



Forest Service

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News Release

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Wet weather creates potentially hazardous driving conditions on Kaibab National Forest roads; motorists urged to use caution

WILLIAMS, Ariz., Dec. 5, 2019 — Recent wet weather has created potentially hazardous driving conditions on many Kaibab National Forest roads, and motorists are urged to plan ahead and exercise caution when visiting.

While Kaibab National Forest roads remain open, motorists should be aware that they could encounter a range of conditions and should prepare accordingly. On the Williams and Tusayan districts of the forest south of the Grand Canyon, rain received yesterday on top of already melting snow from last week's storm has caused roads to become slushy, icy, and, in some cases, temporarily impassable.

On the North Kaibab district north of the Grand Canyon, which is at a higher elevation than the other two districts, snow drifts on roads may be much deeper than they appear and could prevent travel. As a reminder for visitors to the Kaibab Plateau, the Arizona Department of Transportation closed State Route 67 south of Jacob Lake to vehicle traffic on Nov. 26. During the winter, ADOT closes and doesn't clear snow from the route, which runs 43 miles between Highway 89A at Jacob Lake and the North Rim of Grand Canyon National Park.

Kaibab National Forest managers strongly encourage visitors to use caution when driving on any snow-covered forest road. Roads and trails are not maintained for winter travel, and areas of the forest may have little to no cell coverage for emergency calls.

Visitors should be prepared when visiting the forest any time of year, but particularly during winter months. Even a few inches of snow can obscure icy roads and soft shoulders where vehicles can become stuck. Winter storms can trigger unexpected rock slides as well as falling limbs and trees. They can quickly change driving conditions on forest roads from passable to impassable in a matter of minutes.





ADOT provides the following recommendations for all motorists heading into snow country:

- Don't let GPS and navigation apps replace common sense. When a highway is closed, a suggested alternate route involving an unpaved, unplowed road can lead you into danger.
- Always pack an emergency kit, a fully charged cell phone, extra clothing, blankets, water and snacks.
- Slow down. Drive defensively. Be patient and allow additional time for your trip. Never pass a snow plow.
- Leave sufficient space between your vehicle and those ahead of you. Give yourself plenty of room and time to stop or to avoid hazards.
- Make sure your vehicle has plenty of fuel.
- Check weather and road conditions before you travel. Let someone know your route.
- Bring a small bag of sand (or cat litter) for wheel traction.

Tips on winter driving are available at azdot.gov/KnowSnow. Drivers can call 511 or visit ADOT's Traveler Information site at az511.gov for the latest highway conditions across the state.

There are currently no road closures on the Kaibab National Forest associated with recent wet weather. If any road closures were to become necessary, detailed information would be posted in the Alerts and Notices section of the Kaibab National Forest website at www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/kaibab/alerts-notice.

Kaibab National Forest information is also available through the following sources:

- Kaibab National Forest Website: www.fs.usda.gov/kaibab
- Twitter: www.twitter.com/KaibabNF
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/KaibabNF
- Flickr: <http://bit.ly/KaibabNFPhotos>

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