

HERE SPARTANBURG FIELD
GUIDE

Poe Creek

STATE FOREST WMA

Pickens County, SC · Blue Ridge Foothills
Game Zone 2 · ~6,200 Acres · ~45 min from Spartanburg

Whitetail Deer

Black Bear

Wild Turkey

Gray Squirrel

Rabbit

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OVERVIEW

Poe Creek State Forest WMA offers diverse hunting across 6,200 acres of state forest land cooperatively managed by SCDNR and the SC Forestry Commission. Situated in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Pickens and Oconee counties, the area features planted pine stands, mature hardwood ridges, and productive stream bottomlands draining toward Eastatoe Creek. Black bear season applies here — confirm zone-specific quotas with SCDNR before heading out. The squirrel population is excellent and frequently overlooked.

ACREAGE	~6,200 acres
COUNTY	Pickens County (and Oconee County)
GAME ZONE	Game Zone 2
TYPE	State Forest WMA (SCDNR / SC Forestry Commission cooperative)
TERRAIN	Planted pines, hardwood ridges, stream bottomlands
ADDRESS	151 Piedmont Nursery Rd, Tamassee, SC 29686
PHONE	(864) 944-1104 — SCFC Poe Creek
DRIVE TIME	~45 minutes west of Spartanburg

- Black Bear Hunting
- Mountain Squirrel Habitat
- Hardwood Ridge Deer
- Blue Ridge Foothills

SPECIES & SEASONS

Season dates are for 2025–2026 Game Zone 2 WMA regulations. Always confirm current dates and bear quota status with SCDNR before hunting. WMA dates may differ from private land dates.

WHITETAIL DEER		5 / season
Archery Only	Sept 15 – Sept 30, 2025	
Primitive Weapons	Oct 1 – Oct 10, 2025	
Still Gun	Oct 11, 2025 – Jan 1, 2026	
Youth Deer Day	Jan 3, 2026	
Daily Bag	2 per day · 5 per season	
□ No baiting on WMA lands. Deer must be tagged at kill site before moving. Verify current WMA-specific rules with SCDNR.		
BLACK BEAR		1 / season

Still Hunt	Oct 17 – Oct 30, 2025 (Game Zone 2)
Method	No dogs — still hunting only
Statewide Limit	1 bear per season
<p>□ QUOTA-MANAGED. Season may close before Oct 30 once quota is met. Check SCDNR quota status the day before your hunt. Harvest must be reported immediately.</p>	

WILD TURKEY		2 / season
Spring Gobbler	Apr 3 – May 3, 2026 (statewide)	
Daily Bag	1 gobbler/day · max 1 before Apr 10	
Season Limit	2 gobblers per season	
<p>□ No jake (immature male) harvest — illegal as of 2025. Gobblers only. Hen turkey are protected.</p>		

GRAY SQUIRREL		10 / day
Dogs Only	Sept 1 – Sept 15, 2025	
Guns & Dogs	Oct 1, 2025 – Feb 28, 2026	
Youth Only Day	Sept 27, 2025	
Daily Bag	10 squirrels	

RABBIT		5 / day
Dogs Only	Sept 1 – Sept 15, 2025	
Guns & Dogs	Nov 27, 2025 – Feb 28, 2026	
Youth Only Day	Mar 7, 2026	
Daily Bag	5 rabbits	

FERAL HOG		No limit
On WMA	During any open hunting season	
Method	Daytime only on WMA lands	

ACCESS & DIRECTIONS

- 1 From Spartanburg, take I-85 S toward Gaffney/Anderson, then exit onto US-25 N toward Greenville.

- 2** From Greenville, head northwest on SC-8 W through Easley toward Pickens.
- 3** Continue on SC-8 past Pickens, then follow signs northwest toward Scenic Hwy 11 (Cherokee Foothills Scenic Highway).
- 4** Access interior state forest roads from Hwy 11 in northern Pickens County. Interior roads are dry-conditions only — high-clearance vehicle recommended.

DRIVE TIME	~45 minutes west of Spartanburg
MAIN ACCESS	SC-8 in Easley area; Scenic Hwy 11 in northern Pickens County
GPS (approx)	34.99°N, 82.93°W (Piedmont Forestry Center area)
PERMITS	WMA permit (SCDNR) required. State forest permit (SCFC) may also be required — verify before entry.
FOREST ROADS	Interior roads passable in dry conditions only. Do not attempt after rain.

