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Date: June 9, 2020

**Notice of Re-Authorization for
Personal Free-Use Special Forest Products Without Permit
Medicine Bow and Routt National Forests – June 9, 2020**

Due to concerns for the safety of USDA Forest Service staff and the public, as well as logistical challenges for permit distribution, I am granting personal free use authority to collect Special Forest Products on the Medicine Bow and Routt National Forests without a permit, effective June 9, 2020. The collection of Special Forest Products and Botanicals for Personal Use will be free to the general public **through December 31, 2020, and contingent on collectors implementing the following terms and conditions.** This authority allows the removal of special forest products to be gathered for **personal use only. Materials collected under personal free use authority may not be sold or bartered.** Special forest products include: Transplants, Mushrooms, Herbaceous plants, and Ferns.

It is important to check with the local Ranger Districts to see, if there are any specific local restrictions or requirements other than those listed below. While collecting products, forest visitors should align with public health guidelines and federal, state, and local orders/directives around COVID-19. This letter must be in your possession, while collecting or transporting special forest products.

General Terms and Conditions

- 1) Motorized vehicles are not allowed off existing roads that are open to the public and they shall not block traffic or emergency vehicles. The following areas are **closed** to Special Forest Products harvest:
- Within 500 feet of the Snowy Range Scenic Byway (WY Hwy 130), Battle Highway Scenic Byway (WY Hwy 70) and within 100 feet of other State and Federal Highways.
 - All collecting shall occur at least 100 feet from developed areas including trails and trailheads, campgrounds, or other facilities.
 - Within Wilderness Areas, Research Natural Areas, and Special Interest Areas.
 - The entire Pole Mountain Area, including Vedauwoo, on the Laramie Ranger District.
 - The Fish Creek Falls Recreation Area on the Hahn's Peak-Bears Ears Ranger District.
 - Collection is prohibited within timber sale units or other areas signed or shown on the special forest products and botanicals gathering area maps as being closed.

2) Do not damage natural features; riparian areas; other vegetation; roads; trails; fences; ditches; telephone lines, or other improvements.

Product Specific Conditions

Removal of any federally listed or candidate species **OR** any Forest Service sensitive species is prohibited. The appendix contains a list of these species. Knowledge of these species is the collector's responsibility. In addition, please ensure collection sacks or other collection equipment is free of weed seeds, before being brought onto the National Forest.



1) Transplants:

Total limit of 5 trees, 5 shrubs, or 15 herbaceous plants per household in a year. Gather no more than 5 gallons of conifer cones with or without seed. Cut no more than 10 willow branches or cuttings.

- Transplanting Limber Pine (*Pinus flexilis*) is prohibited, due to the potential to spread white pine blister rust.
- Only conifer trees (pine, spruce, and fir) 6 feet or less in height and aspen trees 10 feet or less in height may be collected.
- Digging or removing trees from rock outcrops or rock fissures is prohibited.
- Holes created by digging transplants must be backfilled with soil.
- No mechanized equipment will be used for the removal of transplants including, but not limited to tree spades, backhoes, and frontend loaders.
- Do not collect trees near Laramie Columbine (*Aquilegia laramiense*), which is only found on the Douglas RD.
- Do not transplant lone trees, so there will be residual tree(s) within 20 feet of the selected tree.

2) Mushrooms:

Limit of 1 gallon per day and a maximum of 5 gallons total.

- Cut or break the mushrooms off at ground level.
- Raking or other ground disturbing activities, while collecting mushrooms is prohibited.
- Matsutake (or pine) mushrooms (*Tricholoma magnivelare*) must be cut in half at the time of harvest.

3) Herbaceous Plants:

Limit of 1 gallon per day and a maximum of 5 gallons total. This includes the collection of **above ground** portions of herbaceous plants (flowers, leaves, stems, berries).

- Pick no more than 20 stems of flowers two times until December 31, 2020.
- Gather no more than 1 ounce of seed (flower or grass or shrub).

4) Ferns:

This applies only to the collection of bracken fern fronds and fiddleheads. Other fern species cannot be collected. A maximum total of 50 pounds of ferns can be collected; a 5-gallon container is approximately 10 pounds of ferns.

- Digging or transplanting ferns is not allowed.

Incidental Use while on the Forest

Individuals can collect less than ½ gallon incidental amounts of mushrooms and above ground portions of herbaceous plants for consumption, while staying on the National Forest.

The current [Motor Vehicle Use Map](#) provides seasonal road designations. Electronic forest maps, including areas closed to collections, can be found on our [website](#). Please pay attention to all current [Forest Orders](#), signage, and gates. People can call the following offices for more information and updates. The public should use caution, while driving on Forest Service roads.

- Brush Creek-Hayden Ranger District - 2171 Highway 130 Saratoga, WY (307) 326-5258
- Douglas Ranger District - 2250 East Richards Street, Douglas, WY (307) 358-4690
- Hahns Peak-Bears Ears Ranger District - 925 Weiss Drive Steamboat Springs, CO (970) 870-2299
- Laramie Ranger District - 2468 Jackson Street, Laramie, WY (307) 745-2300
- Parks Ranger District - 100 Main Street, Walden, CO (970) 723-2700
- Yampa Ranger District - 300 Roselawn Ave, Yampa, CO (970) 638-4516

Sincerely,

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RUSSELL M. BACON
Forest Supervisor