



# White River National Forest

## Temporary Outfitter and Guiding Permit Program

The White River National Forest (WRNF) implemented a program for issuing Temporary Outfitting and Guiding Special Use Permits on a limited basis pursuant to the governing directives contained in Forest Service Handbook FSH 2709.14, section 53.1. A copy of the governing directives may be viewed at: [http://www.fs.fed.us/specialuses/special\\_outfitting.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/specialuses/special_outfitting.shtml)

Full implementation of the program at the individual National Forest level is dependent on a variety of factors. Most guided recreational activities are available through existing permit holders on the WRNF and/or on private, state or other Federal lands. Our primary focus is to facilitate greater participation in use of existing permitted Priority Use outfitter/guides. A list of all permitted Priority Use Outfitters is available on our website: [www.fs.usda.gov/whiteriver](http://www.fs.usda.gov/whiteriver) However, the WRNF may consider offering Temporary Outfitter/Guide permits with a focus on applications that include youth, educational, underprivileged and religious groups for a limited number of activities and in a limited number of areas across the Forest.

Temporary Outfitter/Guide permits are:

- Not renewable
- Issued noncompetitively
- For use that is non-recurring
- Not intended for building a business
- Limited to maximum of 200 service days each
- Issued at the sole discretion of the Authorized Officer
- A holder may obtain a maximum of 2 permits; one for summer season & one for winter season
- The holder must provide proof of insurance - the USFS must be listed as an Additional Insured

Consideration of any proposal for use in an area or for a specific activity or season is at the sole discretion of the District Ranger of each administrative unit of the WRNF. The following pages contain the current general guidelines for the Temporary Outfitter and Guiding permit program across the WRNF.

With limited exceptions, **only complete application packages submitted by the deadline dates will be considered** (FS 2700-3f and all appropriate attachments). The deadline dates for submission of a completed form FS 2700-3f Temporary O/G application are as follow:

February 15<sup>th</sup> \*\* for activities proposed from May 1<sup>st</sup> - Oct 30<sup>th</sup> (summer season 184 days)

- April 15 – Forest Service notifies party of one of the following decisions:
  - Request is accepted
  - Request needs modification (for instance, change to a different trail or to different day)
  - Request denied

August 15<sup>th</sup> for activities proposed from Nov 1<sup>st</sup> - April 30<sup>th</sup> (winter season 181 days)

- October 15 – Forest Service notifies party of one of the following decisions:
  - Request is accepted
  - Request needs modification (for instance, change to a different trail or to different day)
  - Request is denied

*\*\*Aspen-Sopris Ranger District does not intend to entertain proposals for temporary outfitter guide requests through the 2016 calendar year due to administrative limitations.*



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Applications *generally* **WILL NOT** be accepted or considered for the following types of locations and/or activities\*:

- Any Cave Resource
- Any “14er” Peak on weekends or Holidays during the summer season
- Use of routes during timeframes or in areas that may have seasonal restrictions due to elk calving, nesting sites, limits on snow compaction or other resource related values
- The Continental Divide Trail on weekends or Holidays during the summer season
- The Colorado Trail on weekends or Holidays during the summer season
- Activities considered to be high risk, including but not limited to:
  - Class IV & above white water rafting/kayaking; use of aircraft or aerial activities; alpine skiing; avalanche area travel; rock climbing
- Hunting

Any entity claiming insurance indemnification waivers will not be issued permits.

Permit applications *generally* **WILL NOT** be considered for the following specific locations and/or time frames due to the intensity and amount of existing use or existing permitted outfitters\*: *A list of priority outfitter guides can be found on this website.*

### **Eagle/HX sites**

Glenwood Canyon (summer - Fridays, weekends & Holidays)

Hanging Lake (all year long)

Shrine Ridge Trail (summer - Fridays, weekends & Holidays)

Vail Pass – (winter – except some limited access to 10<sup>th</sup> Mtn Huts)

Eagles Nest, Holy Cross and Flat Tops Wilderness Areas (all year long)

### **Dillon sites**

Golden Horseshoe (no commercial uses)