Official info: www.scfc.gov/state-lands/poe-creek-state-forest/

FIELD TIPS

Scout with squirrels first. Early squirrel season (Oct 1) opens before gun deer season. Hunting squirrels in the hardwood ridges reveals fresh deer sign, mast production, and travel routes before the deer opener — one of the best pre-season scouting tools available here.

Bear quota is real. Game Zone 2 bear season is quota-managed and can close within days of opening. Check SCDNR's quota status the night before your hunt. Don't drive hours only to find the season already closed.

Focus on transitions. Best deer sign on hardwood ridges above pine plantations and along stream drainages. Pine-to-hardwood transition zones concentrate both deer and squirrels during mast season.

Interior roads close when wet. Do not attempt interior access after rain — roads are primitive. Check conditions before leaving home.

Wear orange on gun seasons. Solid international orange vest and hat required during all gun deer and bear seasons. No exceptions on WMA land.

Dual permit requirement. You may need both a SCDNR WMA permit and an SCFC state forest permit. Confirm current requirements before your first trip.

Tag at point of kill. All harvested deer and bear must be tagged at the point of kill before moving — do not wait until reaching your vehicle.

REGULATIONS & LICENSES

WMA Permit	Valid SCDNR WMA permit required on all WMA land. Available at dnr.sc.gov .
State Forest	SCFC state forest permit may additionally be required — verify at scfc.gov before hunting.
SC License	Valid South Carolina hunting license required for all hunters 16 and older.
No Baiting	Baiting is strictly prohibited on all WMA lands statewide.
Bear Quota	Game Zone 2 black bear season is quota-managed; season closes when quota is reached.
Game Check	All deer harvested must be reported via SC Game Check (app, online, or phone) by midnight on harvest day.
Tagging	Deer and bear must be tagged at the kill site before being moved. Tag stays on until processing.
Age Rule	Hunters under 16 must be accompanied by a licensed adult (21+). Sight and voice contact required.
No Alcohol	Consuming or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while hunting on WMA land is prohibited.
Sunday Hunting	Poe Creek is NOT listed among WMAs currently open to Sunday hunting — hunting is Mon–Sat only.
Trespass	Hunt only within designated WMA boundary. Check the official SCFC WMA map before hunting.

GEAR CHECKLIST

LICENSES & PERMITS

- SC Hunting License
- WMA Permit (SCDNR)
- State Forest Permit (SCFC — verify if required)
- Species-specific tags (deer, bear, turkey)

SAFETY & NAVIGATION

- International orange vest & hat (required gun seasons)
- Topo map / GPS (limited cell service in hollows)
- First aid kit
- Flashlight / headlamp

TERRAIN & WEATHER

- Waterproof boots (creek crossings, wet ridges)
- Layered clothing (foothills temps swing sharply)
- Rain gear
- Water and snacks
- Bug spray / tick protection

HARVEST & HUNTING

- Game bags
- Knife / processing gear
- Tree stand / ground blind (deer hunting)
- Turkey calls (spring season)
- Bear spray (non-bear hunters — precautionary)

EMERGENCY INFO

EMERGENCY	Call 911
PICKENS SHERIFF	(864) 898-5589
SC DNR DISPATCH	1-800-922-5431
SCFC POE CREEK	(864) 944-1104
NEAREST HOSPITAL	Prisma Health Baptist Easley Hospital 200 Fleetwood Dr, Easley, SC 29640

Cell service is limited in Poe Creek's interior ridges and hollows. Download this PDF before your trip. The companion PWA at herespartanburg.com/field-guides/poe-creek/ works offline once installed.

Sources & References

1. SC Forestry Commission — Poe Creek State Forest: www.scfc.gov/state-lands/poe-creek-state-forest/
2. SCDNR WMA Regulations: www.dnr.sc.gov/mlands/wmaregulations.html
3. SC 2025-2026 Hunting Seasons (Berkeley Outdoors): www.berkeleyoutdoors.com/blog/south-carolina-hunting-seasons-2025-2026--103085
4. SC Bill 4066 — Game Zone Deer Seasons: www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/bills/4066.htm
5. SCFC Hunting on SC Forestry Commission-managed Lands: www.scfc.gov/state-lands/hunting-on-sc-forestry-commission-managed-lands/