



## News Release

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests &  
Thunder Basin National Grassland  
<http://fs.usda.gov/mbr>

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### **Buffalo Pass Parties Concern USFS Law Enforcement**

**(STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, Colo.) September 2, 2014** – Destructive partying on the Routt National Forest is drawing the attention of U.S. Forest Service Law Enforcement Officers in the Steamboat Springs area, as multiple events have resulted in a variety of issues, dangerous situations, and citations.

Most recently, a party this past weekend on Buffalo Pass, involving youth ages 14-23, resulted in resource damage, sanitation issues, possession of drugs citations, MIP alcohol citations, drinking and driving, and an automobile accident involving party-goers.

This is an ongoing problem, which correlates directly with holidays, as well as both the start and end of the school year. Multiple large parties involving youth have taken place in the Buffalo Pass area and have had substantial consequences. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) is asking the public to help protect and preserve their public lands from this type of abuse.

“The partying on Buffalo Pass is problematic and involves many issues,” said USFS Law Enforcement Officer Nick Walters. “I hope the community is appalled by the way their lands are treated and will help us curb this issue. These are their lands and the blatant disrespect is by a small percentage of the population, but affects everyone.

“If these types of parties are observed, concerned members of the public should first contact the U.S. Forest Service, or if we cannot be reached they should contact the Routt County Sheriff’s Department, who we have a cooperative agreement with.”

In addition to the list of problems associated with last weekend’s Buffalo Pass party, local USFS officials are dealing with the consistent issue of trash that is either left at camp sites or attempted to be burned in fires. There is a growing problem of wooden shipping pallets being used in fires by campers.

All of these trash issues have been observed at both developed and undeveloped camp sites. Specifically, the pallets cause large, unsafe fires that leave behind remnants and nails.

Buffalo Pass is an area where dispersed camping is trending upward and the need to clean up after recreationists in dispersed camping areas is increasing. At some point different USFS management may be required to protect natural and scenic resources. Law enforcement options being considered include an area-specific ban on pallets for fire use, and prohibitions such as camping in designated sites only or no camping. Fees may also be considered to help with management of the area, similar to other Colorado forests. The Bear River corridor (Stillwater area) on the Yampa District of the Routt National Forest is an example of where fees are in place for designated dispersed camping sites.

Inappropriate, dangerous or illegal partying on National Forest should be reported to the local USFS office, Hahns Peak/Bears Ears Ranger District, by calling (970) 870-2299 or by stopping by the District Office at 925 Weiss Dr. in Steamboat Springs between normal office hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The Routt County Sheriff’s Office can be reached at 970-879-1090.

USFS information is also available at [www.fs.usda.gov/mbr](http://www.fs.usda.gov/mbr), or you can follow us on Twitter, @MBRNFsTBNG.

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