

Know Before You Go

Plan ahead and prepare:

- Be familiar with rules and regulations for dispersed camping on the Rio Grande National Forest.
- Be prepared with supplies and equipment.
- A Rio Grande National Forest visitor map can be useful for information regarding the main roads, private land, trails, landmarks and other features. Maps may be purchased at sjma.org/shop.

Travel and choosing a campsite:

- Motorized travel is allowed only on authorized roads and trails. Obtain a Motor Vehicle Use Map from any of the offices or online for more information on roads and motorized trails.
- Look for an area that has already been impacted, like an already established dispersed camping site, to avoid further damaging soils and vegetation.
- Camp on durable surfaces, like sand or gravel.
- Camp at least 150 feet from water sources.
- All vehicles must stay within 300 feet of a designated road.
- Camping is limited to 14 days, in any 30 day period, on the Rio Grande National Forest.
- Roads may be closed for seasonal road closures and special orders.

Dispose of waste properly:

- Pack out all of your trash.
- For your toilet needs, dig a 6-8 inch pit at least 150 feet from water and cover the pit with soil before you leave.
- Always dump sewage from trailers and motorhomes at designated dump stations, not on the ground.
- Do not use soap or wash dishes or clothing in streams or lakes.

Know Before You Go Cont.

Leave what you find:

- Take pictures, so others can enjoy the rocks, plants, and archaeological objects.
- Artifacts are protected under the Antiquities Act.

Be responsible with fire:

- Always check for fire restrictions.
- Use existing fire rings where available.
- Consider using a camp stove instead of building a fire.
- Create your fire in an area that is free of flammable vegetation.
- Never leave your campfire unattended.
- Make sure to put the fire out completely before leaving the campsite or going to bed. Pour water on the fire and stir the ashes until they are cool to the touch. If it's too hot to touch, it's too hot to leave.
- Do not park over dry grass.
- Extinguish and dispose of cigarette butts safely.

Respect Wildlife:

- Don't feed, interact with, or disturb wildlife.
- Be aware that black bears are in this area.
- Store food, cooking utensils, and trash properly with bear-resistant containers or inside a hard-sided vehicle or camper. You can also hang food and trash at least 10 feet off the ground and 4 feet from the tree trunk.

Respect other visitors and neighbors:

- Minimize noise, be nice, and say hi!
- Respect private landowners and don't trespass on private property.

Caring for the land and serving people.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Dispersed Camping

Divide Ranger District



RIO GRANDE National Forest

Divide Ranger District Office

13308 W Hwy 160
Del Norte, CO
719-657-3321

www.fs.usda.gov/riogrande

This is an informational brochure.
Please refer to Motor Vehicle Use Map for
more detailed information and regulations
about dispersed camping.

Suggested Areas for Dispersed Camping

Pinos Creek

Dispersed camping permitted along County Rd 14 from Burro Creek Trailhead continuing south toward FR 332 and FR 329. This gravel road is suitable for most passenger vehicles.

Pool Table

Dispersed camping permitted along FR 600. This gravel road is suitable for most passenger vehicles up to Hanson's Mill. Beyond Hanson's Mill, road requires OHV or 4x4 high clearance vehicle.

Embargo Creek

Dispersed camping permitted along FR 640 up to Cathedral Campground. This dirt road is suitable for all passenger vehicles. There are sections of private property along this stretch and camping is only allowed on the Rio Grande National Forest land, so please be aware of property boundaries.

Rio Grande Reservoir

Dispersed camping permitted along FR 520. This gravel road is suitable for most passenger vehicles up to Lost Trail Trailhead. Beyond Lost Trail TH, road requires OHV or 4x4 high clearance vehicle.

Willow Park

Dispersed camping available along FR 350.2B, off of FR 345. This gravel road is suitable for most passenger vehicles.

Fern Creek

There are nice sites to disperse camp along FR 522. This road provides access to Fern Creek Trailhead.

Middle Creek

Take Middle Creek Road, FR 523, and turn right onto to FR 528 towards Lime Creek Road. This area has many Forest roads where dispersed camping is available.

Dispersed Camping with Facilities

Hanson's Mill

This small, isolated dispersed (horse friendly) camping area is located 16.8 miles east of Creede on Forest Road 600. There are camping sites, picnic tables, and fire rings in this area. There is a vaulted toilet, but no water or trash receptacles. The area is open year-round and best to visit June through September.

Rito Hondo

This dispersed camping area is located at the Rito Hondo Reservoir Boating Site. There is a vaulted toilet and picnic tables. The area is open year-round and best to visit June through September.

Dispersed camping in Wilderness and Backpacking

Camping in the wilderness or off hiking trails is permitted anywhere on the Divide Ranger District of the Rio Grande National Forest except where listed below.

Permits are not required to enter the Weminuche, South San Juan, or La Garita Wildernesses. No more than 15 people are allowed in a group.

- No camping or fires within 100 feet of any lake, stream, or other water source except in designated areas in the Weminuche and South San Juan Wildernesses.
- No camping or fires within 200 ft of the lake shores of West Ute Lake and Archuleta Lake.
- No camping or fires in the Wheeler Geologic Area.

Camp like a pro!

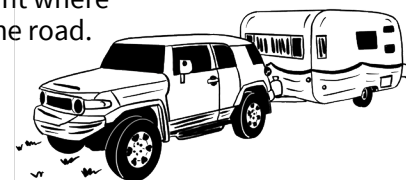
Help take care of your public lands!

Check out this video on the Rio Grande National Forest made by locals.



Quick Facts

1. Use existing campsites - Try to find a place someone else has already used as a campsite and where there's an existing fire ring.
2. Plan ahead and prepare - Bring things that make it easier to live at camp and so you can take care of the campsite.
3. Pack it in, pack it out - That includes trash and pet waste.
4. Got to go? - Burry all poop in a hole 6 to 8 inches deep and pack out your toilet paper. Or use a portable/disposable toilet.
5. Pay attention to, and follow fire restrictions.
6. Dispersed camping is allowed up to 300 ft from the road. Vehicles may only travel 300 ft from the point where they leave the road.



Are you on the right road?

Download the free Divide District Motor Vehicle Use map! Your smartphone will mark your location on the map and even track your route. Use the map to ensure you are on open roads designated for your vehicle.



Divide District East



Divide District West

No dispersed camping in the following areas

- Road 360 from Hwy 160 to Beaver Creek Reservoir.
- Road 410 from Hwy 160 to Big Meadows Reservoir.
- Within Wheeler Geologic Area.