



U.S. Forest Service
National Forests in Mississippi
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News Release



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National Forests in Mississippi to temporarily close Developed Recreation Areas

JACKSON, Miss. March 24, 2020 –The USDA Forest Service today announced that Developed Recreation Areas on the National Forests in Mississippi have been temporarily closed for the health and safety of visitors and staff.

Effective immediately, the following Developed Recreation Areas will be closed:

- On the **Bienville Ranger District**, this notice includes the following areas: Marathon Lake, Shongelo, Shockaloe Base Camp I and Base Camp II.
- On the **Chickasawhay Ranger District**, this notice includes Turkey Fork Recreation Area, the Longleaf Campground, and the Little Tiger ATV Trail.
- On the **Delta Ranger District**, all recreation areas remain closed because of flooding.
- On the **De Soto Ranger District**, this notice includes Big Biloxi, Cypress Creek Landing, Ashe Lake, Fairley Bridge Landing, Janice Landing, Airey Lake, Moody's Landing, and P.O.W. Lake.
- On the **Holly Springs Ranger District**, this notice includes Chewalla Lake Recreation Area and the Puskus Lake Recreation Area.
- On the **Homochitto Ranger District**, this notice includes Clear Springs Recreation Area and Okhissa Lake Recreation Area.
- On the **Tombigbee Ranger District**, this notice includes Davis Lake Recreation Area, Choctaw Lake Recreation Area, and Chickasaw ATV Trailhead.

The following recreation areas remain open but with limited amenities.

- On the **De Soto Ranger District**, the following areas are closed to camping but remain open: Bethel OHV Trailhead, Rattlesnake OHV Trailhead (restroom closed), Bigfoot Horse Trail (restroom closed), South Bethel Mountain Bike Trail (restroom closed), Tuxachanie Trail, and Black Creek Hiking Trail.
- On the **Holly Springs Ranger District**, the Upper Sardis Non-Motorized Trail remains open but the restroom is closed.
- On the **Tombigbee Ranger District**, the Owl Creek Mounds and Noxubee Mountain Bike Trailhead remain open but the restrooms are closed.

These closures include three Developed Recreation Areas that are managed through the national website: www.recreation.gov. Those areas are Chewalla Lake, Choctaw Lake, and Davis Lake. Notifications to campers will be made as soon as possible and refunds will be processed.

NFMS Recreation Closures – 2

As we work through an unpredictable and rapidly changing situation, health and safety is our number one priority. We are committed to continuing to support our communities and fulfill our mission as we all work together to minimize the impacts and spread of COVID-19.

These actions have been taken based on the best available medical advice for cleaning per CDC guidelines and to promote social distancing. Visitors are encouraged to contact the ranger district office with additional questions. Bienville: 601-469-3811. Chickasawhay: 601-376-8273. Delta: 601-760-0701. De Soto: 601-528-6160. Holly Springs: 662-236-6550, Tombigbee: 662-285-3264. Homochitto: 601-384-5876.

The National Forests in Mississippi continues to monitor the COVID-19 situation and evaluate potential impacts and make adjustments to reservations and our reservation policies through www.Recreation.gov. Reservation holders will be notified via email and/or cell phone text messages if there are any changes affecting their reservation. In the event of delayed openings of some, part or all of a recreation areas to ensure safe social distancing, you will receive a full refund for your reservation. Please remember to review current recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and focus on recreating safely while protecting yourself, Forest Service employees and our volunteers.

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