

## CONCLUSION

Traditionally, hunting in New England has been a free activity. In many cases this will continue, but access may be restricted to family and friends.

Hunting and fishing leases have the potential to develop into a viable forest based business in Rhode Island with both landowners and sportspersons benefiting. The supplemental income enables landowners to pay property management expenses, encourages stewardship, and reduces the likelihood that property will have to be sold. Recreationists benefit from an uncrowded place to hunt or fish, which is close to home.

## OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Assessing/Evaluating/Improving Your Potential for Wildlife. Byford, James L. Proceedings from the Conference on : Income Opportunities for the Private Landowner through Management of Natural Resources and Recreational Access. West Virginia University Extension Service. R.D. #740, 1990.

Designing Hunting and Recreational Leases for Your Property. Ernest L. Huntington. Proceedings of the Capital District Forest Owner Workshop. Cornell University Department of Natural Resources, Cornell Cooperative Extension. 1999.

Hunting Lease and Permits. H. Lee Stribling. Alabama Cooperative Extension System. Publication ANR-541. 1994.

Income Opportunities in Special Forest Products. Self-Help Suggestions for Rural Entrepreneurs. Thomas, Margaret G. & David R. Schumann. I USDA Forest Service Ag Information Bulletin 66. May 1993.

Landowners Guide To Working With Sportspersons in Mississippi. Dean Stewart Publication 1538. Mississippi State University. 1998. (<http://ext.msstate.edu:80/pubs/pub1538.htm>)

Lease Hunting Opportunities for Oklahoma Landowners. Ron Masters, Terry Bidwell, Steven Anderson and Michael D. Porter. Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Factsheet F-5032. 1990. <http://agweb.okstate.edu/pearl/forestry/general/f-5032.pdf>

Real Property: Leasing Land For Hunting and Other Recreational Uses. Thomas J. Allen, Dennis K. Smith and Anthony Ferrise. West Virginia University Extension Service. R.D. Publication 726. Updated August 1997.

Tips For Hunting Leases. Jeffrey J. Jackson. University of Georgia, Cooperative Extension Service. Forest Resources Unit Publication 397. April 1997.

### RI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT & THE RURAL LANDS COALITION SUBCOMMITTEE PARTICIPANTS INCLUDE:

Rhode Island DEM:

Office of Strategic Planning & Policy  
Division of Forest Environment  
Division of Agriculture

Rhode Island Forest Conservators Organization  
Southern New England Forest Consortium  
USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service

### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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<http://www.state.ri.us/dem/programs/bpoladm/stratpp/orprod/forstprd.htm>  
USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service  
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Technically, only access to the property can be included in the lease since native game cannot be bought or sold. Commercially raised game can be marketed through hunting leases, but only on shooting preserves. These reserves are licensed through DEM and must consist of at least 120 acres and meet record keeping requirements.

## MARKETS

The primary reason that sportsmen lease land is to obtain a high quality recreational experience. Game reserves and sportsmen's clubs are the most common forms of commercial hunting and fishing in southern New England. Game preserves charge a fee to hunt for birds they've stocked. Sportsmen's clubs are organizations whose members pay an initiation fee, annual dues, and generally perform some type of service for the club each year. The fact that many of these clubs have a waiting list for membership suggests a potential market for fee-based recreation. Information about Rhode Island's Federated Sportsmen's Clubs can be accessed at <http://www.frisc.net/>.



There are companies that deal exclusively with marketing hunting and fishing leases. Generally, they're paid based on a percentage of the lease. Many hunting and fishing web sites, such as [smarhunter.com](http://smarhunter.com) or [www.huntri.com](http://www.huntri.com), have classified ads with land available for lease and people looking to

lease land.

## THE LEASING PROCESS

A lease is a contract that outlines the terms for use of a property. Every lease is different, depending on the needs of the landowner and the sportsperson. At a minimum, the lease agreement should incorporate the key items shown in the sidebar. The lease is a legally binding document, so it's critical that an attorney be involved in the development of the lease.

Sample leases are available in [Landowners Guide](#)

[To Working With Sportspersons in Mississippi](#) by Dean Stewart and [Lease Hunting Opportunities for Oklahoma Landowners](#). by Ron Masters et al.

## LIABILITY

In Rhode Island, landowners are granted limited liability for land that is open to recreation under General Laws (RIGL 32-6-3). However, once fees are charged for use of the property landowners are exposed to increased liability. This seems to discourage landowners from establishing fee-based recreation on their land.

- Description of property (or portion of) to be leased
- Length (or term) of lease
- Rate of the lease
- Proof of liability insurance
- Indemnity clause to protect landowner from liability
- Provisions for extending or cancelling the lease
- Abide by all state and federal laws
- terminate lease at sale of property or death of owner

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