



## Tips to Help you Enjoy your visit to the Cibola National Forest and Grasslands



The spring and summer are perfect seasons for recreating on the Cibola National Forest and Grasslands. National Forests are popular locations. However, many visitors are not aware of the safety issues we face daily. To ensure you have a safe visit, please make sure you are prepared before you hike, bike or walk in the forest. We have provided some pointers to help you prepare for your visit:

**Prevent Forest Fires:** Did you know that most wildfires are human caused? Here are some tips for preventing wildfires:

- **Check Fire Restrictions:** Before you go, call the Ranger District or the Cibola National Forest and Grasslands Supervisor's Office to find out if there are any restrictions in place. You can also go to the NM Fire Information

Website <http://nmfireinfo.wordpress.com/>

- **Fireworks are not allowed on your National Forests:** This includes sparklers. A small spark at the wrong time could cause a devastating wildfire.
- **Campfires Dead Out:** Extinguish your fire/BBQ **one hour** before you leave the area. Use lots of water and douse it until you see water floating on the wood/coals and the fire ash is cold to touch. Partially extinguished fires can be fanned by evening winds and re-kindle fires and take off the next day. Be careful!

**Keep Wildlife Wild:** Wildlife is abundant in the in national forests. You are responsible for your safety and the safety of wildlife. Please help keep wildlife "wild" by not approaching or feeding them. Remember...

- Animals that get food from people may become aggressive. Our food may harm an animal's digestive system or even cause death.
- Do not approach wildlife. All wild animals can be dangerous. Alter your route so you move away from animals without disturbing them. Do not block an animal's line of travel.
- If an animal approaches you, it is your responsibility to move away and maintain a safe distance.
- And Be Bear Aware. Store all attractants (i.e. food or anything that may smell good to a bear) inside an approved bear-resistant container. Keep your food inside a hard-topped vehicle. Hang all attractants at least 10 feet above ground and 4 feet from any vertical support. **DO NOT** burn or bury any attractants and take out what you bring in.

**Follow these Health & Safety Tips:** Whether you're roughing it backpacking or planning a family outing, the most effective way to prevent mishaps is to adequately prepare for the trip.

- **Outdoor and Recreation Safety:** Knowledge of the area, weather, terrain, limitations of your body, plus a little common sense can ensure a safe and enjoyable trip. Go with a partner. If you are by yourself, leave a copy of your itinerary with a responsible person. Include details such as the make, year, and license plate of your vehicle, the equipment you're bringing, the weather you've anticipated, and when you plan to return. If you are going to a remote area, your group should have a minimum of four people; this way, if one person is hurt, one member can stay with the victim while two go for help. If an area is closed, do not go there. Make sure you know the location of the nearest telephone or ranger station in case an emergency. Cell phones don't always work in remote or mountainous areas.
- **Be in good physical condition:** Set a comfortable pace as you hike. A group trip should be designed for the weakest member of the group. If you have any medical conditions, discuss your plans with your healthcare provider and get approval before departing.
- **Be weather wise -- especially in the mountains:** Keep an eye on current and predicted weather conditions, as weather can quickly change. Know the signs for approaching storms or changing weather conditions. During lightning storms, avoid bare ridge tops, exposed places, lone trees, streams, and rocks. Exposure to wind and rain can result in hypothermia - even in the summer,.
- **Learn basic first aid** so you can identify and treat injuries and illnesses. Carry a first aid kit. Learn how to identify and treat heat exhaustion, heat stroke, hypothermia, and dehydration.
- **Make camp before dark:** Traveling after darkness has resulted in many injuries from falls, so travel only during daylight.
- **Watch out for danger trees:** National forests have been heavily impacted by infestations from bark beetles and a variety of moths that have killed many trees. Some picnic areas are temporarily closed so the dead standing trees can be removed. Please obey the closure orders because they are in place for your safety. Standing dead trees could cause serious injuries to persons and damage property if they suddenly fall. When picnicking or camping, please watch for danger trees in your area and move away from them.

For additional information on the Cibola National Forest and Grasslands, go to [www.fs.usda.gov/cibola](http://www.fs.usda.gov/cibola) or call us at 505.346.3900.