

News Release



USDA Forest Service
Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HAVE FUN, BUT BE CAREFUL OUT THERE!

Delta, CO (July 15, 2008) - With the increasing gas prices and cost of living, more and more folks are staying closer to home to recreate and spending more time in the national forest. Over the past three or four weeks, there have been numerous accidents and at least five fatalities that have occurred on National Forest System lands in the area.

“We want folks to get outside and enjoy their National Forests this summer and to save money by playing right here at home; but the number of recent fatalities on the Forest and the circumstances surrounding them is alarming,” stated Charlie Richmond, Forest Supervisor for the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests (GMUG). “Alcohol consumption, driving too fast, making errors in good judgment, and wrecks between OHV/ATVs and licensed vehicles have all been factors in many of these accidents and have resulted in families and friends being in mourning, rather than enjoying their time in the outdoors.”

Forest Service officials on the GMUG are advising forest users to:

- Appoint and use designated drivers if you plan to consume alcohol while recreating or camping.
- Never Drink and Drive any motorized equipment, including ATV's, motorcycles, etc.
- Drive defensively and expect the unexpected recreationist, animal or vehicle around each corner.
- Be prepared to evade/react to hazards by driving at reasonable speeds and being alert.
- Wear lap and shoulder seat belts; more lives are saved by wearing seatbelts that prevent occupants from being thrown out and the vehicle rolling on them.
- Be respectful and cooperative with other forest users, there is room enough for all to enjoy the national forest.
- Drive on routes and roads identified as “open” for the type of vehicle you are driving/riding.
- Have Fun and Be Safe Outdoors!

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