

Going Hunting on Stewart Island / Rakiura?

DOC is modernising the hunting permits application system, starting with a pilot on the 35 restricted hunting blocks in Stewart Island/Rakiura in late 2024.

Making it easier for hunters to get the permits they need

We know that hunters find the current restricted permit application process convoluted and burdensome, and the different permit processes and inconsistencies in rules across different districts can be confusing.

The new permit application process will be much simpler, and a new on-line system will allow hunters to manage their permit themselves.

Hunters using the new on-line system will be able to see what hunting blocks are available at any given date, book a restricted hunting block, provide contact details for hunting party members and apply for a permit online. Additionally, the application process, systems used, and conditions of the permit will be standardised nationally.

Before booking any blocks or applying for a permit, hunters will need to set up an account in the system.

Changes to different hunting permit types will be made from late 2024 and will continue through 2025.

The hunting permits project will look at the entire gambit of hunting permits – restricted, balloted and open.

It will start with a pilot of the 35 restricted hunting blocks on Stewart Island/Rakiura using a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) version of the new system.

From late 2024, hunters wanting to book any of the restricted blocks on Rakiura will be able to use the new on-line system to do this. The MVP version won't include a payments gateway so hunters will still have to pay fees over the phone or in-person.

The modernised system will be rolled out nationally for other restricted hunting blocks throughout 2025. Improvements will also be made to the open hunting permits system in 2025.

A Few Other Things will be Different

There are a few other changes that will be rolled out with the new system in Stewart Island / Rakiura.

Firstly, everyone listed in the hunting party will be issued with a permit, rather than the current practice of just having one permit for the entire hunting party.

The new system also only allows one block to be booked by a hunter – and this includes hunting party members – for any specified period. This is to ensure that everyone gets an equitable chance to book a hunting block and allows for more hunting opportunities during popular times and of popular blocks.

Some blocks have Rakiura Hunters Camp Trust (RHCT) huts on them. When the new system goes live, your hunting permit will be issued when you book a block. If there is a RHCT hut on the block, you will need to book the hut separately by e-mailing the Rakiura National Park Visitor Centre (stewartisland@doc.govt.nz) after securing your permit.

Booking administration fees must be paid within 21 days of the application being made.

Frequently Asked Questions

What's happening?

DOC is rolling out a new hunting permits application system and it will first be used for the 35 Rakiura/Stewart Island Restricted Hunting blocks in late 2024.

What will hunters be able to do in the new system?

Hunters using the new on-line system will be able to see what hunting blocks are available at any given date, book a restricted hunting block, provide contact details for hunting party members and apply for a permit online.

For hunters it will be faster, and simpler.

Is there anything that hunters won't be able to do when the system is piloted in Rakiura?

Yes. The MVP version won't have an online payments facility available so hunters will still have to pay permit fees by either phoning or calling into the Rakiura Visitor Centre.

It also won't allow hunters to make changes to their bookings (e.g. adding a new person to their hunting party). These will also have to be done by either phoning or calling into the Rakiura Visitor Centre.

The Rakiura version of the system will be upgraded to include these features in 2025.

How do hunters get to use the new on-line system?

You will be able to access the new system from the DOC website and before booking any hunting blocks you must create an account.

Setting up an account in the system is a breeze. It's a quick and straightforward process that ensures everything is ready for your hunting adventures.

What else is changing for hunters?

Some other changes will be rolled out with the new system. Firstly, everyone listed in the hunting party will be issued with a permit rather than the current practice of just having one permit for the entire hunting party.

The new system also only allows one block to be booked by a hunter for any specified period. If the block has an RHCT hut on it, you will need to e-mail the Rakiura Visitor Centre to book this once you have received your permit.

Additionally, permit fees must be paid within 21 days of the application being made or the booking will be cancelled.

What about Rakiura hunters who don't have internet access or an e-mail address?

Hunters will still be able to apply for a permit by calling the Rakiura Visitor Centre or showing up in person. Visitor Centre staff will be able to complete the application in the system for the hunter.

What about hunters who have already have a booking in late 2024 or 2025?

Nothing changes for these hunters. The booking and associated permit will remain in place.

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