



Flathead National Forest

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Media Release

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Forest Users Advised to Be Cautious

Warming temperatures and snow melt conditions are contributing to increased water levels in rivers and lakes, and saturated soils across the Flathead National Forest, especially on roads and trails. All forest users should use caution during this time. Deep snow, downed trees, blocked roads and trails, wet and muddy conditions, and high and fast moving water may be encountered.

Flathead National Forest Spokesperson Denise Germann said, “We encourage all forest users to contact a local forest service office to obtain current information about road and trail conditions, access, and ideas for alternate travel routes. Recreationists on or near a river, stream or lake should use extreme caution as water levels may fluctuate quickly.”

Road damage is being discovered as access increases across the forest. Forest crews have been surveying the forest to identify these situations and respond accordingly.

- The East-side Hungry Horse Reservoir Road, Forest Road #38 is open to Hoke Creek, approximately 38 miles south of Montana Highway 2. It is anticipated that the entire East-side Hungry Horse Road will be open Sunday, May 15. The Spotted Bear Ranger Station plans to be open to the public on Monday, May 16.
- The Spotted Bear River Road, Forest Road #568 near the Spotted Bear Ranger Station is not anticipated to be open this weekend due to a mud slide. It is not known when access will be restored.
- The Hay Creek Road, Forest Road #376, south of Polebridge, approximately 30 miles north of Columbia Falls, is temporary closed due to a road slump. It is not known when access will be restored.

Germann said, “We will continue to monitor across the forest, and we anticipate additional damage and challenges as the snow pack melts.” Anyone with information about road damage or other situations are asked to contact a local forest service office.

For updated information on temporary road restrictions, campgrounds, and spring access on the Flathead National Forest, please contact the respective ranger district:

Hungry Horse/Glacier View at 387-3800,
Tally Lake at 758-5204,
Swan Lake at 837-7500, and
Spotted Bear at 758-5376 or 387-3800.

REMINDER:

The West-side Hungry Horse Reservoir Road, Forest Road #895, is open to snowmobile travel as conditions allow through May 31, or until work resumes on the repaving of the first 11 miles.

Throughout the summer, the road will be closed from the Hungry Horse Dam to approximately the Lid Creek Campground. This re-paving project, funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, was initiated last fall. The project includes replacing the existing pavement, approximately 11 miles in length, and replacing culverts, building retaining wall, and road substructure repair. Access to locations along the west-side of the reservoir, south of Lid Creek, will be accessible via the East-side Hungry Horse Reservoir Road.

Gravel resurfacing work will continue on both the East-side and West-side Hungry Horse Reservoir Roads as conditions allow. Travelers are reminded to drive with caution as there will be increased truck traffic around the reservoir. This work is funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

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