

Aspen Ranger District  
806 W. Hallam  
Aspen, CO 81611  
(970) 925-3445—Voice  
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United States Department of Agriculture



**HIKING**

## **CONUNDRUM CREEK TRAIL #1981**

**Length:** 8.5 miles one-way (13.7 km one-way)

**Trail Use:** Very Heavy

**Beginning Elevation:** 8,700 feet (2652 m)

**USGS Map(s):** Hayden Peak, Maroon Bells

**Difficulty:** Difficult

**Ending Elevation:** 11,200 feet (3414 m)

**PERMIT INFORMATION:** In order to provide quality recreation experiences and to protect the wilderness lands the Forest Service must gather data regarding visitor use and travel patterns. **Each party overnighiting** in the Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness is **required to self-register at the Trailhead and to carry a copy of the registration with them** during their visit. There is no fee charged and no limit to the number of permits issued.

**DAY/BACKPACKING OVERVIEW:** An 8-1/2 mile hike up the conundrum valley gaining 2,500 ft in elevation. If going the entire way, backpacking is usually preferred. Day hiking up to Silver Dollar Pond is extremely popular as it provides scenic views as the trail meanders through trees and meadows. Only two of the three river crossings have bridges and extreme caution should be taken at the third stream crossing as water levels can vary throughout the summer. This trail is also used as an entry hike for extended backpacking trips into the wilderness and the starting point for the most challenging of the hikes to Crested Butte. **To help alleviate overcrowding, which often occurs, a one night stay is suggested. Weekend usage is particularly heavy. Camping around the springs is permitted only at designated sites, dispersed campers must be at least 1/4 mile away from the hot springs. No fires are allowed above 10,800 ft. (approx. 1 mile down valley from springs). Bear canisters are required for all overnight visitors. Dogs are not allowed past Silver Dollar Pond. All trash must be packed out and human waste disposed of properly.**

**ACCESS:** Drive 1/2 mile west of Aspen on Highway 82 to the Roundabout. Go around the Roundabout and turn right onto Castle Creek Road. Drive approximately 5 miles up Castle Creek then turn right onto Conundrum Road. Continue 1.1 miles to a parking lot at the trailhead. Be careful not to stray onto the numerous private driveways found along the road. Parking is limited. If lot is full, return to Castle Creek Road where overflow parking is provided. Do not park on Conundrum Road. This narrow road is on a County right-of-way over private property. Parking is prohibited and cars are towed.

**NARRATIVE:** The trail generally parallels Conundrum Creek weaving its way up the valley through the woods and meadows to three river crossings before the hot springs. Mt. Hayden looms at the start of the hike followed by views of Cathedral Peak, Conundrum Peak and Castle Peak. The first crossing at 2-1/2 miles and the second at 6 miles are over log bridges. The third crossing at 6-1/2 miles is bridged only by using a log jam or a large log. This can be hazardous during spring runoffs. At 8 miles, there is a cabin, and the hot springs are just ahead on the left on the other side of the creek. A log bridge spans the creek for crossing.

**ETHICS/REGULATIONS:** The Conundrum Creek Trail is within the Maroon Bell-Snowmass Wilderness, please educate yourself about Wilderness Ethics and the following rules:

- **BEAR CANISTERS REQUIRED** for all overnight visitors. Approved bear canisters must be capable of holding all scented items (including toiletries, garbage, dog food, etc.) and should be stored on the ground and out of sight no less than 100 ft. away from any camp.
- \* **NO DOGS beyond the second stream crossing at the Silver Dollar Ponds.**
- \* **DOGS MUST BE LEASHED** out of consideration for both other people and wildlife.
- \* Limit group sizes to 10 people and 15 stock/pack animals.
- \* **SANITATION** - bury human waste 100 feet from water and 6 inches in the soil.
- \* **No Fires** above 10,800 ft. Lightweight campstover are recommended

**PACK IT IN—PACK IT OUT!! LEAVE NO TRACE!!**

This map is intended for use as a general guide only, not for actual land navigation. The White River National Forest suggests purchasing a topographical trail map prior to your hiking trip.



