



# Rio Grande National Forest

## Temporary Outfitter and Guiding Permit Program

The Rio Grande National Forest (RGNF) implemented a program for issuing Temporary Outfitting and Guiding Special Use Permits on a limited basis pursuant to the governing directives contained in Forest Service Handbook FSH 2709.14, section 53.1. A copy of the governing directives may be viewed at: [http://www.fs.fed.us/specialuses/special\\_outfitting.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/specialuses/special_outfitting.shtml)

Full implementation of the program at the individual National Forest level is dependent on a variety of factors. Most guided recreational activities are available through existing permit holders on the RGNF and/or on private, state or other Federal lands. Our primary focus is to facilitate greater participation in use of existing permitted Priority Use outfitter/guides. A list of all permitted Priority Use Outfitters is available on our website: [www.fs.usda.gov/riogrande](http://www.fs.usda.gov/riogrande) However, the RGNF may consider offering Temporary Outfitter/Guide permits with a focus on applications that include youth, educational, underprivileged and religious groups for a limited number of activities and in a limited number of areas across the Forest.

Temporary Outfitter/Guide permits are:

- Not renewable
- Issued noncompetitively
- For use that is non-recurring
- Not intended for building a business
- Limited to maximum of 200 service days each
- Issued at the sole discretion of the Authorized Officer
- A holder may obtain a maximum of 2 permits; one for summer season & one for winter season
- The holder must provide proof of insurance - the USFS must be listed as an Additional Insured

Consideration of any proposal for use in an area or for a specific activity or season is at the sole discretion of the District Ranger of each administrative unit of the RGNF. The following pages contain the current general guidelines for the Temporary Outfitter and Guiding permit program across the RGNF.

With limited exceptions, **only complete application packages submitted by the deadline dates will be considered** (FS 2700-3f and all appropriate attachments). The deadline dates for submission of a completed form FS 2700-3f Temporary O/G application are as follow:

March 15<sup>th</sup> for activities proposed from May 1<sup>st</sup> - Oct 31<sup>st</sup>

- April 15 – Forest Service notifies party of one of the following decisions:
  - Request is accepted
  - Request needs modification (for instance, change to a different trail or to different day)
  - Request denied

August 15<sup>th</sup> for activities proposed from Nov 1<sup>st</sup> - April 30<sup>th</sup>

- October 15 – Forest Service notifies party of one of the following decisions:
  - Request is accepted
  - Request needs modification (for instance, change to a different trail or to different day)
  - Request is denied



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Applications *generally* **WILL NOT** be accepted or considered for the following types of locations and/or activities\*:

- Any Cave Resource
- Any “14er” Peak on weekends or Holidays during the summer season
- Use of routes during timeframes or in areas that may have seasonal restrictions due to elk calving, nesting sites, limits on snow compaction or other resource related values
- The Continental Divide Trail on weekends or Holidays during the summer season
- The Colorado Trail on weekends or Holidays during the summer season
- Activities considered to be high risk, including but not limited to:
  - Class IV & above white water rafting/kayaking; use of aircraft or aerial activities; alpine skiing; avalanche area travel; rock climbing
- Hunting

Any entity claiming insurance indemnification waivers will not be issued permits.

## Criteria for Consideration of Proposals For Temporary Outfitter/Guide Permits

- 1) All applications that are submitted will be screened for meeting both the initial and second-level criteria in 36 CFR261.54 prior to being evaluated according to the provisions outlined above.
- 2) Applications meeting all criteria, including application deadline dates, will be considered with preference being given to uses that provide opportunities for youth, educational, religious, underprivileged or similar groups. Applications packages must be sufficiently complete for the authorized officer to make an informed decision regarding issuance of a permit. Incomplete packages requiring significant additional follow-up time by Forest staff may not be considered.
- 3) Proposals for summer season activities must remain on existing designated system travelways or bodies of water. *(Proposals for non-motorized or non-mechanized uses occurring off designated route use may be considered, but will normally require a more in-depth analysis of potential impacts pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and be subject to Cost Recovery Fees per FSH2709.11, Chapter 20. Proponents considering an application for this type of activity should submit applications well in advance of the application deadline to provide sufficient time for NEPA analysis. )*
- 4) In general, the smaller the group size, the higher the likelihood of being considered for a permit. Larger group sizes tend to increase potential impacts from a physical or natural resource and social perspectives. Group size must meet existing regulations e. g. Wilderness, site occupancy requirements, etc. *(Proposals for large groups may be considered, but will normally require a more in depth analysis of potential impacts pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and be subject to Cost Recovery Fees per FSH2709.11, Chapter 20. Proponents considering an application for this type of activity should submit applications well in advance of the application deadline to provide sufficient time for NEPA analysis.)*
- 5) In general, proposals for weekday use will have a higher likelihood of being considered due to the amount of existing use that occurs on weekends and Holidays.



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- 6) In general, a person or group cannot acquire a temporary outfitter/guide permit for a similar activity on the same Ranger District more than one time in any 2 year period.
- 7) If the applicant or a managing partner has previous law violations related to the activity for which a permit is requested, has previous poor performance, or has failed to pay fees, the application will be disqualified.
- 8) If multiple applications for similar qualifying activities, use areas or dates are received, a selection will be made through a random drawing.

## Rio Grande National Forest Administrative Units:

Conejos Peak Ranger District	(719)-274-8971
Divide Ranger District	(719)-657-3321
Saguache Ranger District	(719) 655-2547
Forest Supervisor's Office	(719) 852-5941