



News Release

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests &
Thunder Basin National Grassland
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Forest Service Addresses Dog Issues at Tie City Trails

(LARAMIE, Wyo.) March 22, 2011 – The Laramie Ranger District has announced its plan to address dog-related issues and increased winter use at the Tie City recreation area of the Medicine Bow National Forest.

Tie City campground is currently managed by the Forest Service during summer months as a designated recreation area with dogs required to be on a leash. Beginning in the winter season of 2011-12, the existing recreation area boundary will be expanded to include the parking lot, as well as the section of trail between the lot and the campground. A leash law for dogs will be enforced in this area.

During the winter, unleashed dogs will still be allowed on trails, but will need to be leashed through the parking lot and inside the fences and gates which surround the campground. The portion of groomed trail that falls inside the fenced perimeter is known as the Campground Loop.

“As the popularity of this area continues to grow, so will the potential for conflicts and safety issues related to dogs and crowding,” Laramie District Ranger Larry Sandoval said. “This is an emerging issue that requires some level of immediate action before something bad happens. However, I do not want to overreach with this decision and believe that this strikes a good compromise from what has been previously proposed.”

Medicine Bow Nordic Association (MBNA), a special-use permit holder in the area, and the Forest Service will work together to encourage responsibility and courtesy by all users of the trails. It will be recommended that dog owners use other areas on race days. The district is also considering identifying some trails as recommended and encouraged for dog usage.

Education will be the other major component of the Forest Service plan. Information about the variety of activities enjoyed in the area and the public’s responsibility to accommodate multi-use will be stressed. Signage in the area will be improved and clarified, while law enforcement patrols and Forest Service staff presence will be increased.

These solutions are aimed at reducing conflicts between a variety of users at the popular area, including conflicts resulting from the large number of dogs on trails, and safety issues due to heavy use by the public.

The Forest Service has solicited public opinion since the initial proposal in Oct. of 2010, including holding public meetings in Laramie and Cheyenne in January. The meetings were well attended and provided land managers with additional public input and data. Feedback from the entire process was considered by the Forest Service in determining future management of the area.

This most recent effort follows other past Forest Service actions, including a proposed outright ban on dogs in the area in the 1990s.

The Tie City area on Pole Mountain is one of the most highly used recreation spots in the region during winter months. Located just off of Highway 210, the area features numerous trails that are popular with a wide variety of users.

Both experienced and inexperienced cross-country skiers, along with snowshoe enthusiasts, runners and hikers use the trails regularly.

The regulation of dogs in the Tie City area is a long-standing issue and the Forest Service would like to remind the public that it is ultimately the responsibility of dog owners to keep their pets under control and equally as important for non-dog owners to keep in mind the multi-use nature of public lands. All groups are urged to use common courtesy while recreating.

MBNA holds a special-use permit to conduct ski races and regularly groom a portion of the Tie City area trails. The groomed trails are also used for a variety of programs and lessons sponsored by the MBNA. The grooming directly benefits public use and the association is allowed to post signs regarding suggested, but not exclusive, usage of the trails in cooperation with the Forest Service.

A U.S. Forest Service Season Pass or Day Use Parking Fee is required to use the Tie City parking area. A portion of those fees are used for ongoing maintenance of the area, including plowing.

Other similar areas within the Medicine Bow National Forest that are managed for winter recreation purposes include Chimney Park, Corner Mountain, Libby Creek and the Little Laramie trailhead. There are also two additional trailheads on Pole Mountain which access the trail system, Happy Jack and Summit.

For additional information on recreational use of the Pole Mountain area, please contact the Laramie Ranger District office at 307-745-2300 or visit <http://fs.usda.gov/mbr>.

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