## **Required Food Storage Order for Bear Resistant Containers in Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness**

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Release Date: Jul 14, 2015

### **NEWS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **USDA Forest Service**

#### **White River National Forest**

900 Grand Ave., Glenwood Springs, CO 81602

**Contact:** Bill Kight, 970-945-3237 (office)

Phil Nyland, 970-963-2266 (office)

### **Required Food Storage Order for Bear Resistant Containers in Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness**

**ASPEN, Colo.– July 14, 2015** – The Aspen-Sopris Ranger District is implementing a regulation (known also as a “Special Order”, or “Order”) for the 162,333 acre Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness Area on the White River National Forest. This order requires mandatory storage of all food, garbage and attractant in hard-sided bear-resistant containers. All overnight hikers need to provide their own hard-sided containers approved by the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee, which are readily available on-line from several manufacturers and retailers.

Bear resistant containers may also be purchased at the following local outdoor stores: Aspen Expeditions or Four Mountain Sports, at Aspen Highlands; Bristlecone Mountain Sports, Basalt; Factory Outdoors or Summit Canyon Mountaineering, Glenwood Springs; and Ute Mountaineering, Aspen. Bear resistant food canisters can also be rented at the following local vendors: Aspen Expeditions and Ute Mountaineering.

According to Aspen-Sopris District Ranger Karen Schroyer, “Based on recent human/bear incidents in the heavily used Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness, we are implementing this emergency special order requiring hard-sided bear-resistant food canisters for all overnight visitors. Hanging food in trees is not effective and too many people are continuing to store food in their tents. I hope that visitors will understand that this special order is being implemented for their own safety, the safety of others camping nearby and conservation of our bear population.”

The Forest Service works in close coordination with Colorado Parks and Wildlife on bear management issues and they support this order. Over the past few years there have been multiple bear incidents within the Maroon Bells Wilderness. Incidents involved bears feeding on human food, buried garbage and other attractants such as cooking waste and toiletries when visitors to the Wilderness were absent from camp or sleeping.

Once rewarded, bears can become more emboldened, escalating the potential for adverse encounters with visitors as a result of being food-conditioned through human carelessness. In rare cases, visitors have been injured during these encounters. These bears become dangerous to people and are often euthanized in defense of human safety and property.

Food storage is an integral part of bear management on White River National Forest and the Rocky Mountain Region. The Forest Service needs this order in place in order for visitors to effectively manage food, garbage and attractants in bear country. By enforcing the order, the Forest Service is acting to protect both humans and bears. Human safety will be protected by reducing conflicts with bears. Bears will be protected by minimizing habituation and possible destruction of problem animals.

Violations of these prohibitions are punishable as a Class B misdemeanor by a fine of not more than \$5,000 for an individual, \$10,000 for an organization or imprisonment for not more than six (6) months, or both (16 U.S.C. Section 551; 18 U.S.C. Sections 3559, 3571). Forest Service personnel can consider the circumstances of the situation and elect to give a warning notice or educate visitors of the importance for proper storage of food, garbage, and attractants.

For more information contact Phil Nyland, Wildlife Biologist at (970) 404-3158.

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**ORDER**  
**EMERGENCY WILDERNESS OCCUPANCY AND USE RESTRICTIONS**

**MAROON BELLS-SNOWMASS WILDERNESS**  
**USDA FOREST SERVICE**  
**WHITE RIVER NATIONAL FOREST**

Pursuant to 16 United States Code (U.S.C.) § 551 and 36 Code of Federal Register (C.F.R.) § 261.50(a), the following acts are prohibited within the **Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness** of the White River National Forest, Pitkin and Gunnison Counties, State of Colorado (the "Restricted Area"). This Order also incorporates the attached definitions in Exhibit B.

The Restricted Area is shown on the attached map hereby incorporated into this Order as Exhibit A. The restricted area covers approximately 162,333 acres.

**The purpose of this Order is to protect people and property from possible dangerous bear interactions that have increased over time.**

**PROHIBITION:**

1. Possessing or storing any food or refuse, as specified in the order in the Restricted Area. 36 C.F.R. § 261.58(cc)
2. Possessing, storing, or transporting any bird, fish, or other animal or parts thereof, as specified in the order. 36 C.F.R. § 261.58(s)

**EXCEPT WHEN:**

1. The food or refuse is "acceptably stored" or "acceptably possessed" during daytime hours;
2. The food and refuse is being prepared for eating, being eaten, being transported, being prepared for acceptable storage, or is "acceptably stored" during nighttime hours.

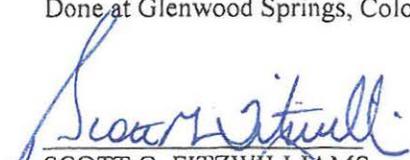
**EXEMPTIONS:**

Pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 261.50(e), the following persons are exempt from this Order:

1. Any federal, state, or local officer or member of an organized rescue or firefighting force, in the performance of an official duty, or
2. Any federal, state, or local officer placing baits to capture animals for research or management purposes in the performance of an official duty, or
3. Any person with a permit issued by the Forest Service specifically authorizing the otherwise prohibited act.

