation (HMAV) stamps. No money from State General Fund revenues is used.

How Does Open Gate Work?

Open Gate is a voluntary leasing program. It provides private landowners incentives to allow public access for hunting, fishing and trapping. Participating private landowners receive access payments, liability protection and other benefits in exchange for signing a flexible lease agreement.

Landowners may participate in Open Gate in two ways:

- Allow public access to a private parcel for hunting, fishing or trapping
- Provide right-of-way access to public lands where exceptional fishing or hunting opportunities exist and access is limited.

Participating landowners also may receive technical guidance if needed and funding to help manage habitats that will improve hunting, fishing and trapping opportunities.



Information or Assistance

Contact the Open Gate Program Coordinator (505) 476-8043, the NMDGF Information Center 1-888-248-6866, or visit: www.wildlife.state.nm.us.

Open Gate Program Coordinator

Wildlife Management Division
New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
P.O. Box 25112, Santa Fe, NM 87504



New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
Conserving New Mexico's Wildlife for Future Generations



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Open Gate

Hunting and Fishing Access Program



**Incentives for
Private Landowners
to Provide Public Access**

Landowner Benefits:

- Monetary compensation for allowing public access.
- Flexible lease agreements tailored to the landowner's needs.
- Liability protection under the terms of 17-4-7 NMSA 1978.
- Program rules designed to protect private property and property rights.
- Signs provided and installed on site to manage public access.
- Property patrols by Conservation Officers (Game Wardens) during open seasons.
- Ability to withdraw from the program at any time (payments may be prorated).
- Opportunities to enrich New Mexico's outdoor heritage by improving public access.
- Additional funds and technical assistance to improve habitat and enhance hunting, fishing, and trapping opportunities.

How to Participate

If your property provides quality hunting, fishing and/or trapping opportunities or provides access to public lands that do, you may qualify to participate and receive payment.

How Lease Agreements Are Made

Each fiscal year, a set amount of funds for Open Gate Access Agreements (leases) is budgeted. Leases with qualifying landowners are made until all available funds for the year have been allocated. Access Agreements generally last for one year, however, longer-term leases also may be available.

How Much Would I Receive?

Access payments are based on a variety of factors including property location, acreage, types of wildlife habitat and the hunting, fishing and/or trapping opportunities that will be permitted. Leases must support public hunting or fishing and provide access for the duration of the agreed season(s).

Primary Hunting Access leases may include upland game (dove, grouse, pheasant, quail, squirrel), waterfowl and sandhill crane, turkey and/or javelina hunting. Access payments range from \$0.25 to \$10 per acre annually depending on:

- Property proximity to an urban center.
- Number of game hunting opportunities provided (e.g. upland game and javelina, but no waterfowl or turkey).
- Habitat quality as determined by a department evaluation.

Deer Hunting Access leases include Primary Hunting Access game plus deer. Primary Hunting Access rates increase up to 25% for unlimited deer hunting and up to 10% for restricted deer hunting (e.g. archery-only or youth-only deer hunting).

Bear, Cougar and Furbearer Hunting & Trapping Access lease payments are \$0.15 per acre annually.

Fishing Access: Annual lake and private pond lease rates range from \$62.50 to \$250 per surface acre. River and stream access rates are from \$312.50 to \$1,250 per mile for single-side access and doubled if both sides of a waterway are accessible. Rate ranges depend on:

- Property proximity to an urban center.
- Accessibility of fishing areas.
- Fishery quality as determined by a department evaluation.

Right-of-Way Access leases enable hunters, anglers and/or trappers to access quality public lands (USFS, BLM, State Trust) where access is otherwise limited or precluded. Right-of-Way Access leases permit access only and do not permit hunting, fishing or trapping on the leased private land. Annual rates are \$0.50 per acre of public land made accessible. For example, if Open Gate leases a road through your property that provides access to 20,000 acres of BLM property, your annual lease payment would be \$10,000.

Detailed annual access rates are available online:
www.wildlife.state.nm.us.

How to Apply

The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish currently is accepting applications for the Open Gate program. If you are interested in participating, please submit the application provided with the requested supplemental materials. When your application is received, the Open Gate Coordinator will contact you to assist with the review process. Because leases are offered until all available funds are used, qualifying landowners are encouraged to apply early.

Applications and supplemental materials can be mailed by the U.S. Postal Service to:

Open Gate Program Coordinator
Wildlife Management Division
New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
P.O. Box 25112, Santa Fe, NM 87504

For instructions to submit applications and supplemental materials by e-mail, contact the Open Gate Coordinator, (505) 476-8043.



Open Gate Application

Complete all sections that apply below. Include all supplemental materials listed at the bottom. For information or assistance, contact the Open Gate Program Coordinator (505) 476-8043, the NMDGF Information Center 1-888-248-6866, or visit: www.wildlife.state.nm.us.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: ____ Zip: _____ Phone: (____) _____

E-mail: _____

Yes, I would like to open my gate for hunting or trapping.

What opportunities would you like to include in the lease (e.g. dove, quail and deer hunting or furbearer trapping)?

Private (deeded) acreage: _____

Yes, I would like to open my gate for fishing.

Lake, reservoir, stream or river where access will be provided:

Miles of stream/river (approximate): _____

Private pond acreage (approximate): _____

Yes, I would like to open my gate and allow right-of-way access to public lands.

Description of access improved (include a descriptive map if possible): _____

Supplemental Materials (please check)

Applicants must also provide all of the following:

Copy of the recorded property deed(s)

Legal description for the property, including acreage (property tax records or deed)

Legible map showing the property boundary. (i.e. 1:100,000 scale BLM land status map—available from BLM offices, USGS map, aerial photo map available from Google Maps, etc.)

If a lessee, a copy of the lease is required with a notarized and signed statement from the landowner that authorizes Open Gate participation.