

## **Bear Aware**

Here are some things that can be done to avoid bear encounters and ways to stay safe if an encounter occurs.

## **Bear Safety Tips**

- If you notice fresh scat, diggings, tracks, or come upon a carcass, avoid the area.
- Avoid storing garbage. If it must be stored, keep it indoors or in well-sealed containment to prevent it from attracting bears.
- Remove fruit and berries from trees and bushes.
- When enjoying the forest or local parks make noise, be alert, and avoid areas of dense brush where visibility is limited. This can prevent surprise encounters with bears and other wildlife.
- Keep BBQ's and smokers clean and grease free to eliminate attractants.

## **Staying safe in an encounter**

- Attempt to detour as far away as possible.
- If it is impossible to detour around the bear or turn around, wait for the bear to leave. Try to leave a minimum of 100 yards between you and the bear.
- If a bear begins to approach, speak in a monotone and non-threatening voice. If it continues toward you, step aside and allow it to pass.

- If the bear is following you or behaving aggressively, and you have bear spray on hand, spray a short burst of spray at the bear. If this does not work to deter the bear, spray at the bear, and begin to yell, showing that you will make a stand.
- Predatory bears may follow, circle, or stalk you. Start with yelling and throw rocks or sticks at the bear.
- If a defensive bear charges and makes contact, drop to the ground, and play dead. Protect the back of your neck with your hands and use your elbows and toes to avoid being rolled over. Remain as still as possible and do not scream. Do not move until you are certain the bear has left.
- Bears will often snap their jaws and making a woofing sound when agitated or startled. If a bear is encountered and they begin to snap their jaws, slap the ground with their paws, or make woofing sounds, these are warnings to leave the area.
- Do Not Run as this may initiate a predator response from the bear.