

**REGIONWIDE ORDER
USDA FOREST SERVICE
ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION**

Prohibitions and Restrictions on Cave Access

Pursuant to 16 United States Code (U.S.C.) § 551 and 36 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) 261.50(a), the following acts are prohibited on all National Forest System lands administered by the Rocky Mountain Region in the states of Colorado, Wyoming, South Dakota, and Kansas. This Order does not apply to administrative units of the Nebraska National Forest and Grasslands.

The purpose of this Order is to reduce the likelihood of the inadvertent spread of the fungus that causes White-nose syndrome and to protect bat species from White-nose Syndrome.

The following prohibitions are in addition to the General Prohibitions set forth in 36 CFR Part 261 Subpart A.

PROHIBITION:

In accordance with 36 CFR Part 261.53(a), entering any cave on National Forest System (NFS) lands is prohibited, subject to the exceptions set forth below.

EXCEPTIONS:

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 261.50 (e), the following persons are exempt from the Prohibition set forth above:

1. Any Federal, State or local law enforcement officer, or member of an organized rescue or firefighting force working in the performance of an official duty.
2. Entry into specific caves identified in Exhibit A is prohibited during the dates specified for winter bat hibernacula, subject to Exception Number 1.
3. Entry into all other caves on NFS lands (i.e. those not identified in Exhibit A) is allowed year-round for persons who:
 - a. are in possession of a valid, signed registration form obtained through the Rocky Mountain Region's public website (<http://www.fs.usda.gov/r2/>) or by a written request to the Rocky Mountain Region (USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Region, 1617 Cole Blvd, Bldg 17, Lakewood, CO 80401; ATTN: Cave Registration Request; and
 - b. have decontaminated their equipment and clothing prior to entering the cave in accordance with the guidelines attached and incorporated into this Order as Exhibit B; and
 - c. for caves on NFS in Colorado, visitors are not in possession of any clothing or equipment that has been used in caves or mines in White-nose Syndrome affected States and Canadian Provinces. The list of White-nose Syndrome affected States and Canadian Provinces can be found at (<http://www.whitenosesyndrome.org>) and is also indicated on the authorized Registration Form.
4. Forest Service employees, contractors to the Forest Service, and personnel from State wildlife agencies when conducting White nose Syndrome related activities who have decontaminated their equipment and clothing prior to entering the cave in accordance with those guidelines

hereby attached and incorporated into this Order as Exhibit B. For caves on National Forest System lands in Colorado, workers are not in possession of any clothing or equipment that has been used in caves or mines in White-nose Syndrome affected States and Canadian Provinces in any cave on National Forest System lands.

5. Tribal members of any Indian Tribe defined under 36 C.F.R. § 261.2 who are conducting ceremonies, rituals, or other culturally important events are exempt from this Order.
6. Persons with a valid Special Use Permit specifically exempting them from the effect of this Order.
7. Persons in possession of written authorization from a Forest Supervisor specifically authorizing cave entry to conduct research, inventory, or monitoring as needed to understand and manage White-nose Syndrome and to contribute to the nomination of cave resources as significant under the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 4301 – 4309 and 36 C.F.R.290) who have decontaminated their equipment and clothing prior to entering the cave in accordance with those guidelines hereby attached and incorporated into this Order as Exhibit B. For caves on National Forest System lands in Colorado, visitors are not in possession of any clothing or equipment that has been used in caves or mines in White-nose Syndrome affected States and Canadian Provinces in any cave on National Forest System lands.
8. Members of the National Speleological Society or Cave Research Foundation conducting activities consistent with the national Memorandums of Understanding between the Forest Service and these caving organizations (#16-SU-11132428-117 and 16-SU-11132428-118, respectively) with a written authorization from a Forest Supervisor specifically authorizing cave entry who have decontaminated their equipment and clothing prior to entering the cave in accordance with those guidelines hereby attached and incorporated into this Order as Exhibit B. For caves on National Forest System lands in Colorado, visitors are not in possession of any clothing or equipment that has been used in caves or mines in White-nose Syndrome affected States and Canadian Provinces in any cave on National Forest System lands. These Members must have proof of their Current Membership and the written authorization from the authorized Forest Supervisor must be in the physical possession of the Member or Members when undertaking the exempted activities. Related activities involve for example leading or assisting cave research, survey and monitoring, identification of sensitive resources, installation of bat gates and signs, monitoring cave use and impacts, survey and cartographic work, cave cleanup and restoration activities, bat observations, monitoring cave and karst resource or environmental conditions, white-nose syndrome surveillance, or related activities or information-gathering of mutual interest and benefit to inform management and conservation of the cave and karst resources.

