

# Dixie National Forest VISITOR GUIDE



*A Contrast in Color, Culture, & Climate*



*Casto Canyon*



*Tule Lake*

*A* place of diversity, the Dixie National Forest straddles the divide between the Great Basin and the Colorado River in southern Utah. Scenery ranges from desert canyon gorges of amber, rose, and sienna to high mountain forests, plateaus, and alpine lakes.

## Fast Forest Facts

**Elevation Range:** 3,000' - 11,000'

**Acres:** nearly 2 million

**The name:** Southwest Utah was called *Utah's Dixie* by early settlers from the southern states sent to the desert to grow cotton and silk; the forest was named after the area.

**Temperature range:** From mountain lows of -30 degrees to valley highs of over 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

*T*he Dixie National Forest is characterized by contrast. As a part of the world-renowned landscapes of Southern Utah, the forest provides a backdrop and serves as a gateway to surrounding National Parks and Monuments. Nationally recognized highways and trails course through the forest and provide ready access to the distinctive natural highlights of the forest landscape.

*Come see for yourself!*

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*Sego Lily*

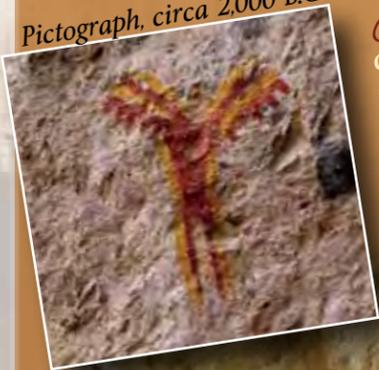
*This Visitor Guide provides the information you can use to plan your trip to the Dixie National Forest.*

# Get to Know Us

## History

What is now the Dixie National Forest was once inhabited by the *Paleo-Indian Culture* who hunted woolly mammoths and megafauna. This culture was followed by another hunter-gatherer group known as the *Archaic Culture*. They also lived seasonally in the high country and followed game to lower elevations in winter.

Pictograph, circa 2,000 B.C.



Pictographs, petroglyphs, dwellings, and artifacts—all indicate the presence in the area of horticultural prehistoric cultures. Identified as the Fremont and Anasazi (*Ancestral Puebloan*), they occupied the Dixie National Forest area from 500-1,275 AD. They were farmers, planting corn, beans, and squash near water sources. These cultures used the high

North Creek granary

country for hunting and gathering of rock, medicinal plants, and other resources. Their stone granaries—still visible tucked into the sandstone cliffs—kept their stores safe from animals.

By the early 1,300s, new groups known as the Paiutes and Utes moved here from the west, living much the same as their predecessors. These were the people who were here when the first Europeans explored the area, led by Fathers Dominguez and Escalante. The route that they pioneered became known as the Old Spanish Trail. By the mid 1800s trappers, traders, gold hunters, slave traders, and immigrants traveled this road regularly. Today it parallels much of Highway 15.

Ute family, circa 1860-1880 (courtesy of firstpeople.com)



In the late 1800s, Utah became a haven for those escaping religious persecution, and in 1849, Brigham Young of the Church of Jesus

Christ of the Latter Day Saints (Mormons) sent settlers to the southwest corner of the state to mine iron and coal, raise cotton, and grow mulberry trees for silkworms. Today, these settlements still border the Dixie National Forest.



Brigham Young & Mormon diary cover (Special Collections, Sherratt Library, Southern Utah University)

Forested lands were used for minerals, timber, water, and livestock forage. In the summer, families would relocate to the mountains to pasture the milk cows, producing butter, milk, and cheese to sell. During this time, large sheep herds—sometimes 30,000 in size—were driven across Utah to Nevada and California for use by miners. These herds left little forage for local ranchers. At the request of local communities, the federal government set aside forest reserves between 1902 and 1905 to protect the grass and water around these communities. In the 1930s, three different reserves were combined into the Dixie National Forest.



Gifford Pinchot

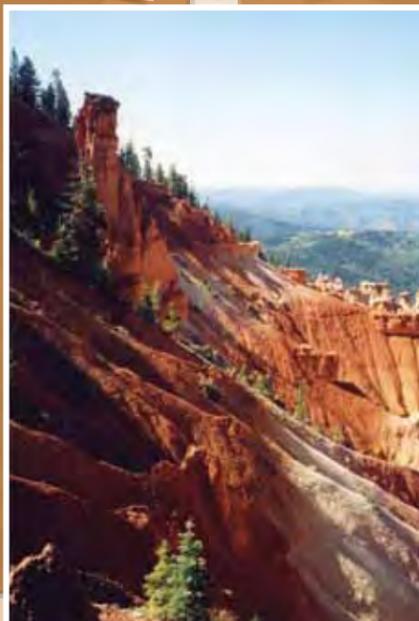
The conservation mission of the Forest Service was best stated by its first Chief, Gifford Pinchot (1905-1910): "To provide the greatest good for the greatest number of people for the long run."

During the the Great Depression of the 1930s, the national forest served as a work area for the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), providing young men with jobs building roads, guard stations, and recreation sites. There are still several facilities on the forest that show off the craftsmanship of "the Boys."



CCC building a restroom on Brian Head Peak, circa 1935

Today, people value the Dixie National Forest not only for its resources (minerals, timber, water, and forage) but also for its opportunities for camping, fishing, hiking, and wildlife viewing. The national forest is located in the "Grand Circle" with several famous neighbors, including Zion, Bryce Canyon, and Capitol Reef National Parks, and Cedar Breaks and the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments. The dramatic elevational differences mean you can pick the weather you want to recreate in!



Virgin River rim

The vast resources of the Dixie National Forest belong to all Americans. These resources must rely on the stewardship of us all if they are to be sustained for our future generations.

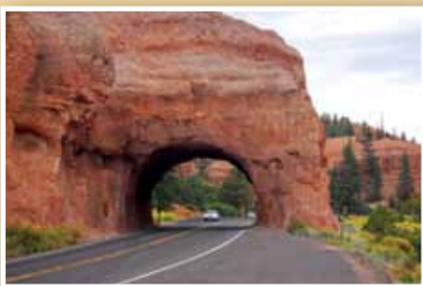


## Scenic Byways, Backways, & Drives

The Dixie National Forest is known for its scenery—from red rock canyons to high mountain plateaus. Scenic *byways* are major roads through this splendor that are suitable for passenger vehicles. Scenic *backways* are lower-standard roads that often require high-clearance vehicles or 4-wheel drive. Always check road conditions before you venture out.

### Highway 12 All American Road

Along Highway 12, a 124-mile All American Road, you will pass more than enough scenery to fill up your camera.



Leaving Utah Heritage Highway 89 seven miles south of Panguitch, travel east into Red Canyon where you'll encounter a dramatic landscape of sandstone hoodoos. Continue east up onto the Paunsaugunt Plateau and the entrance

to Bryce Canyon National Park. East of the plateau you'll drive through the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, past three State Parks, and numerous scenic viewpoints into Capitol Reef, Boulder Top, the Henry Mountains, Circle Cliffs, and Navajo Mountain. The byway ends in Torrey at Highway 24.

Areas of interest include Kodachrome Basin State Park, Escalante Petrified Forest and Campground, the Hole in the Rock Road, Calf Creek Falls Trail and Campground, and Anasazi State Park. Highway 12 is an ideal location for viewing fall colors, and on a clear day you can see more that 100 miles into Colorado and Arizona.

A good place to start your explorations is at the Red Canyon Visitor Center, located on the western end of the byway, 3 miles east of the Highway 89 junction. It is usually open from Easter Day to the end of October.

