



Press Release

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Many Campgrounds are Open for Business, but Some Campgrounds are closed for the Forth of July Due to Bark Beetles and Snow

Denver Colo. July 3, 2008— There are 184 Campgrounds in Northern Colorado and Southeastern Wyoming open for the Forth of July weekend. However, Forest Service officials concerned about visitor safety have identified some campgrounds and picnic areas that will remain closed for the season or may experience delayed openings due to hazards caused by bark-beetle killed trees and heavy snow levels. Seventeen out of 223 recreation sites, mainly campgrounds and picnic areas across three National Forests in northern Colorado and southeastern Wyoming will be closed all summer. Fourteen sites will experience delayed openings this summer due to the bark beetle epidemic. Eight high elevation recreation sites are closed because of snow. Some roads have also been closed due to washouts after heavy snow melt.

The closures and delays are on the Arapaho and Roosevelt, Medicine Bow and Routt, and White River National Forests.

“Everyone is working hard to open these campgrounds; however, some are still snow covered and inaccessible, and removing all the bark beetle hazard trees is taking time. Public safety is our number one priority, so, we need to remove all the hazard trees before we open the campgrounds to the public. Beetle-killed trees are hazards because they can fall anytime. Visitors need to be aware of their surroundings and wind conditions in areas where trees have been killed by the mountain pine beetle,” said USFS Bark Beetle Incident Commander Clint Kyhl. “We are making great progress with all of our partners, and hope to open all the remaining sites as soon as possible,” he added.

USFS hotshot firefighting crews, Colorado Corrections Industry Crews, and Colorado Youth Corps have been cutting and removing the hazard trees in many campgrounds to get them ready for the holiday weekend. Contractors have also been spraying high valued trees in other campgrounds to keep the beetles from attacking them. A number of forest recreation sites have already had beetle-killed hazard trees removed; For instance, Sapphire Point, Giberson Bay Day Use Area, Heaton Bay Campground on Dillon Reservoir were closed, but are now open.

In spite of the closures and delays, there are still many great places to camp and explore on the National Forests. To check the status of any campground, visit www.fs.fed.us/r2/recreation/camping/campgroundlist or call the local Forest Service

office for more information. Reservations for most campgrounds can be made on www.recreation.gov or by calling 1-877-444-6777. For general information about the bark beetle epidemic go to www.fs.fed.us/r2/bark-beetle.

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