These restrictions are in addition to the general prohibitions in 36 C.F.R. Part 261, Subpart A. This Order shall remain in effect from the date signed until December 31, 2015 or until rescinded, whichever occurs first.

Done at Glenwood Springs, Colorado this 10<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2015.

  
SCOTT G. FITZWILLIAMS  
Forest Supervisor,  
White River National Forest

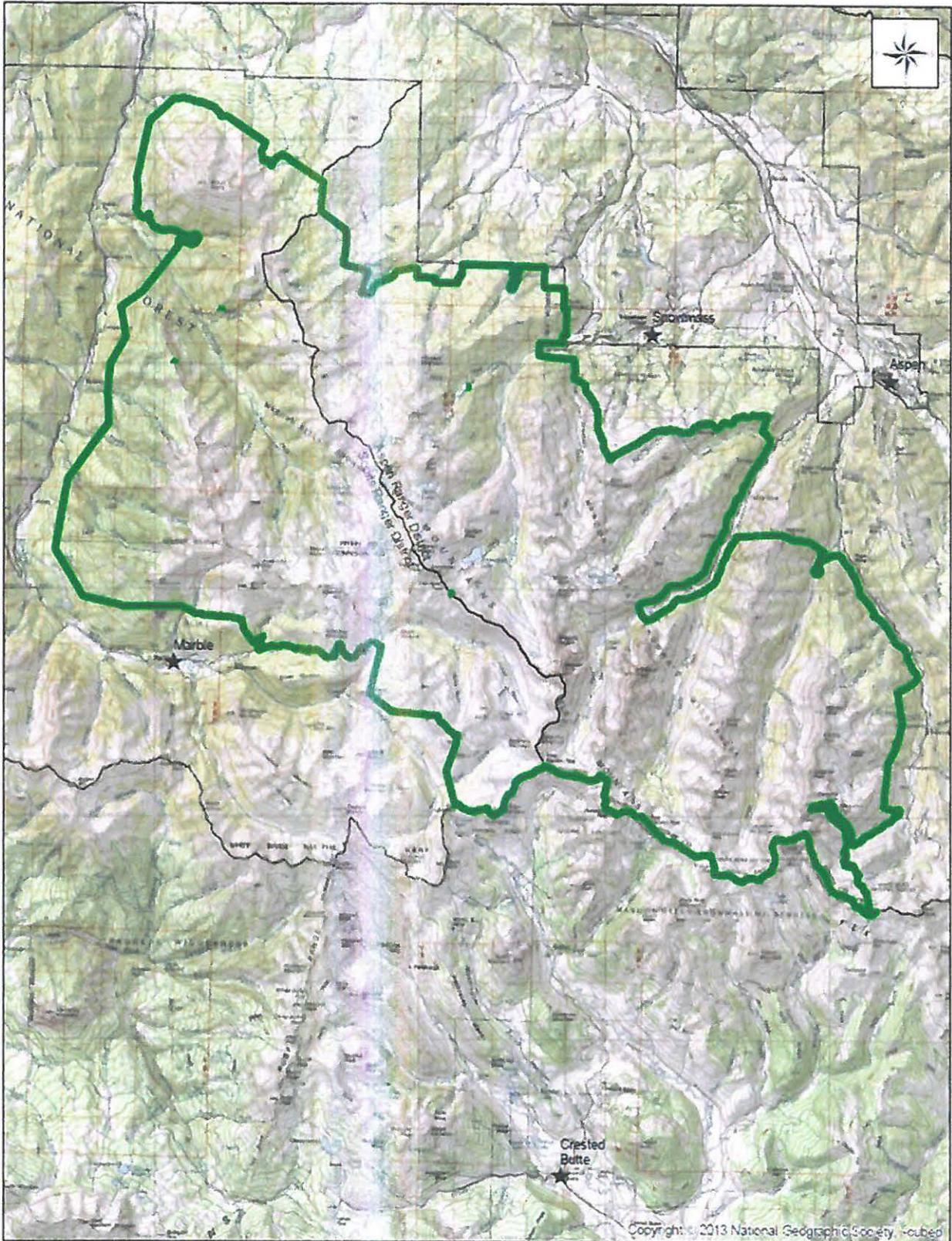
Violations of these prohibitions are punishable as a Class B misdemeanor by a fine of not more than \$5,000 for an individual or \$10,000 for a corporation, or imprisonment for not more than 6 months, or both. 16 U.S.C. § 551 and 18 U.S.C. §§ 3559 and 3571

