Wildlife management areas, national forests, or any type of public hunting land can provide some of the best recreational opportunities for hunters, anglers and outdoor enthusiasts. When hunting on public land, you not only have the responsibility to keep yourself safe, but you also have the responsibility in keeping others safe as well. Here are some tips for hunting public land that you should consider before venturing out. Check natural resources agency websites for information about public lands www.fws.gov/offices/statelinks.html.

**KNOW BEFORE YOU GO**
1. Read and understand all of the state rules and regulations that pertain to public land use for outdoor recreation. (Example: public lands may not necessarily be open every day of the week for hunting during hunting season.)
2. Read and understand all licenses, permits, tags, seasons and daily game limits needed for hunting public land.
3. Locate access points, trails, boat ramps and property boundary lines. Most state agencies have maps available for your use. GPS apps are great ways to locate these areas. (Example: OnX Maps.)

**HAVE A PLAN**
1. Make sure to let family members know the location that you plan to hunt and when you plan to return.
2. Carry extra water, food, and fire starter as a precaution should you become lost.
3. Know the signals for help: 3 whistle blows or 3 shots from a gun.
4. Scout the area before hunting season. This will enable you to learn the area prior to the hunt.
5. Locate several hunting locations which will allow you other options for hunting if you arrive at one of your areas and it is occupied by another hunter.

**BE RESPECTFUL**
1. If someone is in your choice spot for hunting, go to another location. Never intrude on another hunter. Safety should always be kept in mind.
2. Don’t encroach on another hunters set up. If you wander upon someone while hunting, safely back out of the area.
3. Always pick up trash that you may have left and any that someone else may have forgotten. Always leave public ground better than you found it.
4. If field dressing an animal, make sure to follow the regulations for that area, if allowed. Make sure that any remains are out of sight of public roads and not dumped in streams near bridges.

**PRACTICE SAFETY AND SECURITY**
1. Always be aware while you are hunting public land, that other hunters are in the area. Be alert to their presence and always identify your target before shooting.
2. When leaving your vehicle at parking areas, make sure that you secure your vehicle, tool boxes and camper shells.