### Highway 14 State Scenic Byway

Connecting I-15 with Utah Heritage Byway, Highway 14 winds its way from the red rock canyons near Cedar City, up over the Markagunt Plateau, and past the beautiful Navajo Lake and Duck Creek area.

From the plateau, you can see into Zion National Park; from Strawberry Point you can see the Kaibab Plateau in Arizona and the rim of the Grand Canyon. A short detour north from Highway 14 will take the you to fabulous views of Cedar Breaks National Monument.

Campgrounds, hiking, and fishing can be found at Navajo Lake and Duck Creek.



### Utah's Patchwork Parkway National Scenic Byway

Utah's 55-mile Patchwork Parkway garnered its name from an incident in the 1890s when settlers, desperate for food, crossed a valley to the north in midwinter using handmade quilts laid atop deep snow. They reached Parowan and brought food back to save the people of Panguitch.



The area is a patchwork of unparalleled scenery and vibrant history. It serves as the gateway to Cedar Breaks National Monument, and is a fascinating route across southwest Utah's high plateaus, connecting to Heritage Highway 89 and All-American Scenic Highway 12.

Travelers can start their byway trek from Parowan or Panguitch, historic Mormon pioneer settlements that still boast a large concentration of 19th century architecture. The original Panguitch townsite is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These two townsites were previously home to American Indian groups who left behind a number of sites to explore.

This landscape is home to Brian Head, Utah's highest elevation community and southernmost ski area. Panguitch Lake and White Bridge have campgrounds.

### Scenic Backways and Drives *(dirt/gravel roads)*

- » East Fork of the Sevier River Scenic Backway (17 miles; closed in the winter): Starting at Highway 12, the backway (FR 98) travels along the interior of the Paunsaugunt Plateau, past Tropic Reservoir and Kings Creek Campground.
- » Griffin Top Scenic Backway (32 miles; closed in winter): The road leaves CR 1660 and FR 17, then climbs to the Escalante Summit. It then turns north on FR 140 and travels across the Griffin Top part of the Aquarius Plateau, ending at FR 154 north of Posey Lake.
- » Posey Lake Scenic Backway (40 miles; closed in winter): This backway begins in Escalante FR 153-FR 154, and ends on Highway 24 in Bicknell.
- » Hell's Backbone Road (44 miles; closed in winter; high-clearance vehicles recommended): FR 153 from Escalante makes a loop to Highway 12. Hell's Backbone bridge is an engineering feat originally built by the CCC in 1930s, spanning 90 feet between canyons.



Hell's Backbone bridge

# Special Places

© Markus Gann

## Cedar Mountain-Navajo Lake/ Cascade Falls Trail/Lava Beds

The area known locally as Cedar Mountain is really the Markagunt Plateau, on the edge of the Colorado Plateau. A large field of stark and abrasive lava beds sit near the center of this plateau, some of which are less than 2,000 years old. Much of the lava did not come from a central volcano but welled up from cracks in the earth's surface. Underground lava tubes formed as a result, one of which can be seen at Mammoth Cave.

Townsend's big-eared bat  
(© Eric Isselee)



Lava beds

The cave is an important summer feeding roost and winter hibernation spot for Townsends big-eared bats, fringed myotis bats, and others. It is open to the public from May to September to explore on your own. In the winter, it is gated to protect the bats.



Navajo Lake

On Cedar Mountain you'll find Navajo Lake, formed when lava flowed across the eastern end of the valley in which it sets. Lava tubes run under the

lake and drain water into both the Great Basin and Colorado River drainages, as the headwaters of the Virgin River. At Navajo Lake, you can camp, boat, or fish for rainbow and brook trout. A trail to the south of the lake along the Virgin River Rim provides hiking, horseback riding, and biking opportunities.

Also located on the rim is the Cascade Falls National Recreation Trail. This short 0.8 mile trail winds under the rim of the plateau and ends at Cascade Falls.

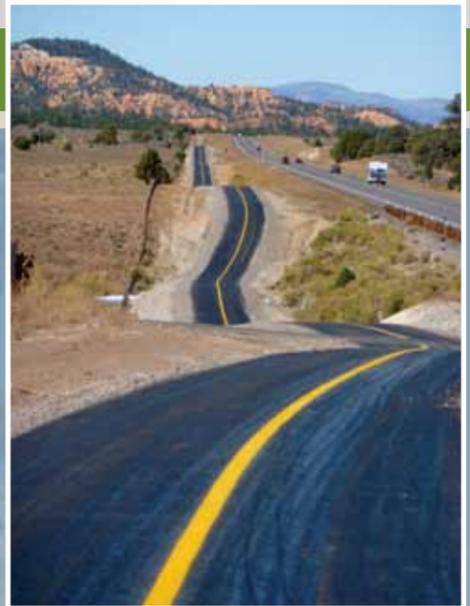


Bobcat (© Tom Tietz)

## Red Canyon

Located along 5 miles of the All American Road (Highway 12), Red Canyon is lined with stark spires and ghostly hoodoos eroded out of the red limestone and sandstone. In 1925, tunnels were dug through the limestone fins to impress dignitaries and provide a gateway to the splendor of Bryce Canyon National Park.

A paved bike road runs parallel to Highway 12 for bikers to safely ride from Red Canyon to the East Fork of the Sevier River. In addition, trails leaving from the valley invite the hiker, biker, OHV user, and equestrian to explore further.



Paved bike path along Highway 12

## Wilderness

Wilderness is an area of federal land that is free from human control, is undeveloped, and provides outstanding opportunities for solitude and a primitive type of recreation. The Dixie National Forest is fortunate to have four congressionally designated Wildernesses. They are rugged and remote—and best suited for experienced hikers and backpackers. Please contact the Dixie National Forest prior to visiting for current maps, regulations, and conditions.



Ashdown Gorge

### Dixie National Forest Wilderness

Pine Valley Mountain  
Cottonwood  
Ashdown Gorge  
Box-Death Hollow

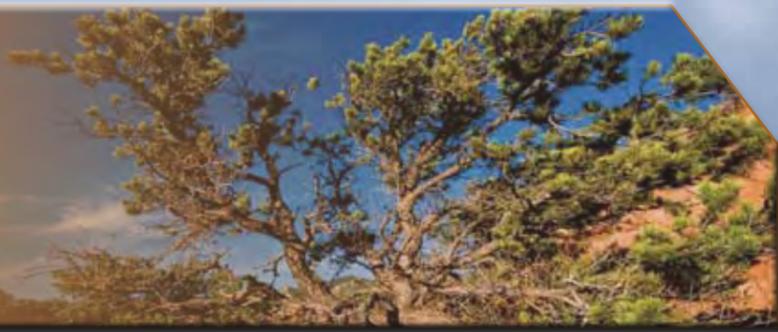


Help protect Wilderness for our future by following the "Leave No Trace" principles:

- » Plan ahead and prepare
- » Travel and camp on durable surfaces
- » Dispose of waste properly
- » Leave what you find
- » Minimize campfire impacts
- » Respect wildlife
- » Be considerate of other visitors



Chipmunk



## Special Places

### Pine Valley Recreation Area

Located in the western basin below the Pine Valley Mountain, the Pine Valley Recreation Area has nine loops (including an equestrian camp), numerous trails, and excellent fishing in both the Santa Clara River and the Pine Valley reservoir. In the summer, you can tour the Pine Valley Chapel, built in the late 1800s by a Scottish shipbuilder.

Nearby, trees from the Forsyth Canyon area were cut in 1890s and hauled 500 miles to Salt Lake for pipes in the Tabernacle Pipe Organ on Temple Square.

