

State of New Mexico  
Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

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**Susana Martinez**  
Governor

**Tony Delfin**  
Acting Cabinet Secretary

**Christy Tafoya, Division Director**  
State Parks Division



## News Release

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Christina Cordova, 505-476-3363; E-mail: [christina.cordova@state.nm.us](mailto:christina.cordova@state.nm.us)  
Beth Wojahn 505-476-3226; E-mail: [beth.wojahn@state.nm.us](mailto:beth.wojahn@state.nm.us)

## State Park Officials Remind Hunters and Anglers to Boat Safe and Smart During Fall and Winter Season

**Santa Fe, NM** – As New Mexico celebrates National Hunting and Fishing Day on Saturday, September 24, the New Mexico State Parks Division wants to remind hunters and anglers to keep safety as their number one priority. “As hunting and cold water fishing seasons begin, we encourage everyone to be prepared for changing conditions on the water and on land” said Barry Lucero, Chief of Boating Safety & Law Enforcement. Autumn in New Mexico usually begins with warm days and weather can quickly change.

In order to have a safe, enjoyable, hunting or fishing trip this fall, as waterfowl are migrating, elk are bugling, and salmon are spawning, state park officials recommend following these simple tips:

- ✓ Wear your lifejacket! Once you’re in the water it’s too late! Lifejackets save lives!
- ✓ Never boat under the influence of drugs or alcohol--impairment on the water is deadly!
- ✓ Avoid placing passengers in danger by overloading your boat--refer to your vessel’s capacity plate.
- ✓ Minimize your movement in the vessel. Capsizing, sinking or falling overboard for small boats accounts for more than 70 percent of all boating fatalities.
- ✓ Know the weather forecast. Weather conditions can change rapidly and defeat your operator skills and vessel’s capabilities!
- ✓ Tell someone where you are going, when you plan to return and update them on your plan as it changes; or file a float plan at the local marina or park office.
- ✓ Make sure you have a way to call for assistance--marine radios and cell phones are good options.
- ✓ In the event of an emergency, if possible, try and stay with your vessel because rescuers will look for you there first.

Hunters and anglers need to be aware of their boat’s limitations and their ability as operators when heading out to hunt fish or just enjoy a great autumn day out on the lake and waterways. “Late season hunters and anglers should exercise an extra degree of care and caution when air and water temperatures are colder,” Lucero added. “Boaters could find themselves fighting to survive cold water immersion with sudden movement on a boat overloaded with extra gear and fishing or hunting partners.”

The New Mexico State Parks Division offers FREE boating safety classes around the state and online throughout the year. State law requires that you wear a lifejacket when on a canoe, kayak, or raft and that all children 12 years old and younger wear a lifejacket while on the deck of a moving vessel. Experience Adventure at YOUR state parks; for more information, call 888-NMPARKS or visit [nmparks.com](http://nmparks.com).



*Elephant Butte Lake State Park*

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For more information on YOUR New Mexico State Parks, please visit our website at [www.nmparks.com](http://www.nmparks.com) or call 1-888-nmparks.

*Conditions are Right for Adventure at New Mexico State Parks!*



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*The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department provides resource protection and renewable energy resource development services to the public and other state agencies.*

1220 South St. Francis Drive • Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505  
Phone (505) 476-3355 • Fax (505) 476-3361 • [www.nmparks.com](http://www.nmparks.com)