This order will be in effect from August 1, 2019 – July 31, 2021, or until this Order is terminated whichever occurs first.

Violation of these prohibitions is punishable by a fine of not more than \$5,000 for an individual and \$10,000 for an organization, or imprisonment for not more than six (6) months, or both. (16 U.S.C. § 551, 18 U.S.C. §§ 3559 and 3571).

Dated this 31st day of July, 2019, at Lakewood, Colorado.


 Brian Ferebee
 Regional Forester
 Rocky Mountain Region

EXHIBIT A

AREAS SUBJECT TO CLOSURE

Entry to the following caves is prohibited during the dates specified:

Forest	District	State	Cave Name	Cave Number	Closure Dates (inclusive)
Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grasslands	All	CO	None	N/A	N/A
Bighorn National Forest	Tongue	WY	Big Piney	020206-001	October 15 through April 15
	Tongue	WY	Cliff Dweller's	020206-002	October 15 through April 15
	Tongue	WY	Eaton's	020206-003	October 15 through April 15
	Tongue	WY	Tongue River	020206-004	October 15 through April 15
Black Hills National Forest	Hell Canyon	SD	Jasper	020303-001	October 1 – May 31
	Hell Canyon	SD	Bad Luck	020303-002	October 1 – May 31
	Hell Canyon	SD	Porcupine	020303-003	Year Round
	Hell Canyon	SD	Cave 41	020303-004	October 1 – May 31
	Hell Canyon	SD	S&G	020303-005	October 1 – May 31
	Hell Canyon	SD	Two-Name	020303-006	October 1 – May 31
	Hell Canyon	SD	Stenders	020303-007	October 1 – May 31
	Hell Canyon	SD	King Tut	020303-008	October 1 – May 31
	Hell Canyon	SD	Onyx	020303-009	October 1 – May 31
	Hell Canyon	SD	Rainbow	020303-010	October 1 – May 31
	Mystic	SD	Igloo	020306-001	October 1 – May 31
	Mystic	SD	Aspen Sink	020306-002	October 1 – May 31
	Mystic	SD	Bear Trap	020306-003	October 1 – May 31
	Mystic	SD	Reynolds	020306-005	October 1 – May 31
	Northern Hills	SD	Knife-Blade	020308-001	October 1 – May 31

	Northern Hills	SD	Runkle	020308-002	Year Round
	Northern Hills	SD	Erskine	020308-003	Year Round
	Northern Hills	SD	Davenport	020308-004	Year Round
	Northern Hills	SD	Blue Crystal Ice	020308-005	Year Round
	Northern Hills	SD	Ice/Horsethief	020308-006	Year Round
	Northern Hills	SD	Gordon's	020308-007	October 1 – May 31
Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests	All	CO	None	N/A	N/A
Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests and Thunder Basin National Grassland	All	CO, WY	None	N/A	N/A
Nebraska National Forest and Grasslands	This Order does not apply to administrative units of the Nebraska National Forest and Grasslands.				
Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Comanche and Cimarron National Grasslands	All	CO, KS	None	N/A	N/A
Rio Grande National Forest	All	CO	None	N/A	N/A
San Juan National Forest	All	CO	None	N/A	N/A
Shoshone National Forest	Washakie	WY	Gaylord (Sawmill) Cave	021403-001	October 15 – April 15
	Wind River	WY	Spooky Cave	021405-003	October 15 – April 15
White River National Forest	Blanco	CO	Fulton	021502-001	August 15 – October 15
	Blanco	CO	Spring	021502-002	August 15 – April 15
	Sopris/Eagle	CO	Hubbard	021503-003	Year Round
	Sopris	CO	Lime Creek	021503-004	October 15 – April 15
	Sopris	CO	Ice Cave	021503-005	October 15 – April 15
	Eagle	CO	Bair	021504-001	October 15 – April 15
	Eagle	CO	Buffalo	021504-003	August 15 – April 15
	Eagle	CO	Fixin-to-die	021504-004	August 15 – April 15

	Eagle	CO	Groaning	021504-005	August 15 – April 15
	Eagle	CO	Premonition	021504-007	Year Round
	Eagle	CO	Thursday Morning	021504-008	August 15 – April 15
	Eagle	CO	Wednesday Afternoon	021504-009	October 15 – April 15
	Eagle	CO	Fulford	021504-010	October 15 – April 15
	Eagle	CO	Devil's Den	021504-011	October 15 – April 15