### Pine Lake Recreation Area



Pine Lake Recreation Area is located in a fragrant ponderosa pine and spruce forest. The area has a campground and a day use area adjacent to Pine Lake. There are several trails in the area for hiking, biking, horseback riding, and OHV riding.

### Posey Lake Recreation Area

This small fishing lake is a delightful retreat in a conifer and aspen forest. Facilities include a non-motorized boat ramp and two fishing docks. Two hiking trails start from the campground. Other trails nearby allow hiking, biking, and horseback riding.



### Powell Point

Named in honor of John Wesley Powell, explorer of the Colorado Plateau region, this stunning vista overlooks adjacent states and National Parks. Please check in at the Escalante or Powell District Offices for current road and weather conditions.



Powell Point, west side

### Leeds Creek Kiln and Children's Forest

There is a lot of history in the high reaches of Leeds Creek Canyon, where the Leeds Creek Kiln was built to support the mining operations for the Silver Reef Mining Area. The kiln made charcoal from the surrounding oak and juniper forest; the charcoal kept the smelter at a constant temperature for removing the silver from sandstone. Families from Leeds helped restore the kiln in the 1990s.

In 2001, children from local elementary schools—with the help of an Elderhostel group—designed and built the 0.5-mile nature trail that interprets the area's natural and cultural resources for visitors.

*The road from Silver Reef is occasionally closed in winter.*

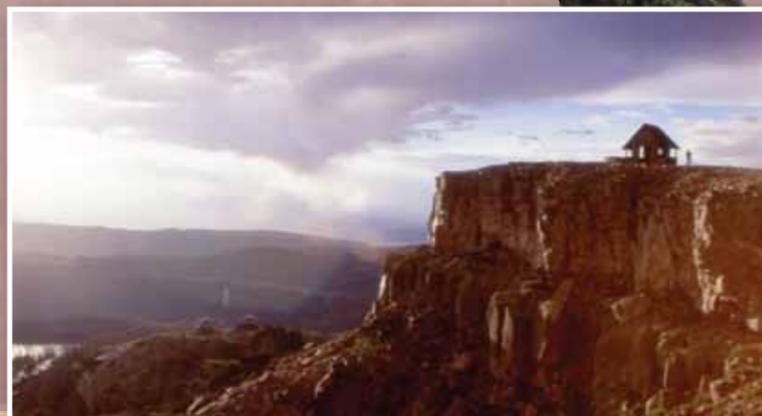


### Brian Head Peak

Known as Monument Peak until 1890, Brian Head Peak lies on the west rim of the Markagunt Plateau. (Markagunt is a Piute Indian word that means *high land of trees*.) At 11,307' it is the highest point in Iron County. Although a dirt road can be followed nearly all the way to the summit, there are a number of trails, most of them intended for mountain bike enthusiasts, that can get you a peak experience. A wood and stone pavilion built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s still stands the test of time, and makes a great spot to enjoy lunch with views all the way to Arizona and Nevada. Watch carefully—you may spot bald eagles, peregrines, or prairie falcons.



Peregrine falcon (© M. Lorenz)



Brian Head Peak



# Our Natural Resources

## Flora

At almost 2 million acres, the Dixie National Forest is one of the largest national forests in Utah. It stretches for about 170 miles east to west, straddling the divide between the Great Basin and the Colorado River. Elevations range from 3,000-11,000'; annual precipitation ranges from 10-40"; and temperatures range from -30 to over 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Its topographic and climatic diversity mean that there are numerous ecosystems to be found here.

The vegetation on the Dixie National Forest gradually changes from sagebrush (*Artemesia tridentada*) and rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*) at lower elevations to low-growing pinyon pine (*Pinus edulis*) and juniper (*Juniperus sp.*) at mid-elevations. These give way to aspen (*Populus tremuloides*), ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), bristlecone pine (*Pinus longaeva*), Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*), and subalpine fir (*Abies lasiocarpa*) at high elevations.

As you travel through the spruce forests on the Dixie National Forest (and especially on the Markagunt Plateau) you will see a lot of dead trees. They were killed by spruce bark beetles (*Dendroctonus rufipennis*), insects smaller than a grain of rice, but deadly.

Some of the timber has been harvested to reduce the fire danger, improve scenery, and to provide wood products and logs for homes. (Proceeds from timber sales are used to plant seedlings to aid in forest recovery.) Some trees have blown down in strong winds and provide firewood for local use.

For more information, visit [www.fs.usda.gov/dixie](http://www.fs.usda.gov/dixie).



Spruce bark beetles

© Tatiana Edrekina

### Tree Identification

If needles are in groups, the tree is a pine.

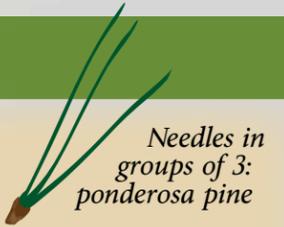
- If needles are in groups of 3, it is a ponderosa pine.
- If needles are in groups of 5 and branch looks like a bottle brush, it is a bristlecone pine.
- If needles are in groups of 5 and the branch is flimsy, it is a limber pine.
- If needles are in groups of 2, it is a pinyon pine.

If needles are singular and flat, the tree is a fir.

- White fir (*Abies concolor*) needles are 2-3" long
- Subalpine fir (*Abies lasiocarpa*) needles are 1" long

If needles are singular and 4-sided, the tree is a spruce (4-sided needles will roll between your fingers).

- Blue spruce (*Picea pungens*) has furrowed bark
- Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*) bark has silver dollar-sized plates



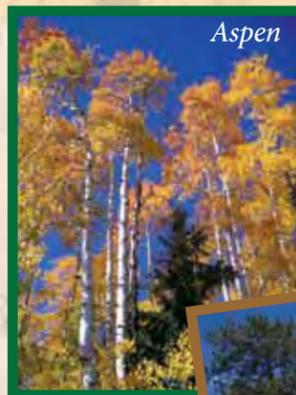
Branch shaped like a bottle brush: bristlecone pine



Singular needles: spruce or fir



Bristlecone pine



Aspen



Subalpine fir behind Podunk Guard Station



Ponderosa pine (© mdd)

High Elevation  
8,000' - 12,000'

Sagebrush  
(© Brendan Bucy)



Claret cup cactus (© Mishella)



Rabbitbrush



Pinyon pine



Juniper



Juniper leaves

Mid Elevation  
6,000' - 8,000'

Lower Elevation  
3,000' - 6,000'



An osprey goes fishing  
(© Richard Fitzer)

Prairie dog (© James M. Phelps, Jr.)



## Wildflowers & Watchable Wildlife

Watching the bountiful wildlife on the Dixie National Forest is a favorite activity of visitors. The grasslands, plateaus, and mountains of the forest are home to an astonishing diversity of animals—some small and shy, others big and bold. Here is a small sampling of what you might spot:

- » Mule deer: Found throughout the forest at different elevations as seasons change
- » Elk: Common at Sidney Valley, Panquitch Lake, Paunsaugunt Plateau, Hoodle Creek, and Griffin Top
- » Bald eagles: Spot them at Panquitch Lake (Oct.-Nov. or when the lake freezes) or Cottonwood area near I-15 in the winter
- » Geese and ducks: Often seen at Panquitch Lake and Duck Creek Pond
- » Raptors: Found throughout the forest, and include kestrels, red-tailed hawks, turkey vultures, osprey, and golden eagles
- » Migratory birds: Also found throughout the forest in the summer, includes hummingbirds and many song birds
- » Pronghorn and prairie dogs: May be seen on the Paunsaugunt Plateau



A northern saw whet owl guards his lunch



Mule deer (© Alucard)

