



News Release

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

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Medicine Bow National Forest Welcomes Visitors for Memorial Day

(LARAMIE, Wyo.) May 23, 2012 – In contrast to recent years, a good number of open campgrounds and Forest roads will greet visitors to the Medicine Bow National Forest this Memorial Day weekend.

Preparations have been in full swing to ready areas for the holiday crowds and some recreation sites on the Brush Creek/Hayden, Douglas and Laramie Ranger Districts are open for the season. In certain cases, visitors will be welcomed back to sites that have seen significant work or have even been closed as a result of hazard trees from the beetle epidemic that swept across Western forests over the last decade.

On the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District, all campgrounds are accessible with the exception of Deep Creek, Hog Park and Silver Lake. Many main Forest roads, including the 550 Road and the 801 Road, are open, but most secondary roads remain closed. The 261 Road is open, but drivers should be cautious of soft spots. Please call the District Office at (307) 326-5258 for details and the most current information.

All four campgrounds on the Douglas Ranger District are open for Memorial Day weekend. Roads are open and are clear of snow, although the La Bonte Canyon Road on the Laramie Peak Unit can be very slick. For more information and details, please contact the District front desk at (307) 358-4690.

The Laramie Ranger District opened several recreation sites last week on the Pole Mountain Unit, including the Vedauwoo Day-Use Site, Vedauwoo Campground, Blair Picnic Site and Yellow Pine Campground. On the Snowy Range side, a portion of North Fork Campground is open and Pelton Creek Campground may be open in time for the weekend crowds. The road to Lake Owen is open and the day-use site is usable, but the campground will remain closed for the time being. For the most current information and for details, please call the Laramie Ranger District, (307) 745-2300.

On all three districts, day-use fees are \$5.00 and daily campground fees are \$10.00. Some campgrounds may not yet have water, so please plan to bring your own water.

Campground reservations may be made at some sites through ReserveUSA by phone at 877-444-6777 or online at www.recreation.gov. Where available, reservations are recommended for holiday weekends such as Memorial Day.

Recreation site information may also be found on this website, <http://fs.usda.gov/mbr>, or you can follow the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests and Thunder Basin National Grassland on Twitter, [@MBRNFsTBNG](https://twitter.com/MBRNFsTBNG).

Some campgrounds are still inaccessible due to lingering snow or because of ongoing work to remove beetle-killed hazard trees. Please respect these closures and do not try to drive around snow banks or barriers.

Remember that weakened or dead trees can fall without warning, endangering people and blocking roads. Recreationists need to watch out for falling or high-risk trees, especially in high winds.

Overall fuel conditions this year are as dry as they've been in several years for Memorial Day weekend. Unseasonably dry weather, combined with an abundance of tall, dead vegetation from last year has created conditions that will readily burn and carry fire. The U.S. Forest Service wants outdoor adventures to be enjoyed, but reminds visitors to be especially careful with fire use.

Although no fire restrictions are currently in place on the Medicine Bow National Forest, campers and other public land users need to follow basic fire safety rules.

- Scrape back dead grass and forest materials from your campfire site.
- Keep your campfire small and under control; make it only as big as you need it.
- Keep a shovel and a water container nearby to douse escaped embers.
- Put your campfire dead out before leaving your campsite or going to sleep.
- Do not park vehicles in tall dry grass, since hot tailpipes can cause fine fuels to catch on fire.
- Remember that any ignition – cigarettes, campfires, gunfire, vehicles – could be the cause of a wildland fire, as grass and other vegetation is dry and extremely flammable.
- Always follow current fire restrictions.
- Fireworks are not allowed on federal lands.

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