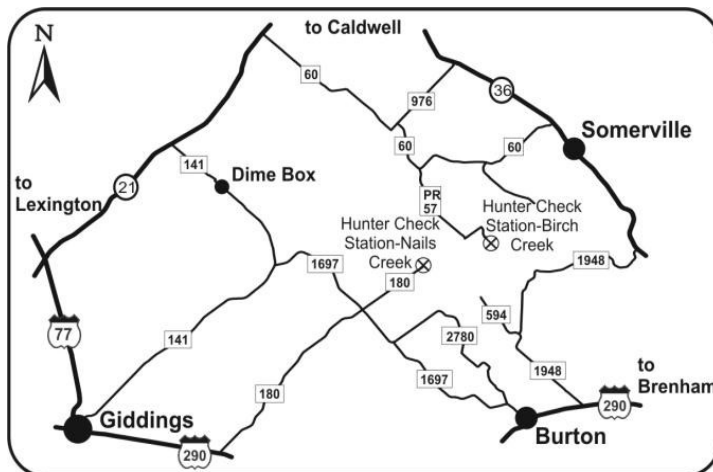




Lake Somerville State Park Birch Creek Unit

Background

Somerville State Recreation Area in Burleson and Lee counties contains approximately 5,520 acres of post oak, hickory, blackjack oak and water oak timber with an understory dominated by dense stands of yaupon. The terrain is flat to gently rolling. The hunter check station is near the entrance to the Birch Creek Unit of Lake Somerville State Park at the very end of Park Road 57. Park Road 57 may be accessed off Farm to Market Road 60. Public hunts were instituted during the 1986 season as a population control measure.



Objectives of the department are to restore and maintain healthy populations of native fauna and flora in natural habitats and to provide for compatible public use. Where game populations exceed the carrying capacity of the habitat, the preferred method of reduction is public hunting.

Hunting Information

A legal buck deer is defined as having a hardened antler protruding through the skin AND: (1) at least one unbranched antler OR (2) an inside spread measurement between main beams of 13 inches or greater.

- NOTICE: All park rules and regulations must be adhered to unless superseded by hunting regulations.
- Permitted hunters should report to the Park headquarters for directions by 10:45 am on the first day of their assigned hunt period with their Texas Hunting License, Photo ID and a printed copy of their permit. **Hunters must contact the area as soon as possible if they are unable to attend their accepted hunt or not able to arrive on the first day for orientation.** Standby hunters should report to the check station by 10:00 a.m. on the first day of the desired hunt period to complete the application process. Standby hunters will be drawn as vacancies permit. Following a brief orientation, personnel will take hunters to a pre-

selected blind. Hunters are to remain in the blind until hunt personnel pick them up. Hunting will end at 9:30 a.m. on the final day of the assigned hunt.

- Hunters must visibly wear a minimum of **400 square inches of daylight fluorescent orange material**, with at least 144 square inches appearing on both chest and back and orange headwear.
- **Special Restrictions: shotguns with slugs and archery equipment are the only means which may be possessed or used during the hunts.** Only one legally permissible mean per hunter will be allowed into the hunt area. Rifles and handguns with centerfire and rimfire ammunition are prohibited. Use of dogs is prohibited.
- Ground blinds are provided. Hunters may bring ground blinds, however the use of nails, spikes, screws or bolts to attach such structures to trees is prohibited. **Use of personal blinds/stands will be at the hunt manager's discretion.**
- Non-permitted visitors and family members will not be allowed in the hunt area, except a non-hunting adult will be allowed to assist a permitted hunter with mobility disabilities.
- Hunters will be responsible for the reasonable care of their game after harvest. No facilities for deer storage will be available on the Park.
- Hunters are reminded that they must have a valid Texas Hunting License and any stamp required by statute. It is no longer necessary to use a hunting license tag or bonus tag for on a deer taken during a Special Permit drawn hunt however a TPWD Legal Deer Tag, issued at the area, must be attached to a harvested deer prior to leaving the hunt area. Hunters 17 years of age and older must have in their possession a valid I.D. Hunter Safety Education is required of Texas hunters born on or after September 2, 1971 (see the Texas Parks and Wildlife Outdoor Annual for more information). Each hunter should also bring a flashlight, food, drinking water and foul weather gear.
- Disturbance or removal of plants, rocks, artifacts or other objects is prohibited.
- The possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages is prohibited.
- Hunters' vehicles will not be allowed into the hunt area, except that hunters with mobility disabilities may hunt from a stationary motor vehicle. Operation of an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) or off-road vehicle (ORV) is prohibited, except by a qualified hunter with mobility disabilities.
- Camping is available at Birch Creek State Park and at Nails Creek State Park for permitted hunters. Multi-purpose campsites with electricity, water and tent pads will be available for use. Reservations are not required. The normal overnight camping fee will be charged to those hunters using the Park's facilities. Private motels are available in Giddings, Somerville and Caldwell.

For information about the park, contact the Birch Creek Park at (979) 535-7763.