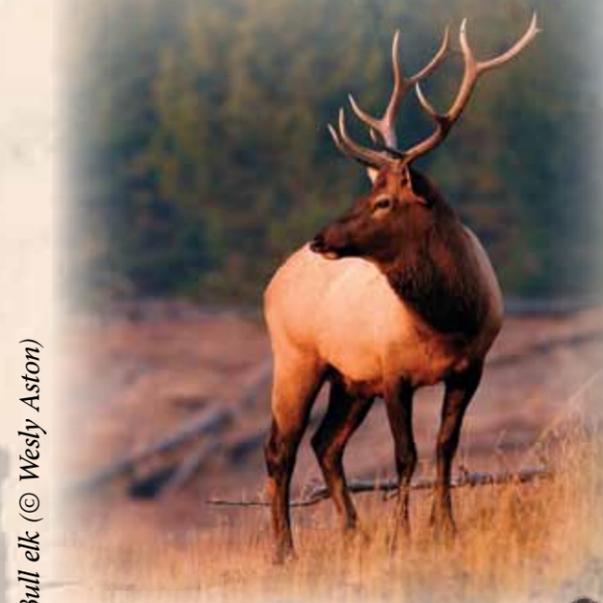
Good roads with wildlife viewing opportunities include: Aquarius Plateau (FR 140 and 154), Tom Best Loop Road (FR 117), and the Pine Valley area (FR 035).



Watson's bladderpod

### Wildflowers

Your best wildflower viewing options are on the high plateaus of the Dixie National Forest. Depending on the amount of precipitation, the flowers bloom in different locations and amounts. A *Wildflower Celebration* is held each July at the Cedar Breaks National Monument, with hikes and workshops. For further information, visit [www.nps.cebr](http://www.nps.cebr).



Bull elk (© Wesly Aston)

Indian paintbrush against aspen bark  
(© Heather A. Craig)



Globe mallow (© Karin Hildebrand Lau)



Columbine

### Wildlife Viewing Ethics



- » Give the wildlife their space. Use those binoculars!
- » If you find what you believe to be an "orphaned" or sick animal, leave it alone. Often the parents are close by and are waiting for you to leave.
- » Pets must be restrained when viewing wildlife.
- » Do not feed wildlife. Animals that become habituated to handouts can eventually become nuisances, losing their instinctive fears of people. Often the only solution is to euthanize the animal.
- » Leave the area if an animal shows signs of alarm. Watch and listen for raised ears, skittish movements, or alarm calls.



Sand lily

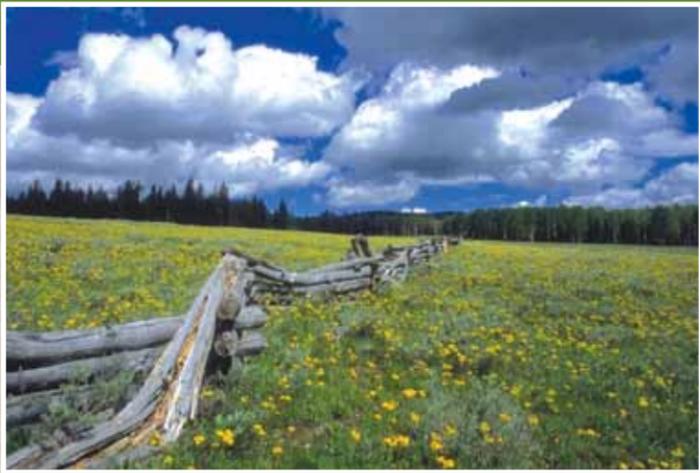


Pronghorn (antelope)

Leopard frog (© Gerald E. DeBoer)



# Dixie National Forest



Cedar Mountain Meadow



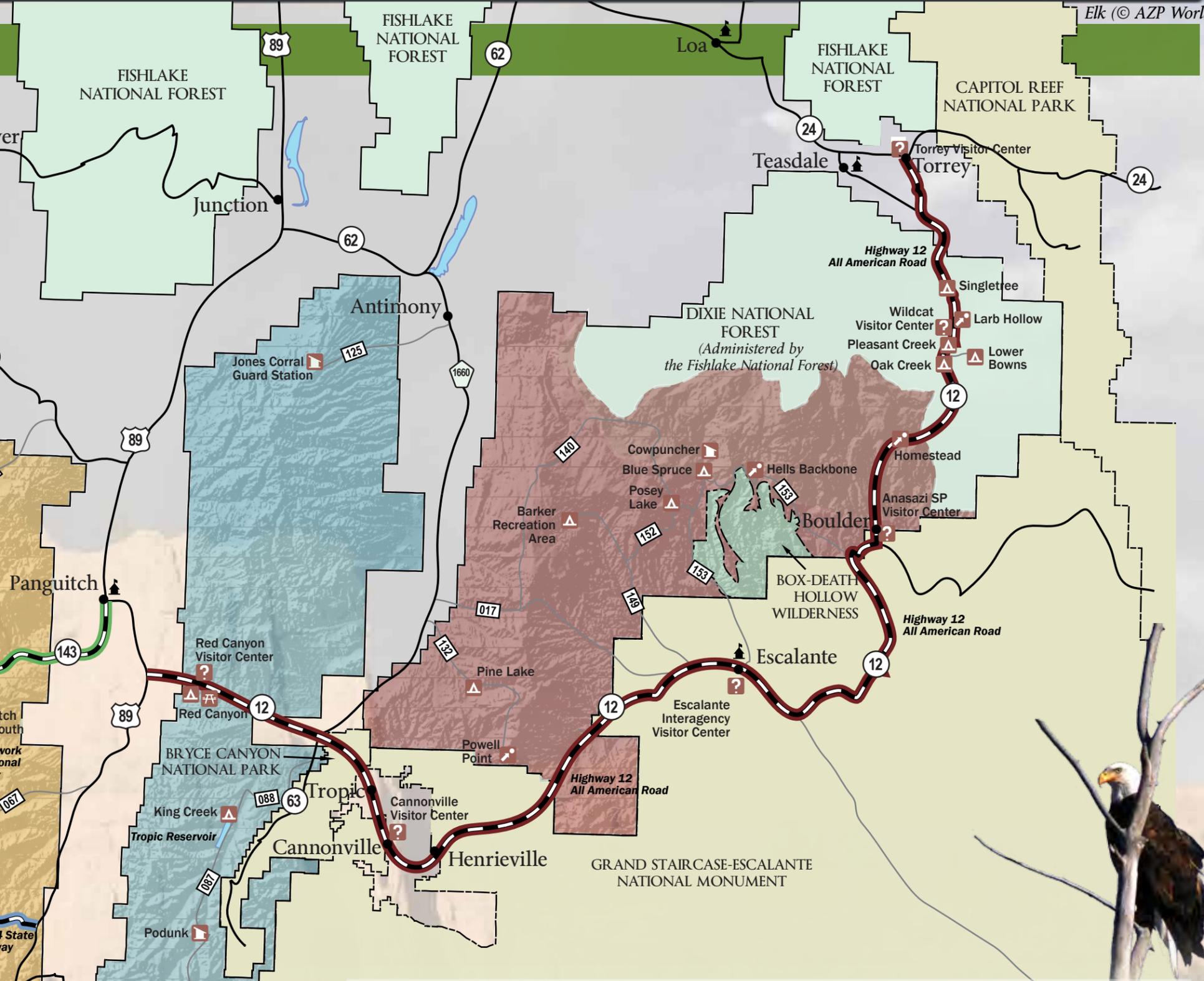
Peregrine falcon monitoring



Vicinity map



Elk (© AZP Worldwide)