French Gulch Trail (no commercial uses)

Cataract Lake Trail (Fridays, Weekends & Holidays)

Quandary Peak (Fridays, Weekends & Holidays)

### **Aspen/Sopris sites \*\***

Ashcroft (Year round - Fridays, weekends & Holidays)

Capital TH (summer - Fridays, weekends & Holidays)

Conundrum drainage (summer - Fridays, weekends & Holidays)

Government trail (summer - Fridays, weekends & Holidays)

Independence Pass, Hwy82 corridor (Fridays, weekends & Holidays)

Leadking Loop (summer - weekends & Holidays)

Lenado TH (winter - Fridays, weekends & Holidays)

Maroon Valley (Fridays, weekends & Holidays)

Richmond Ridge (winter - Fridays, weekends & Holidays except hut use)

Rocky Fork DU (summer - weekends & Holidays)

Ruedi Reservoir (summer - Fridays, weekends & Holidays)

Thomas Lakes/ Mt. Sopris (summer - Fridays, weekends & Holidays)

West Snowmass (winter - weekends & Holidays)

**\*\* Due to administrative limitations caused by staffing vacancies the Aspen-Sopris Ranger District does not intend to entertain proposals for temporary outfitter/guide permits through 2016.**

\* On a case by case basis, special circumstances such as proposals for short duration or mid-week time frames, or low impact activities may be considered for one or more of these areas at the discretion of the District Ranger.



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## Criteria for Consideration of Proposals For Temporary Outfitter/Guide Permits

- 1) All applications that are submitted will be screened for meeting both the initial and second-level criteria in 36 CFR261.54 prior to being evaluated according to the provisions outlined above.
- 2) Applications meeting all criteria, including application deadline dates, will be considered with preference being given to uses that provide opportunities for youth, educational, religious, underprivileged or similar groups. Applications packages must be sufficiently complete for the authorized officer to make an informed decision regarding issuance of a permit. Incomplete packages requiring significant additional follow-up time by Forest staff may not be considered.
- 3) Proposals for summer season activities must remain on existing designated system travelways or bodies of water. *(Proposals for non-motorized or non-mechanized uses occurring off designated route use may be considered, but will normally require a more in-depth analysis of potential impacts pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and be subject to Cost Recovery Fees per FSH2709.11, Chapter 20. Proponents considering an application for this type of activity should submit applications well in advance of the application deadline to provide sufficient time for NEPA analysis. )*
- 4) In general, the smaller the group size, the higher the likelihood of being considered for a permit. Larger group sizes tend to increase potential impacts from a physical or natural resource and social perspectives. Group size must meet existing regulations e. g. Wilderness, site occupancy requirements, etc. *(Proposals for large groups may be considered, but will normally require a more in depth analysis of potential impacts pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and be subject to Cost Recovery Fees per FSH2709.11, Chapter 20. Proponents considering an application for this type of activity should submit applications well in advance of the application deadline to provide sufficient time for NEPA analysis.)*
- 5) In general, proposals for weekday use will have a higher likelihood of being considered due to the amount of existing use that occurs on weekends and Holidays.
- 6) In general, a person or group cannot acquire a temporary outfitter/guide permit for a similar activity on the same Ranger District more than one time in any 2 year period.
- 7) If the applicant or a managing partner has previous law violations related to the activity for which a permit is requested, has previous poor performance, or has failed to pay fees, the application will be disqualified.
- 8) If multiple applications for similar qualifying activities, use areas or dates are received, a selection will be made through a random drawing.
- 9) Applications for use of hut systems from those with existing reservations may be accepted up until 30 days prior to the start date of the reservations. Applicants must include documentation verifying that they have reservations at one or more huts. Any permit issued for winter hut use will be specific only for use of the route or trail that directly accesses a hut and/or use at the hut and will not authorize any ancillary travel, guiding or ski activities. Evidence of appropriate winter survival and avalanche training qualifications for lead person(s) must be included in all winter hut applications. Appropriate avalanche safety equipment must be provided to all participants.

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