

# USDA Forest Service Cherokee National Forest

Ocoee/Hiwassee Ranger District

Route 1, Box 348-D  
Benton, TN 37307



# NEWS

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## Outdoor Recreation Season in the Cherokee National Forest

**BENTON, TN – May 22, 2006 ...** USDA Forest Service officials at the Cherokee National Forest say they are preparing for another busy outdoor recreation season. Last year the Forest received over 2.5 million site visits. With the exceptions of Chilhowee and Parksville all campgrounds in the Tellico and Ocoee Ranger Districts will be open for the Memorial Day weekend.

One of the busiest weekends is just around the corner - Memorial Day. Memorial Day generally marks the end of the school year and the beginning of summer vacation for many people. The majority of the recreation sites and campgrounds in Cherokee NF will be operating at or near full capacity during this busy holiday weekend. This is an extremely busy time for National Forest managers and field crews. For a more enjoyable visit visitors should read and become familiar with all posted information, including various rules and regulations.

Cherokee National Forest (CNF) is home to 30 developed campgrounds, 30 picnic sites, and over 600 miles of trails. There are also a number of beaches/swimming areas and boat ramps for water enthusiasts. Two Forest Service Scenic Byways, the Ocoee (Ocoee/Hiwassee Ranger District) and the Overhill Skyway (Tellico/Hiwassee Ranger District) provide visitors with outstanding scenic beauty viewing opportunities. For those who enjoy seeing wildlife there are designated watchable wildlife viewing areas on every Ranger District. Several whitewater rivers including the Nolichucky, Hiwassee and the "Olympic River" - the Ocoee, flow through the CNF. The Ocoee Whitewater Center, site of the 1996 Olympic Canoe & Kayak competition offers picnic sites, hiking and biking opportunities and provides a variety of regional information at the administration building. Fishing is permitted in the CNF with appropriate licenses. The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (1-800-262-6704 or 1-800-332-0900) sets seasons and limits, and establishes regulations. Licenses are available at many local retail outlets. Many streams throughout the CNF contain rainbow, brown and brook trout.

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## **1st add -- Outdoor Recreation in the Cherokee NF**

The Cherokee National Forest offers a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities. Many campgrounds fill up fast on holiday weekends. Forest Service officials suggest that if you plan to camp over the Memorial Day weekend you get there early, campsites are on a first-come first-served basis. Remember, you cannot hold campsites for others, and a campsite must be occupied the first 24 hours. Many areas are full by Friday afternoon or evening.

With the exceptions of Chilhowee and Parksville all campgrounds in the Tellico and Ocoee Ranger Districts will be open. A new horse use camp, Lost Corral will be open in time for the Memorial Day holiday. The overflow area at Quinn Springs will be open this Memorial Day weekend.

Additional information and maps are available at any of the following Cherokee National Forest offices:

- **Forest Supervisor's Office:** 2800 North Ocoee St., Cleveland, TN 37312 - Phone: (423) 476-9700
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- **Ocoee/Hiwassee Ranger District:** 3171 Hwy 64, Benton, TN 37307 - Phone (423) 338-3300
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- **Tellico/Hiwassee Ranger District:** 250 Ranger Station Road, Tellico Plains, TN 37385 - Phone (423) 253-8400
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- **Nolichucky/Unaka Ranger District:** 4900 Asheville Hwy SR 70, Greeneville, TN 37743 - Phone (423) 638-4109
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- **Watauga Ranger District:** 4400 Unicoi Dr, TN 37692 - Phone (423) 735-1500