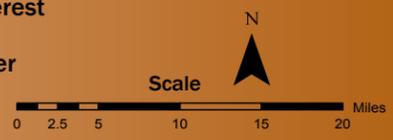
*Before venturing on to the Dixie National Forest, please pickup a map with the level of detail appropriate for your planned activities:*

*For backcountry and off-road travel: Motor Vehicle Use Maps (MVUM) are available at all Forest Service offices and Visitor Centers, and may be downloaded from [www.fs.usda.gov/dixie](http://www.fs.usda.gov/dixie).*

*For hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding: Topographic maps are recommended. Visit the US Geological Survey for online purchases: [www.usgs.com/](http://www.usgs.com/).*

*National forest maps may be purchased at: [www.nationalforeststore.com](http://www.nationalforeststore.com).*

- |  |                             |  |                            |
|--|-----------------------------|--|----------------------------|
|  | Pine Valley Ranger District |  | Forest Supervisor's Office |
|  | Cedar City Ranger District  |  | District Ranger Office     |
|  | Powell Ranger District      |  | Paved Roads                |
|  | Escalante Ranger District   |  | Unpaved Roads              |
|  | Wilderness Areas            |  | Scenic Byway or Backway    |
|  | National Parks & Monuments  |  | Interstate Highway         |
|  | Campground                  |  | U.S. Highway               |
|  | Guard Station               |  | State Highway              |
|  | Picnic Area                 |  | County Road                |
|  | Point of Interest           |  | Forest Route               |
|  | Visitor Center              |  |                            |
|  | Ski Area                    |  |                            |





# Campgrounds & Trails

Pine Valley Guard Station



## Campgrounds

RD	Name	# of Units (single/double)	Season	Amenities	Reserveable
Pine Valley	Pine Valley Recreation Area (8 loops and 1 horse camp)	50/11 (horse camp- 18)	May-Sept.	<i>(small corrals; hitch rails)</i>	Yes
	Honeycomb Rocks	22/0	May-Sept.		Yes
Cedar City Ranger District	Cedar Canyon	14/0	May-Sept.		Yes
	Duck Creek	92/2	June-Sept.		Yes
	Navajo Lake	28/4	June-Sept.		No
	Panquitch Lake North	31/18	May-Sept.		Yes
	Panquitch Lake South	17/0	May-Sept.		No
	Spruces	26/0	June-Sept.		No
	Te-Ah	42/0	June-Sept.		Yes
	White Bridge	28/0	May-Sept.		Yes
	Yankee Meadow	29/0	May-Sept.		No
	Deer Haven Group Site	50	June-Sept.		Yes
Powell Ranger District	Coyote Hollow Equestrian	4/0	May-Oct.	<i>(non-potable water; hitch rails; no corrals)</i>	No
	King Creek	36/0	May-Oct.		No
	King Creek Group Site	1 (capacity-150)	May-Oct.		Yes
	Red Canyon	32/0	May-Oct.		No
Escalante Ranger District	Barker Recreation	13/0	May-Sept.		Yes
	Blue Spruce	5/1	May-Sept.		No
	Pine Lake	28/0	May-Sept.		Yes
	Posey Lake	22/0	May-Sept.		Yes



Blue Spruce Campground

- Restrooms
- Drinking water
- Garbage collection
- Boat ramp
- Horse use site
- Showers
- Dump site
- Walk-in site

## Historic Guard Stations

Guard Stations on the national forest were originally built "a day's ride" from each other so that the Ranger would have a place to spend the night when out in the field. With the advent of vehicles and better roads, guard stations fell into disuse. Starting in the 1990s, they were restored as public rental cabins, with the fees being used for maintenance and further restoration.

GUARD STATION	LOCATION	CAPACITY/ SEASON	FACILITIES	NOTES
Pine Valley Campground	<i>Pine Valley District:</i> From Central, go 11 miles east on FR 035 to the Pine Valley Recreation Area. At the reservoir gate, go 0.5 mile and turn north on the 1st road.	6/year-round	Electric stove, fridge, water heater; table and chairs; fold-out couch; bunk beds in bedroom; running water May-Sept.; outdoor toilets for winter use; pellet-burning stove; no linens	Built in 1935, the station sits on a wooded hill with mountain views, east of Pine Valley Reservoir. Area activities include fishing, hiking, horseback riding, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing.
Cowpuncher	<i>Escalante District:</i> North on Hell's Backbone Road out of Escalante, then north on FR 145 past Blue Spruce Campground.	4/May-Sept.	Propane stove and fridge; wood cook stove; some pots and dishes; no bedding; hot water heater and indoor shower (water is limited)	Built in 1935, it sits in a beautiful valley with Pine Creek running through it. Popular activities in the area include stream fishing, hiking, mountain biking, and big game hunting.
Podunk	<i>Powell District:</i> Follow Forest Road 087 south from Utah State Highway 12.	6/May-Sept.	Propane and wood stoves; table and chairs; no kitchen gear; no linens; no running water	Built in 1928 on the Paunsaugunt Plateau, it sits beneath a stand of mature spruce trees and above the meandering East Fork of the Sevier River.
Jones Corral Guard Station	<i>Powell District:</i> Off County Road 22 by driving Forest Road 125 north of Widtsoe Junction or FR 126 near Antimony	4/May-Sept.	Propane and wood stoves; table and chairs; no kitchen gear; no linens; no running water	Built in 1935 on the remote Mt. Dutton, this guard station has been used by generations of Forest Service employees working in the backcountry.

Cabins are available for rental from Memorial Day to October 31. For more information, visit: [www.fs.usda.gov/dixie](http://www.fs.usda.gov/dixie).

Campground fees range from \$5-\$22 depending on amenities, and are subject to change. **Single** site fee covers up to 8 people and two vehicles. **Double** site fee covers up to 16 people and 4 vehicles.

Extra vehicle charges range from \$4-\$7.

For campground or cabin reservations use the

National Reservation Service at 1-877-444-6777 or [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov)





# Trails

The Dixie National Forest has over 1,600 miles of outstanding trails that can be enjoyed by foot, horse, mountain bike, or off-highway vehicles. The following are just a few highlights—more information is available at your local Ranger District Office, or visit our website at [www.fs.usda.gov/dixie](http://www.fs.usda.gov/dixie).

