

NEWS RELEASE

USDA Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region
Umatilla National Forest



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541-278-3722 (Joani Bosworth, Public Affairs Officer)

June 29, 2009

Forest Prepares for a Busy July 4th Weekend

With the celebration of America's independence fast approaching, many are making plans to spend their holiday weekend recreating on the Umatilla National Forest. Here's some useful information to help make your weekend getaway a little more enjoyable!

Wildfire Prevention:

Whether you're planning to spend the weekend camping at your favorite campground or enjoying one of several back-country trails or scenic drives, one message remains consistent: LEAVE YOUR FIREWORKS AT HOME!

"Forest regulations prohibit possessing, discharging, or using any kind of fireworks, including sparklers and smoke bombs, on National Forest lands," said Brian Goff, Umatilla National Forest Fire and Aviation Staff Officer. Violators will be fined and, if found responsible for starting a forest fire, can be held liable for costly fire suppression expenses. "Also, please be careful with campfires, cigarettes, and chainsaws," reminds Goff.

Accessibility:

All Umatilla National Forest campgrounds will be open and operating for the holiday weekend. However, late spring snow has delayed the opening of several high elevation roads and trails. Our advice; check with the local ranger district for the latest conditions before setting out.

Campground Improvements:

Visitors can expect to see improvements underway at several forest campgrounds across the Forest, thanks to fees collected at recreation sites. "We're finalizing the installation of two new flush toilets and two new vault toilets at Jubilee Lake Campground along with new vault toilets at Bull Prairie Lake and Olive Lake Campgrounds," said Larry Randall, Forest Recreation Staff Officer. New vault toilets are also scheduled for installation later this summer at Woodward Campground.

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Boat dock accessibility improvements and ramp repairs at Olive Lake will take place this summer as well. “We’ve also replaced, or will be replacing, a number of picnic tables, fire rings and grills at several campground sites,” said Randall. “Some of these facilities were long overdue for maintenance and were excited to be catching up.”

New Recreation User Fees:

Beginning July 1, trailhead parking fees will be charged at eight trailheads in the Wenaha-Tucannon Wilderness. Visitors who park at Elk Flats, Meadow Creek, Panjab, Teepee, Three Forks, Timothy, Tucannon, Twin Buttes trailheads will be required to pay a \$5 per day parking fee or display a current Northwest Forest Pass, Interagency Senior Pass or Interagency Access Pass in the window of their vehicle. “Fee tubes have been installed at each trailhead site for easy payment,” said Randall.

The Northwest Forest Annual Pass can be purchased for \$30 and can be used at any National Forest in Oregon or Washington. The Interagency Annual Pass can be purchased for \$80. The Interagency Senior Pass is a \$10 lifetime senior pass for U.S. citizens 62 years or older and the Interagency Access Pass is a free lifetime access pass for citizens with permanent disabilities. All four passes can be obtained at any Umatilla National Forest Office.

Four forest campgrounds will also be joining the fee program this summer. Overnight camping fees of \$8 per night will be charged at Winom, Ladybug, Panjab and Midway Campgrounds.

Ninety-five percent of all funds collected at recreation fee sites remain on the Umatilla National Forest to help fund much needed future improvements.

For More Information:

For additional information about the status of Forest campgrounds, trails and roads, please contact the Umatilla National Forest offices or visit the website at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/uma>.

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