

Glenda Wiles

From: McKay, Tod G -FS <tgmcay@fs.fed.us>
Sent: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 12:37 PM
Subject: News Release: Forest Welcomes Visitors for 4th of July
Attachments: July 4th 2017.docx; BitterrootNF_Campground1.jpg; Campground2.jpg

Forest Welcomes Visitors for 4th of July

Hamilton, Montana (June 27, 2017) – With the 4th of July right around the corner, the Bitterroot National Forest is a great place to get away from the noise of fireworks and enjoy your holiday. A few considerations will help ensure everyone's safety and enjoyment:

- **Fireworks are not permitted** on National Forests. Please leave them at home. Violations are punishable by a fine of \$500 or more. Anyone who starts a wildfire can be held liable for suppression costs which can be substantial.
- **All campgrounds on the Forest are open and ready for visitors.** Campgrounds fill up quickly. For a complete list of campgrounds and to determine if your favorite campground is one in which you can reserve a site, visit our website at www.fs.usda.gov/bitterroot and click on the *Recreation/Cabins and Camping* sections.
- **Never leave a campfire unattended** and make sure your coals are cool to the touch before you leave. Forecasts are for a hot and dry 4th of July and visitors need to be fire safe.
- **Be prepared for changing weather conditions** including the potential for afternoon thunderstorms.
- **Be cautious around flowing waters** and especially at creek crossings.
- **Expect heavier traffic than normal on forest roads and trails** over the holiday. Drive defensively and notify the Forest Service of any downed trees or road damage so repairs can be made.
- **Pack it In–Pack it Out** is the best practice for all of your garbage.

Please be aware that as of today (June 27th) drinking water is not available within the Lake Como Recreation Area (including Lower Como Campground). The forest is currently installing a new water system to provide potable water to the areas campgrounds, beach and picnic areas and boat launch. Construction is taking place this week with the goal of having the new system operational by the July 4th holiday weekend. Contact the Darby/Sula Ranger District at (406) 821-3913 for updates and more information.

There is also no potable water available this summer at Blodgett Campground so please plan accordingly and bring your own drinking water.

The gate at Lost Horse Road #429 on the Darby/Sula Ranger District is open. Schumaker Campground is also open. Please be advised that the road is rough (ruts & wash boarded) due to our recent rains and thunderstorms and is not recommended for trailers.

The Magruder Road Corridor between Darby, MT and Elk City, ID is closed at Observation Point due to snow. Nez Perce Pass is open to Paradise Campground. Contact the West Fork Ranger District for road updates. Magruder Road is suitable for high-clearance vehicles only. Travelers are advised to carry a chainsaw in case of a fallen tree on the road and should be aware that there is no cell phone coverage or services for 120 miles.

A reminder for those heading to Lake Como, you will need a recreation pass for parking. Cost of the passes are \$5/vehicle or \$30 for a season pass and are available at all Forest Service offices, area retailers including Mr. T's and People's Market in Darby and Angler's Roost, Lone Pine, Town Pump South, Bob Ward's, and Riverside in Hamilton, and on-site at the recreation area. Day use fees and camping fees are charged at Lake Como from Memorial Day through Labor Day weekend.

Local hiking and camping books, maps, animal and plant guides and Forest souvenirs are available at the *Discover the Bitterroot* store in the lobby of the Forest Supervisor's office at 1801 N. First Street in Hamilton.

Have a safe and happy 4th of July holiday!

Stay in touch with us through www.facebook.com/DiscoverBitterrootNF and www.twitter.com/BitterrootNF.

Bitterroot National Forest – District Offices:

West Fork Ranger District, (406) 821-3269

Darby/Sula Ranger District, (406) 821-3913

Stevensville Ranger District, (406) 777-5461

Supervisor's Office, (406) 363-7100

###



Tod McKay
Public Affairs Officer

Forest Service
Bitterroot National Forest

p: 406-363-7122

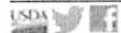
c: 406-531-1130

tgmckay@fs.fed.us

1801 N. First

Hamilton, MT 59840

www.fs.usda.gov/bitterroot



Caring for the land and serving people

This electronic message contains information generated by the USDA solely for the intended recipients. Any unauthorized interception of this message or the use or disclosure of the information it contains may violate the