	Trail	Miles (one-way)/Description	Uses
Pine Valley Ranger District	Duncan Springs	An easy/moderate 2-mile trail through pinyon pine and juniper to the aspen at the springs	
	Canal Trail	A 1-mile easy trail following an historic canal built in the 1900s to provide water to a community to the north; view of Pine Valley and the surrounding area	
	Cemetery Trail/ Water Canyon Trail	A moderate 1.5-mile trail that takes you through dense pinyon pine, juniper, and mountain mahogany up onto a ridge with great views of Pine Valley to the south and Grass Valley to the north	
	Gardner Peak	A 3-mile trail from Pine Valley to the top of Gardner Peak; provides a bird's-eye view of the Pine Valley and surrounding area; moderate to steep	
Cedar City Ranger District	Brianhead Bike Complex	A series of trails that range from easy to advanced leaving from the Brianhead Ski Resort; some end at Panquitch Lake where shuttle service can be arranged; there are also loop trails that bring you back to the resort	
	Bristlecone Trail	An easy 0.5-mile walk along the rim of the Markagunt Plateau; interpretative signs line the trail to its end at a large bristlecone pine and viewing platform; vistas off the plateau into Zion National Park.	
	Cascade Falls Trail	An 0.8-mile easy walk overlooking the Markagunt Plateau and ending at a falls where the water tumbles down from a lava tube under Navajo Lake	
	Henderson Trail	A 1.5 mile moderate trail that winds through the forest and ends at Henderson Lake; beautiful in the fall	
	Navajo Lake Loop	A 12-mile easy trail around the lake, passing through lava flows, flower-filled meadows, and quaking aspen; great place to camp, fish, and ride single-track trails	
	Twisted Forest Trail	An easy 0.5-mile trail offering up close views of ancient bristlecone pine and fabulous vistas above Cedar Breaks National Monument	
	Virgin River Rim	A 32-mile moderate/difficult trail that offers excellent high-elevation alpine hiking and single-track riding with stunning views; follows the rim along Utah's high southern plateau; views of the Pink Cliffs and Zion National Park	
Powell Ranger District	Casto Canyon Trail	A 5.5-mile trail that connects to the Fremont motorized trail; travels through a large wash and beneath huge red hoodoos; be sure to check out the Limekiln/Casto Canyon Loop.	
	Grand View	A 74-mile moderate/advanced non-motorized trail that travels around the perimeter of the Paunsaugunt Plateau; primary access is at Thunder Mountain Trailhead in Red Canyon, and Sheep Creek Trailhead 10 miles west of Cannonville	
	Pink Ledges Trail	A 0.4-mile trail starting at the Red Canyon Visitor Center; a trail map with numbered interpretive stops is available at the visitor center	
	Thunder Mountain	A 7.8-mile trail accessed in Red Canyon and the Coyote Hollow Trailhead near the top of the canyon; trail travels through brilliantly-colored rock hoodoos and bristlecone pine; great for biking, hiking, and horseback riding	
	Red Canyon Bike Trail	This paved trail is 8.6 miles from the mouth of Red Canyon to the East Fork of the Sevier River	
Escalante Ranger District	Canaan Mountain Loop Trail	A 7.5-mile moderate trail that goes from the valley floor up into tree covered mountains; scenic views into the Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument and Powell Point to the north	
	Chriss Lake Trail	A 2.1-mile moderate climb through pine and aspen to a beautiful reservoir	
	Posey Lookout Trail	A steep but fairly easy 0.7-mile trail from Posey Lake Campground up through pine and fir to an overlook where you can see the Henry Mountains and into the canyons of Capitol Reef National Park	
	Powell Point Trail	A easy 0.9-mile trail from the southern tip of the plateau to the edge of Powell Point where you can enjoy spectacular views of Arizona and Utah	



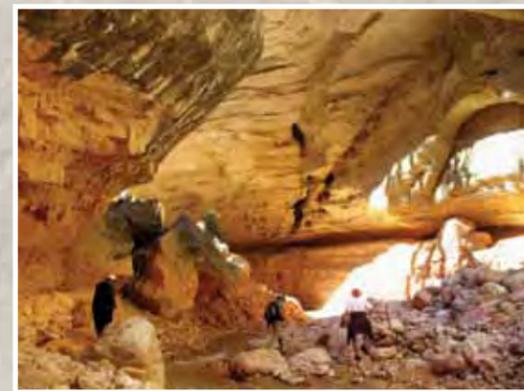
Cowpuncher Guard Station



Hiking the High Mountain Trail

	Hiking		Motorcycles
	Horses		ATV
	Bicycles		Off-highway vehicles
		Nature Walk	

**TRAIL COURTESY**



Exploring Ashdown Gorge

# Activities

## Off-Highway Vehicle Use

Off-highway vehicles are a popular way of travel across the Dixie National Forest. OHV trail systems provide opportunities for leisure rides as well as more challenging experiences. Numerous other roads and trails on the national forest are open for OHV use, but travel off road is not allowed. Visit our website any District Offices for detailed trail maps to help you plan a safe and legal trip.



Along the Antimony Trail



Off-Highway Vehicle Trail Systems	Miles (one-way)	Notes
Paunsaungunt OHV System	65	This system provides easy rides along roads and trails, all connecting on the Paunsaungunt Plateau. Many trails provide views from the western rim of the plateau overlooking the Sevier Valley. There are 6 loops within the system.
Fremont Trail System	50	These trails are easy rides that have spectacular views of the high country, mountain valleys, and meadows. There are 4 loops on the Sevier Plateau.
Piute OHV Trail Connect	25	These are easy rides on roads and trails that connect from the Fremont Trail to the larger Piute Trail in central Utah.
Markagunt OHV System	400	An easy to moderate system, Markagunt roads and trails access dramatic vistas and great fishing.

## MOTORIZED CROSS-COUNTRY TRAVEL PROHIBITED

Only use roads and trails designated as open on official map.

Cross-country or "off-road" motorized travel is prohibited forest-wide. Motorized vehicle use is only allowed on routes designated as open on the official Dixie National Forest Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) with the following exceptions:

- Off-road travel for the purpose of firewood gathering is allowed only as specified under permit.
- Off-road travel for purposes of dispersed camping is allowed within 150 feet along designated open routes. Use established travel ways and campsites whenever possible. There is no restriction on setting up camp beyond 150 feet if gear is transported using non-motorized means.

The Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) is a legal document that identifies the roads and trails where motor vehicles are allowed. It will be reissued each year, much like hunting proclamations or regulations. It is the user's responsibility to be familiar with the annual MVUM. The map will be provided free of charge at local Forest Service offices and on the internet at: [www.fs.usda.gov/dixie](http://www.fs.usda.gov/dixie) or at [www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/ohv/ohv\\_maps.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/ohv/ohv_maps.shtml)

Forest visitors are allowed to park adjacent to any road or trail if:

- Parking does not raise safety concerns.
- Parking along the road does not impact natural or cultural resources.
- Parking is not prohibited by signage.

Once parked along the route, visitors may engage in other activities including unloading OHVs for use on designated roads and trails.

## Mountain Biking

World-class mountain bike trails criss-cross the Dixie National Forest. The Maragunt Plateau is the most popular, but there is great riding on all of the Districts. Those wishing a "thrill downhill" will find it at the Brian Head Mountain Bike Park. Visit any District Office for maps and current information.

Courtesy of Sanpete.com



Mountain Bike Trails	Miles (one-way)	Notes
Canal Trail	5	Easy ride on the north side of Pine Valley overlooking the community of Pine Valley; the trail runs along an historic ditch built in the late 1800s to provide water to the town of Newcastle 50 miles north
Virgin River Rim	32	Moderate to skilled ride overlooking the Virgin River watershed and Zion Park overlook
Navajo Lake Trail System	12	Easy to moderate ride surrounding Navajo Lake
Bunker Creek (Left and Right Forks)	5.5	Advanced riding down either branch of Bunker Creek
Sydney Valley	3.5	Advanced single-track along the rim overlooking the Parowan Valley; connects to Bunker Creek trails
Dark Hollow	6	Advanced single-track riding starting at the headwaters of Lowder Creek; spectacular views into Parowan Valley from the summit.
Lowder Ponds	2.5	Advanced single-track through the forest and meadows connecting to the Sydney Valley trails
Blowhard	10	Extreme riding; steep single-track down from Blowhard to Highway 14
Thunder Mountain	10	Moderate to advanced riding across ridges and around Hoodoos south of Red Canyon, from the canyon floor to the edge of the Paunsaungunt Plateau
Red Canyon	9	Easy ride on paved trail along Highway 12, starting at the mouth of Red Canyon and ending at the East Fork of the Sevier River



Fish art © Joe Tomelleri



## Fishing

There are 500 miles of fishing streams and 90 fishable lakes on the Dixie National Forest! Game fish include brook, rainbow, cutthroat, and brown trout. You might want to try your luck at:

- » Pine Valley Reservoir
- » Navajo Lake
- » Panguitch Lake
- » Upper and Lower Enterprise Reservoirs
- » Tropic Reservoir
- » Red Creek Reservoir (has a nonmotorized boat ramp)
- » Pine Lake (has a nonmotorized boat ramp)
- » Posey Lake (has a nonmotorized boat ramp)
- » Chriss Lake
- » McGath Reservoir
- » Barker Reservoir



