

NEWS RELEASE

USDA Forest Service
Coronado National Forest
300 West Congress
Tucson, Arizona 85701

www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado



For Immediate Release

Contact: Supervisor's Office (520) 670-4552

MEMORIAL DAY TIPS FOR A "GETAWAY" WEEKEND

TUCSON, AZ (May 25, 2004)— The key to holiday camping success? Make a plan before you go! Campgrounds on the Coronado National Forest fill up quickly at the beginning of the Memorial Day weekend so to avoid disappointment, plan to arrive at your campsite no later than noon on Friday. Other camping tips include:

- Avoid pitching tents near snags (dead trees) as they can fall without warning. "Widow makers" (broken tree branches) pose potentially deadly threats, especially during windstorms.
- Keep a clean campsite so you don't attract dangerous wildlife. Store food in vehicles or bear-proof food storage boxes away from sleeping areas. Wash and store cookware and dishes promptly after meals. Always wash yourself after meals, and change clothing. Properly dispose of garbage.
- Don't feed wildlife, either purposefully or accidentally. Help keep wildlife WILD.
- Keep pets under control at all times. Don't allow them to disturb other campers or chase wildlife. Obey posted regulations.
- Leave loud music, shouting and other rude behavior at home. If you use a generator, don't run it late at night or early in the morning.

Like to hike? Here are some safety tips:

- Be prepared for potential encounters with black bears and mountain lions. Hike with a group and keep children within arm's reach. Report unusual animal behavior to the Arizona Game and Fish Department at (520) 628-5376.
- Fire-damaged areas have many unseen dangers. Burned trees can topple without warning and burned out roots create hazardous holes for unwary hikers (see "*Trails and Roads*" below).
- Stay on designated trails and roads to avoid damaging fragile vegetation and soils.

Campfires and Smoking. Campfire and smoking restrictions in all areas of the Coronado National Forest go into effect at 8:00am on Friday, May 28. Campfires, charcoal grills and stove fires within developed recreation sites are permitted in Forest Service provided grills. Pressurized liquid or gas stoves, lanterns and heaters meeting safety specifications are allowed outside of developed areas. Smoking is allowed only within enclosed vehicles and buildings, developed recreation sites or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter, cleared of all flammable material. Fireworks are prohibited on all National Forest System lands year-round.

(more)

Recreation Sites (open).

Mt. Lemmon: Gordon Hirabayashi Recreation Site, Rose Canyon Recreation Area, Showers Point Group Site, Spencer Canyon and Inspiration Rock Picnic Area.

Madera Canyon: The west side of the newly rebuilt Mt. Wrightson Trailhead and Picnic Area is open (east half will remain closed until completion). **Mt. Graham:** All recreation sites are open.

Chiricahua Mountains: All recreation sites are open except Crystal Cave (seasonal closure from April 14 through August 31). **Huachuca Mountains:** All sites are open.

Recreation Sites (closed) on Mt. Lemmon: Molino Basin Picnic Area (seasonal closure through October); General Hitchcock Campground; Middle Bear Canyon, Chihuahua Pine and Cypress Picnic Areas; Sykes Knob; and Marshall Gulch.

Trails and Roads. On Mt. Lemmon, all trails within the Oracle Hill Fire area above 6000' remain closed; trails below that elevation are open. All trails within the Aspen Fire area west of the highway remain closed. On Mt. Graham, Swift Trail (State Highway 366) reopened to public access on May 14.

Ranger District (with major recreation areas) contact information:

- Santa Catalina Ranger District (Mt. Lemmon, Sabino Canyon) - (520) 749-8700.
- Nogales Ranger District (Santa Rita Mts., Madera Canyon) - (520) 281-2296.
- Sierra Vista Ranger District (Huachuca Mts., Miller Peak Wilderness) - (520) 378-0311.
- Safford Ranger District (Mt. Graham) - (928) 428-4150.
- Douglas Ranger District (Chiricahua Mts., Dragoon Mts.) - (520) 364-3468.
- Coronado National Forest Headquarters - (520) 670-4552