## EXHIBIT B

### Definitions:

1. "Food and Refuse" means any substance, solid or liquid (excluding water, baled hay, or hay cubes without additives) which is or may be eaten or otherwise taken into the body to sustain health or life, provide energy, or promote growth of any person or animal or any refuse which might attract bears. It includes items such as soft drinks, alcoholic beverages, canned foods, pet foods, processed livestock feed and grains, personal hygiene products, empty food and beverage containers, and any item that may attract bears including trash, food residue, garbage, and similar items that may contain odors.
2. "Acceptably stored" means:
  - a. Stored in hard-sided bear-resistant container certified through the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee Courtesy Inspection Program. Soft-sided containers are not acceptable. A container may be certified by the local District Ranger or their designated representative(s) if it meets the IGBC criteria and is hard-sided, or
  - b. Stored by other methods approved in a permit issued by the Forest supervisor responsible for the area where the method is proposed for use.
  - c. Meat carcasses or game parts harvested by hunting that occurred legally under Colorado State Hunting Laws are more than 100 yards from overnight camping sites.
3. "Acceptably possessed" means:
  - a. Possessed or attended during daytime by a person(s) that is physically present within 100 feet and direct sight of the accessible food, refuse, or item.
4. "Daytime" means ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset, Mountain Time.
5. "Nighttime" means ½ hour after sunset to ½ hour before sunrise, Mountain Time.

**EXHIBIT A:** The Maroon Bells – Snowmass Wilderness, White River National Forest, where storage of food, garbage, and other bear attractants is required.



# Food Storage and Sanitation Order

## *Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness, White River National Forest*

### Your safety is important

This food storage order was created to help keep you and other forest visitors safe by avoiding encounters with bears and preventing bears from being attracted to camping areas frequented by people.

All food and other items that might attract bears must be stored where bears can't access them at night and during the daytime when they are unattended. "Attended" means that a person is physically present within 100 feet and in direct sight of items that must be stored in a bear-resistant manner.



### These items must be properly stored

- 1) Human food including fresh and canned food, soft drinks, alcoholic beverages, and unclean cooking equipment and supplies
- 2) This also includes garbage, food scraps, and empty food and beverage containers.
- 3) Attractants including pet food and edible hygiene items such as soap, toothpaste and deodorants.

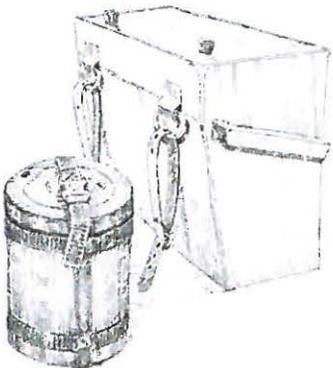
### Proper storage methods

Proper storage methods include placing food and other items in hard-sided bear resistant containers. Legally harvested meat carcasses or game parts must be stored more than 100 yards from overnight camping sites unless acceptably possessed.

### Bear resistant containers

Approved hard-sided bear resistant horse panniers and backpackers' containers that are certified through the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee Courtesy Inspection Program.

NOTE: Plastic or metal food coolers, soft-sided containers, backpacks, and leather or canvas horse panniers are NOT bear resistant containers.



# Bear Resistant Canisters

Required for overnight camping in Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness Area  
Recommended for Hunter Fryingpan Wilderness Area

Available at the following locations:

## **Aspen**

Aspen Expeditions (across the plaza)  
\$10/day to rent, plus \$10 cleaning fee upon return  
\$95 to purchase

Four-Mountain Sports (through doors in lobby)  
No rental  
\$85 to purchase

Ute Mountaineer (on Galena St. in Aspen)  
\$8/day to rent  
\$50 (approximately) to purchase

## **Basalt**

Bristlecone (in Willits area near Starbucks)

## **Carbondale**

Ragged Mountain Sports  
902 CO-133 (off Roundabout)  
\$6/day to rent  
\$80 to purchase

## **Glenwood Springs**

Factory Outdoors (on Hwy  
82) No rental  
\$80 to purchase

Summit Canyon Mountaineering (corner of 8<sup>th</sup> and Grand  
Ave.) No rental  
\$80 to purchase

## **Front Range**

Various REI locations