*For more fishing information:*

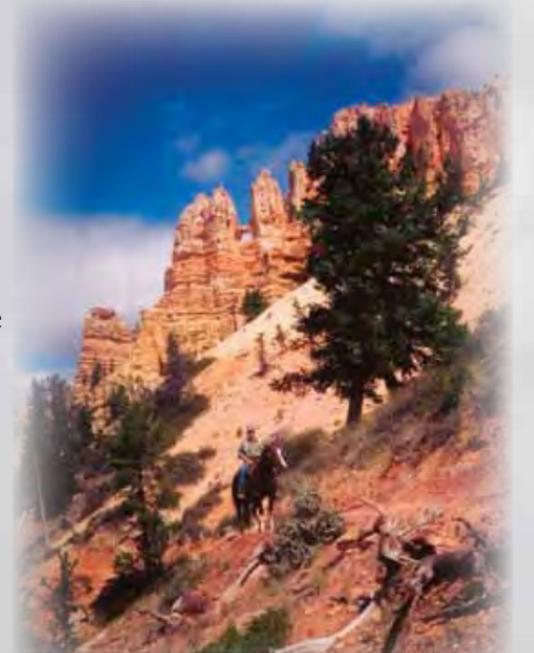
Visit the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources:  
[www.wildlife.utah.gov/fishing/](http://www.wildlife.utah.gov/fishing/)  
 or the  
 Dixie National Forest website:  
[www.fs.usda.gov/dixie](http://www.fs.usda.gov/dixie)

## Horseback Riding

One of the most enjoyable ways to get away from the crowds and see the Dixie National Forest is from the back of a horse. Refer to page 11 for a listing of a few of the trails used by riders. Most forest trails are open to horse use.

Tips for horse travel:

- » Be aware that most trails are open to other uses as well—please use caution.
- » Certified weed-free hay is required on all forest trails for overnight use.
- » Check at any District Office for information on trailheads with sufficient space to turn horse trailers.



## ❄️ Winter Recreation

National forest lands across the West offer great winter recreation opportunities and the Dixie is no exception. Here you can find groomed trails for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, along with large open areas for snowmobile fun. While some areas can be reached from a paved road (e.g. the Cedar City and Pine Valley Winter areas), others are accessed from more primitive trailheads. Check with the local Ranger District offices for current conditions.

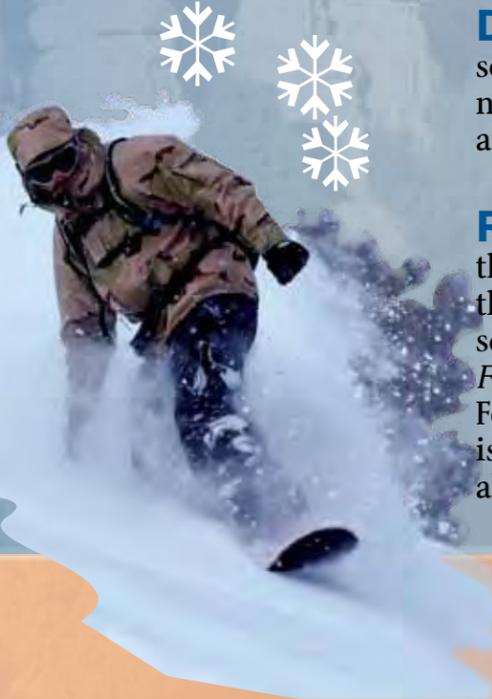


© ALPO

## Snowmobiling

The Utah Division of Parks and Recreation, in partnership with the Cedar Ranger District, grooms a network of almost 100 miles of trails across the district as part of the Cedar Mountain Snowmobile Trail Complex.

© Benis Arapovic



## Downhill Skiing & Snowboarding

The Brian Head Ski Area has downhill skiing and snowboarding fun on almost 900 acres of the Dixie National Forest. Brian Head has the highest elevation base facilities of any ski resort in Utah, and terrain reaching to almost 11,000'.

## Nordic Skiing & Snowshoeing

Within the Pine Valley Recreation Area, the valley floor is groomed for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, conditions permitting.

Deer Valley is a non-motorized winter playground. Located south of Highway 14 at the Iron/Kane County line, there are nearly 1,300 acres with 12 miles of ski trails (about 5.6 miles are marked and groomed).

Ruby's Inn on the Paunsaugunt Plateau grooms trails along the rim of Bryce Canyon and onto the plateau. Trails wind through ponderosa pine and offer solitude and spectacular scenery. A Winter Festival is held in February where there is fun for all ages and abilities.



Deer Valley Snowfest

# Know Before You Go

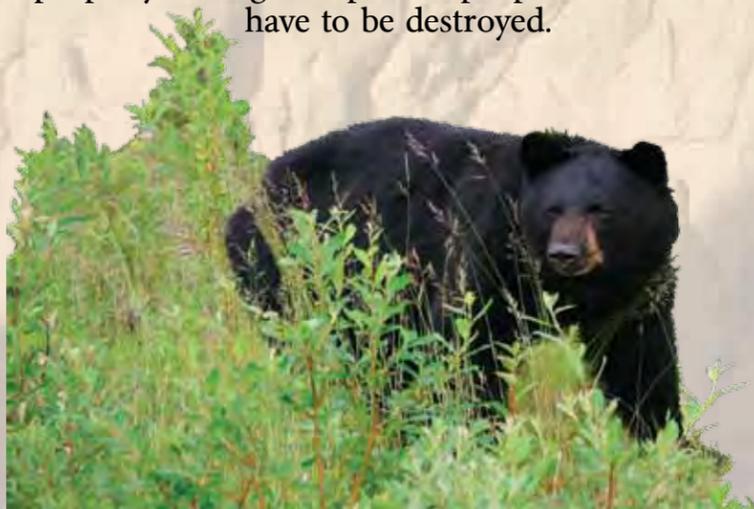


## Be Bear Aware!

Seeing a black bear is a memorable experience. If you want that experience to be positive rather than negative, follow these tips:

- Keep a clean campsite. Store food and garbage in closed vehicles and out of sight.
- Never put food scraps in the campfire—it attracts bears and skunks.
- Don't keep food, shampoo—or anything that smells—in tents or sleeping areas.
- Store stoves and Dutch ovens in a vehicle or secure place when not using.
- When camping in the backcountry, hang food and garbage from a tree limb at least 10 feet from the ground and 5 feet from the tree trunk. This tree should be at least 100 yards from your sleeping area.
- Some bears also target motor oil, insect repellent, liquor, and other things that look like food. Please put these items away.

If bears become accustomed to human food, they may become aggressive towards humans or cause property damage. To protect people, these bears may have to be destroyed.



For more information, visit [www.BeBearAware.org](http://www.BeBearAware.org).



