



## Visitation and Land Use Policies

### **Statement of Philosophy:**

The Blue Ridge Center is managed for its ecological and historical values. Our programs and activities are intended to protect the ecology of the area and the integrity of historical resources. The garden and agricultural areas are as important ecologically as the forest, meadows and streams. Failure to follow our land use policies could have immediate and devastating effects on the entire season's crop in our garden. In addition, there are rare and threatened flora and fauna present onsite. **All guests, volunteers, visitors, employees and contractors are required to adhere to our policies.**

### **Removing plants, artifacts or any property from the Blue Ridge Center is strictly prohibited:**

The Blue Ridge Center is an educational resource that is actively under study. Old bottles, plates and other remnants of former inhabitants must be left where they lay. If you see something that may be of interest to researchers, please let Blue Ridge Center staff members know where you saw it, but leave it alone. Similarly, **please do not pick flowers or remove plants, feathers, nests, rocks, mushrooms, berries or other flora or fauna from the Blue Ridge Center. This includes antlers, skulls and bones. Violators will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.** Take only photos and leave only footprints.

### **Tobacco Use:**

Smoking is prohibited within 100 yards of the garden fence, in the garden area itself, in any building, and is strongly discouraged in other areas of the Blue Ridge Center land. This policy is necessary to protect our garden from tobacco-borne viruses and bacteria, which are carried on the hands of smokers, as well as in tobacco smoke. These viruses and bacteria are particularly damaging to farms such as ours. If you must smoke onsite, please keep in mind our Leave No Trace policy. **DO NOT** throw cigarette butts on the ground; take them home with you and dispose of them properly.

### **Pets:**

No animals allowed in any BRCES building (with the exception of *working* service animals). All pets must remain on leash **at all times**. (Dogs allowed to roam off leash will tend to depart from the established hiking trails, thereby encouraging erosion. Also, even a usually well-behaved dog may act unpredictably in the presence of wildlife or farm animals.) Be sure to clean up after your pet. Dog feces left on the ground can adversely affect water quality. No animals allowed in any ponds or streams on the property.

### **Parking:**

All vehicles must be parked in designated areas. Vehicles are not allowed to go past the trailhead to the Demory Field campground except by permission from authorized Blue Ridge Center associate.

### **Group Hiking:**

<sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub>All groups must stay on established hiking trails. Bushwhacking across the preserve is not allowed.

<sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub>Following game trails is prohibited.

<sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub>All youth groups must be led by a minimum of two qualified adult leaders.

<sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub>All group leaders should carry a cell phone and first-aid kit for emergency use.

<sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub>Certain areas at the Center are restricted from public access, including the animal pastures, fenced gardens, farm machinery and equipment, private residences, seasonal intern housing, and staff offices.

### **Camping:**

Camping is by advance reservation only, in designated areas only, utilizing Leave No Trace and Low Impact ethics. Principles of Leave No Trace: Plan ahead and prepare; travel and camp on durable surfaces; dispose of waste properly; leave what you find; minimize campfire impact; respect wildlife; be considerate of other visitors. Visit <http://www.lnt.org/> for a full list of Leave No Trace guidelines. All visitors/guests must pack out all trash and recyclables.

## Visitation and Land Use Policies (continued)

### **Camping Rules:**

<sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub>Cooking fires are not allowed. Cooking will be done over stoves or in the Blue Ridge Center's grill. Portable charcoal grills are not allowed. Camp stoves are acceptable.

<sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub>Be cautious of bears and other wildlife. Put food and trash away in secure containers.

<sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub>Campfires are permitted only in designated fire rings. No bonfires.

<sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub>Fresh drinking water is available from the above-ground spigot at the east side of the Demory Field.

<sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub>Quiet time begins at 9:00 pm and ends at 7:00 am. Lights out starts at 11:00 pm.

### **Fires and Firewood:**

Ground fires and wood gathering are **not** allowed. Ground fires can sterilize the soil and leave unsightly fire rings, scarred rocks and unburned wood. If you come here as part of an organized camping group, we have a fire ring at Demory Field for those who have reserved the field in advance. You must bring your own **local** firewood. The gathering of dead and downed wood on Blue Ridge Center property is prohibited. When finished with your fire, burn all wood and coals to ash, put out the campfire completely, thoroughly soak with water, then scatter the cold ashes.

### **Alcohol:**

Alcohol use (beer and wine only) requires pre-approval by authorized Blue Ridge Center associate, and is allowed only at organized, sanctioned events, under the laws of Virginia and Loudoun County.

### **Horses:**

**Only members of the United States Trail Ride, Inc (USTR) are permitted to ride horses on Blue Ridge Center property. Guest riders are not allowed - no exceptions.** All riders must have their USTR member tag, visible, on their body or horse while on Blue Ridge Center property. For more information, please visit the United State Trail Ride, Inc. website, [www.ustrailride.org](http://www.ustrailride.org). Horses must stay on established trails that are maintained thoroughly and are marked for their use. On multi-use trails, hikers yield the right-of-way to horses. Hikers should stop and move their body and pets to the side of the trail and allow horses to pass.

**No Hunting, Firearms, Fireworks, or Explosives - Visitors are **not** allowed to hunt or to use fireworks, firearms, or explosives. Our farmers raise sheep and other animals that are stressed by loud noises.**

**Bicycles, ATVs, and other similar off-road vehicles are not permitted on Blue Ridge Center trails.**

**Fishing, swimming, ice skating, and boating are not permitted in any streams or ponds.**

**Recreational drugs and illegal substances are not permitted at the Blue Ridge Center. One violation of this rule is grounds for instant dismissal, and proper legal authorities may be notified.**

### **Emergency Information:**

**<sup>3</sup><sub>1</sub> For emergencies, dial 911.**

<sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub>Neersville Volunteer Fire & Rescue (located across the street), 11762 Harpers Ferry Rd, **540-668-6974**

<sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub>Animal Control: 703-777-0406

<sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub>Game Warden: Rich Landers, 540-295-3258

<sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub>Jefferson Urgent Care, 84 Somerset Blvd, Charles Town, WV, 304-728-8533

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