

# Dispersed Camping

## Descanso Ranger District - Cleveland National Forest



### Dispersed Camping on the Descanso Ranger District:

dispersed camping refers to camping on National Forest land outside of a developed campground. There is no defined campsite, no electricity, no restrooms, and no running water. It is an opportunity to access the back country and obtain a level of solitude that developed campgrounds cannot provide.

There are various areas on the district that offer this kind of experience. Some are near developed roads and accessible by car. Others are only accessible by foot, mountain bike or horseback. Most forest and Wilderness lands outside of the Laguna Recreation Area are open to dispersed camping. **Wood and charcoal fires are never allowed when dispersed camping in the back country.**

Dispersed camping is free, unless parked in a fee area that requires a parking pass. A Visitor's Permit is required when camping outside of developed campgrounds on National Forest land. The permit can be obtained at no cost from the Alpine District office in person, by email, telephone or online submission. Permits are only available during normal business hours.

Remember, when outside of a developed campground, think before you drink: all surface water on the Cleveland National Forest should be considered unsafe to drink without treatment. Due to severe drought, no surface water may be available. The best practice is to always carry water.

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF VISITOR PERMIT

**The camping limit is a maximum of 14 days within a 30 day period.** A new permit must be obtained for each separate camping trip. The permit will allow up to 15 people to camp together as a group.

**Dispersed camping is not permitted anywhere within the boundaries of the Laguna Recreation area.** To view the boundaries, click on the "Maps" link on the following website: [www.lmva.net](http://www.lmva.net). Staying overnight in the Desert View Picnic Area, Pioneer Mail Picnic area, Noble Canyon Trailhead, or Pine Creek Wilderness Trailhead is prohibited.

1. Camp at least 1/4 mile from any developed campground, trailhead, private property or highway.
2. Do not camp at turnouts along Sunrise Highway.
3. Camp at least 100 feet away from lakes, streams, springs and meadows.
4. Do not block roadways or gates.
5. Each group must be equipped with a shovel or hand trowel for use in extinguishing fires and burying human waste.

6. Smoking shall be confined to cleared areas of at least 3 feet in diameter or to the inside of vehicles. Recreational users will be liable for the cost of suppression and damages caused by any wildfire started through negligence. (California Health and Safety Code 13009)
7. Sanitation: select a location at least 100 feet from lakes, springs, meadows and campsites. Dig a hole 8 inches deep; cover and compact the soil after use. Put toilet paper in Ziploc bags, do not bury it. Remember, pack it in, pack it out.
8. Remove all garbage and litter from your campsite and put it into proper trash receptacles. Do not burn or bury your trash. Pack out what you pack in. LEAVE NO TRACE!
9. Motor vehicles are restricted to roads, except in designated off-highway vehicle areas. All mechanized forms of transportation, including bicycles, are prohibited in the Pine Creek /Hauser Wilderness areas and on the Pacific Crest Trail.
10. Observe the quiet hours from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. by reducing music and conversation to low levels. Generators cannot be operated during quiet hours.
11. Keep dogs restrained on a leash no longer than 6 feet. (Title 36 CFR 261.8 (d))
12. Use of portable liquid or solid fuel stoves is permitted. Stoves must be used in areas that are cleared to a minimum of 3 feet in diameter of flammable vegetation.
13. **All wood and charcoal fires are prohibited outside of developed campgrounds on the Cleveland National Forest.**

**Fire Danger Level:** Please check current fire conditions and closures before visiting the forest by logging on to [www.fs.fed.us/r5/cleveland](http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/cleveland). For a 7 day forecast, go to <http://forecast.weather.gov>

For more information:

### Descanso Ranger District

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Open: M-F 8:00 A.M – 4:30 P.M

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