## Tread Lightly!

Unpaved and primitive roads present special challenges, even in good weather. Before you head out, think about another challenge—your responsibility to “Tread Lightly.” Here’s how:

- T** *ravel only where motorized vehicles are permitted.*
- R** *espect the rights of others to enjoy their activities undisturbed.*
- E** *ducate yourself by getting travel information and regulations, comply with signs, and ask owners' permission to cross their property.*
- A** *void streams, lakeshores, meadows, muddy roads, steep hillsides, wildlife, and livestock.*
- D** *rive responsibly to protect the environment and preserve opportunities to enjoy your vehicle on public lands.*

tread lightly!®

LEAVING A GOOD IMPRESSION



## Aquatic Nuisance Species

When zebra and/or quagga mussels invade our local waters they damage boats, destroy fish habitat, and clog public water pipes. Zebra and quagga mussels attach to boats, bait buckets, and other gear. You can help stop these aquatic hitchhikers by following these three steps:

1. *Clean mud, plants, animals or other debris from your boat and equipment.*
2. *Drain the ballast tanks, bilge, livewells, and motor.*
3. *Dry (7 days summer; 18 days spring/fall; and 30 days winter) or freeze.*



## What's that Smoke?

Throughout time, fires have burned in our forests. Where appropriate, fire continues to be used as a management tool to restore forest health. During your visit to the Dixie National Forest, you may see smoke in the sky. You can check current fire conditions by calling any District Office, or by going to [www.utahfireinfo.gov](http://www.utahfireinfo.gov). To report a fire, call the Color Country Interagency Fire Center at (435) 865-4600.



## Responsible Recreation

To sustain the beauty and health of our national forests, please follow these tips:



### Choose an Existing Site

Creating new campsites kills vegetation and leads to soil erosion. Use only designated sites.

### Park Away from Water

Parking near water eventually kills vegetation, leading to erosion and water pollution that make it hard for fish and other

aquatic wildlife to breathe. In addition, vehicles driven onto tree roots seriously jeopardize the health of the tree. Please park at least 200 feet (or 12 vehicle lengths) back from water.

### Human Waste

Bacteria and viruses found in human feces are known to cause hepatitis, salmonella, giardia, and other gastrointestinal diseases. Remember, the water in the rivers and lakes you visit may flow into your own drinking water supply.

Please follow these simple steps when nature calls:

- ☞ Find a spot at least 200 feet from any water source.
- ☞ Dig a hole 6-8 inches deep and bury human waste.
- ☞ Pack out used toilet paper.



© Lane V. Erickson

### Respect Living Trees

By carving or chopping into the trunks of trees, people unknowingly slit veins right below the bark. These veins transport nutrients and water throughout the tree. If the damage becomes severe, it will deprive the tree of nutrients and food, and the tree slowly starves to death.



### Don't Erase the Traces of America's Past

Archaeological and historic sites hold clues to America's past. If disturbed, a part of our heritage will be lost forever. If you discover such remains, please leave them undisturbed and contact the Dixie National Forest.

*Sites and artifacts on federal lands are protected by federal law.*

Flyer Village, 700-950 A.D.

### Use Established Fire Rings Wisely

Please follow these simple steps:

- ☞ Keep your fires small and bring your own firewood. If you have to collect firewood at your campsite, collect dead and down wood only.
- ☞ Check at the local Ranger Station for current fire restrictions. Remember, they can change on a daily basis.
- ☞ Use existing fire rings. Scrape away litter and any other burnable material within a 10-foot-diameter circle surrounding the fire ring.
- ☞ Have a shovel, axe, and bucket of water available before lighting your campfire.
- ☞ Make sure all wood fits inside the fire ring. Don't "feed" a large log into the fire ring.
- ☞ To put out a campfire, slowly pour water onto the fire and stir with a shovel. Continue adding and stirring until all material is cool to touch.
- ☞ Do not bury your fire. The coals can smolder and re-ignite.
- ☞ NEVER leave a fire unattended, even if there are no flames present. Make sure it is out cold. Many wildfires have been caused by abandoned campfires.



© Noam Armorn



Blue grouse (© Sasha Burkard)

### Forest Creatures

Help keep wildlife "wild" by not approaching or feeding them. Keep your dog leashed to protect both him and wildlife.

### Noxious Weeds

Noxious weeds can rapidly displace native plant species that provide habitat for wildlife and food for people and livestock. Here's how you can help reduce their spread:

- ☞ Learn to recognize common weed species.
- ☞ Don't camp or drive in weed infested areas.
- ☞ Don't pick the flowers of noxious weeds and take them home—you'll spread seeds.
- ☞ When using pack animals, carry only feed that is certified weed-free. Within 96 hours before entering backcountry areas, feed them only weed-free food.
- ☞ Wash your vehicle, including the undercarriage, to remove any weed seed before driving to the forest.



Musk thistle (© Martin Fowler)

For more information, visit the Utah Weed Control Association at [www.utahweed.org/](http://www.utahweed.org/).

Scotch thistle (© Picturepartners)

# Dixie National Forest



## Your Fees at Work

Recreation fees have made a meaningful difference in our ability to serve our national forest visitors because these dollars can be reinvested into visitor services and facilities. For example, on the Dixie National Forest fees have been used for:

- Improvements to rental cabins, such as fencing, spring maintenance, painting, and other renovations
- Increased visitor services staffing
- Outfitter and guide permit administration and capacity analysis
- This Visitor Guide



A youth group helps renovate a Guard Station



Pika (© Adrian Baras)



Lupine (© Taikura)



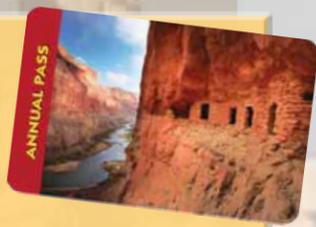
Thunder Mountain Trail in Red Canyon

## America The Beautiful - National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Interagency Pass Program



The America the Beautiful interagency pass program is a suite of annual and lifetime passes that provides U.S. citizens and visitors an affordable and convenient way to recreate on federal lands. Between 80% and 100% of the program's proceeds are used to improve visitor services.

**NOTE:** Passes are honored nationwide at all Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and US Fish & Wildlife Service sites charging entrance or standard amenity fees. In some areas, is good for discounts on other fees such as camping.



## Visitor Centers

**St. George Interagency Visitor Center**  
345 E. Riverside Dr.  
St. George, UT  
(435) 688-3200

**Pine Valley Heritage Center**  
132 E. Main  
Pine Valley, UT  
(435) 574 -2463

**Duck Creek Visitor Center**  
Highway 14  
Open seasonally  
(435) 682-2432

**Red Canyon Visitor Center**  
5375 E. Highway 12  
Open seasonally  
(435) 676-2676

**Cannonville Visitor Center**  
12 Center St.  
Cannonville, UT  
(435) 826-5640

**Escalante Interagency Visitor Center**  
Highway 12  
Escalante, UT  
(435) 826-5499

**Anasazi State Park**  
460 N. Highway 12  
Boulder, UT  
(435) 335-7382

**Wildcat Visitor Center**  
Highway 12  
Open seasonally

**Torrey Visitor Center**  
Junction of Highway 12 and 24  
Torrey, UT  
Open seasonally



Red Canyon Visitor Center



Escalante Interagency Visitor Center

## Forest Contact Information

**Dixie National Forest**  
Supervisor's Office  
1789 North Wedgewood Lane  
Cedar City, UT 84721-7769  
(435)865-3700

**Pine Valley Ranger District**  
196 E. Tabernacle, Suite 40  
St. George, UT 84770  
(435) 688-3246

**Cedar City Ranger District**  
1789 North Wedgewood Lane  
Cedar City, UT 84721-7769  
(435) 865-3200

**Powell Ranger District**  
P.O. Box 80  
Panguitch, UT 84759-0080  
(435) 676-9300

**Escalante Ranger District**  
P.O. Box 246  
Escalante, UT 84726-0246  
(435) 826-5400

Visit us online at:  
[www.fs.usda.gov/dixie](http://www.fs.usda.gov/dixie)

Visitor Guides for other national forests in the Intermountain Region may be found at [www.fs.usda.gov/goto/r4/rec\\_publications](http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/r4/rec_publications)

Background photo (© Jenny Solomon)

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Fall on Mammoth Creek

