



**U.S. Forest Service**

National Forests in Mississippi  
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Web: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/mississippi>



# News Release

**District Contact Numbers:**

Bienville: 601-469-3811  
Chickasawhay: 601-378-8273  
Delta: 662-873-6256  
De Soto: 601-528-6160  
Holly Springs: 662-236-6550  
Homochitto: 601-384-5876  
Tombigbee: 662-285-3264

## National Forests in Mississippi partially reopens some Developed Recreation Areas

JACKSON, Miss. May 22, 2020 –The USDA Forest Service today announced that it is partially reopening some Developed Recreation Areas on the National Forests in Mississippi that had been temporarily shut down for the health and safety of visitors and staff because of Covid-19.

“We look forward to opening these sites for public use and enjoyment. Recreating on the National Forests in Mississippi is an activity individuals and families look forward to experiencing every summer,” said Forest Supervisor Carl Petrick. “While we understand there may be some excitement from the public to return to beloved recreation areas, please continue to follow local, state, and federal guidelines on staying safe.”

The Forest Service stressed that it is partially reopening these Developed Recreation Areas, and some services and amenities may be provided at a level less than before or not provided at all. At some areas, restroom facilities remain closed. Portable restroom facilities may be available. Visitors are responsible for providing their own personal protective equipment, including hand sanitizer. Visitors are asked to avoid gathering in large groups and to follow state and federal guidelines and recommendations for social distancing and the use of cloth face coverings.

The National Forests in Mississippi has partially reopened the following Developed Recreation Areas:

- The **Bienville Ranger District** opened Marathon Lake Recreation Area for day use and camping for self-contained RVs. The Bienville also opened Shockaloe Base Camp I and Base Camp II for day use only.
- The **Chickasawhay Ranger District** opened Turkey Fork Recreation Area for day use and primitive and RV camping. The Chickasawhay also opened the Longleaf Horse Trail and Campground for day use and primitive camping and Little Tiger ATV Trail for day use only.
- The **De Soto Ranger District** opened Ashe Lake Recreation Area for day use only.
- The **Holly Springs Ranger District** opened Chewalla Lake Recreation Area and Puskus Lake Recreation Area for day use only.
- The **Homochitto Ranger District** opened Okhissa Lake Recreation Area for fishing only.
- The **Tombigbee Ranger District** opened Davis Lake Recreation Area for day use and camping for self-contained RVs. The Tombigbee also opened Choctaw Recreation Area for day use only but the boat ramp remains closed. Choctaw Lake is still closed to fishing.

## NFMS Rec Areas Reopening – 2

General forest areas that are not part of Developed Recreation Areas remain open to the public and offer opportunities for visitors to enjoy the outdoors including activities such as hiking, fishing, birdwatching, and primitive camping.

“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,” Petrick said.

The Forest Service asks visitors to 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. For tips from the CDC on preventing illnesses like the coronavirus, go to: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention.html).

Visitors are encouraged to contact the local ranger district office with additional questions. Bienville: 601-469-3811. Chickasawhay: 601-378-8273. Delta: 662-873-6256. De Soto: 601-528-6160. Holly Springs: 662-236-6550, Tombigbee: 662-285-3264. Homochitto: 601-384-5876.

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