

4 - SNOW REMOVAL ON FOREST ROADS – YOU NEED A PERMIT!



If you own property inside the National Forest boundary, you must obtain a permit before you can legally remove snow from a National Forest road. Unless you plan to use a snowmobile, skis, or snowshoes to reach your property, snowplowing will probably be necessary.

To prevent damage to road surfaces and natural resources, many Forest roads must be upgraded to all-weather standards before snow removal is permitted. Offering accommodations for displaced winter recreationists may also be required, such as removing snow for a parking area or working with the Forest Service to reroute trails.



ACQUIRING A PERMIT FOR SNOW REMOVAL:

The Forest Service can issue a special-use permit for removing snow on a National Forest road, as long as you comply with permit specifications and post a bond to cover damages that may occur as a result of snow removal. With the right of access comes a responsibility to help maintain and potentially upgrade the road to accommodate winter and wet-season traffic. Annual fees are determined by estimating the likely repair and maintenance needs, and the length of road to be plowed. Those who receive authorization may also incur the cost of upgrades required to bring the road up to all-weather standards suitable for year-round access and snowplowing.

Snowplowing authorization includes criteria to protect the road and natural resources from inadvertent damage. These specifications include equipping plows with shoes to protect road surfaces by leaving 2" of snow on the surface, plowing the full width of the road so drainage structures are not compromised, and completely removing snow piles along the roadside so that ditches are functional.

Administrative review and environmental analysis of easement requests can take several years. Requests are prioritized according to the extent the public benefits, therefore, applications by municipal water districts, radio towers, and electric companies are processed first. Requests by neighborhood associations representing several property owners are also given priority.