

LEAVE NO TRACE OUTDOOR ETHICS

Set a positive example for future generations by practicing the following "Leave No Trace" principles:

- * Plan Ahead and Prepare
- * Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
- * Dispose of Waste Properly
- * Leave What You Find
- * Minimize Campfire Impacts
- * Respect Wildlife
- * Be Considerate of Other Visitors

Leave no Trace ethics that are most commonly defied are:

- * Camping too close to water
- * Poor horse management with excessive damage to vegetation and pollution of water. Not scattering dung heaps.
- * High impact camps & leaving a mess, especially hanging poles, hitch rails and tent frames.
- * Poor planning & preparations that result in packing in too much stuff, & too much heavy, bulky stuff.
- * Leaving food items & scraps around camp that attract nuisance animals & bears.
- * Camping too close to trails.
- * Leaving flagging tape that marks your route.



Trail Ethics:

Trails are signed for the type of use allowed. Please don't cut across switchbacks or create new trails.



Motors & Machines:

Motorized vehicles and bicycles are not allowed on some Trails and are never allowed in the Wilderness areas.



Multiple use:

As you use this area you may notice that the Forest is managed for a broad range of uses. Recreation use alone includes hiking, horseback riding, hunting, snowmobiling and sightseeing. In addition, the vegetation in the Forest requires some form of management. Timber harvest and livestock grazing are both forms of land management you may encounter while using this area. The livestock grazing on this area is managed in a very progressive and specific manner. The fences and gates that you may see are critical to managing the livestock and meeting the resource objectives that are planned for this area. Please close all gates that you open as you travel through the area. Controlling the livestock in the manner that we have planned is important.



For any questions or comments please contact:

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Visit www.fs.usda.gov/gmug for more information



CAMPING IN YOUR NATIONAL FORESTS




All visitors are welcome to the National Forest. We want you to have an enjoyable stay. We ask for your co-operation in protecting the environment by keeping a clean campsite and by not misusing or damaging tables, signs, and other structures. Dollars saved by lower maintenance costs can be used to improve existing sites and to build new recreation areas to accommodate the increasing numbers of people using the Forests. It is a Forest Service goal to provide a broad spectrum of camping opportunities. The Forest visitor can select a site which is best suited to his or her camping ability and recreation activity desires.


Gunnison National Forest Paonia Ranger District





DISPERSED CAMPING:


Campers go hunting, hiking, 4-wheeling, and horseback riding throughout the Forest in many areas where developed camping areas are not available. Finding a site to camp and enjoy these activities in remote areas or in relative solitude has become a popular form of camping throughout the Forest. At some more popular areas, minimal toilet facilities are provided. Contact the local Forest Service office for current information and refer to the Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) for each area (Grand Mesa, Gunnison, and Uncompahgre National Forests). Dispersed camping is permitted in most areas of the Forest. Some caution should be used in selecting a site because of intermingled private lands within the National Forest. Recreation maps are available at all local Forest Service offices. Personnel at each station can answer questions on specific sites. Unlike developed campgrounds which are designed and maintained to protect the vegetation, soils, and natural setting; camping in undeveloped areas require more from the camper to help keep the site in the condition in which it was found. Dispersed camping must not occur within 100 feet of water sources (rivers, streams, ponds, or wetlands) or within 100 feet of any road or system trail. In some areas, dispersed camping is restricted to specific sites, contact the local Forest Service office for current information. Campsites can be occupied for no more than 14 days, then the site must be moved at least 3 miles away. Camping is also limited to a total of 28 days in a 60 day period. The following are suggestions to help maintain these areas:


 **ACCESS:** In areas closed to the use of vehicles off Forest roads, where developed parking sites are not provided, and where not otherwise prohibited, direct access to a suitable parking site within 300 feet of the road is permitted. Such travel must not damage the land or streams. Please select your route carefully, and do not cut live timber. Off road travel should be limited to when the ground is dry. The public is encouraged to camp in locations where others have previously camped and utilized existing routes (tow-track trails) to those camp areas. Campers are required to leave a clean camp, not to damage vegetation or pollute streams and lakes on the National Forest and implement “Leave No Trace” practices.

 **HUMAN WASTE:** Human waste can affect water quality and pose a health risk to others. Use toilets where provided. In other areas select a suitable screened spot at least 200 feet away from open water. Dig a small hole 6 to 8 inches deep. After use, fill the hole with the loose dirt and tramp in the sod with your foot. Nature will dispose of the waste in a short time by a system of “biological disposers”.

 **TRASH:** All dispersed areas are managed on a “pack it in – pack it out” basis. Cans, bottles, aluminum foil, and anything that will not burn should be carried out. Paper and other burnable items should be burned in your campfire. Please do not bury garbage or trash, animals are prone to digging it up.

 **WATER:** For short trips, take a supply of drinking water from home or from another domestic source. For longer trips, boiling water for a minimum of 5 minutes is the most effective treatment for giardia cysts and other water borne disease organisms. A longer boiling time may be required at higher elevations.

 **FIRE:** Select a site away from low limbs and clear away needles, twigs and other ground litter to mineral soil. Dig a shallow pit and line it with rocks. Keep your fire only as large as needed to cook or heat with. **Never leave a fire unattended.** When you are through with your fire pit make sure the ashes are dead cold out then bury the pit and disperse the rocks. Whenever a stove is available, we recommend its use. Campfires should be at least 100 feet from all lakes, streams, and National Forest System Trails and are not allowed at or above tree line.

 **BEAR AWARE:** The GMUG is home to black bears, help discourage a bear encounter. Keep a clean camp. Store food, including stock and pet food and garbage in bear-proof containers. (Coolers and plastic boxes are not bear-proof.) Hang food in a tree 10 feet off the ground and 4 feet from the tree, if bear-proof containers are not available. Keep sleeping areas free of food and odors. Do not sleep in clothes worn while cooking or handling game or fish. **NEVER INTENTIONALLY FEED A BEAR!**

DEVELOPED CAMPING:

Bear Proof Food Storage Containers are REQUIRED in all GMUG Campgrounds.

Many Forest Service Campgrounds have a host, on the Gunnison National Forest is it provided by Recreation Resource Management of America (RRM of A). Most campsites are available on a first come, first serve basis. Contact www.Recreation.gov or call 1-877-444-6777 to find campgrounds that do accept reservations. There is a 14 day stay limit at each campground, when this limit is reached, special permission has to be obtained to stay longer. Small trailers may be used in the campgrounds. The main camping and picnicking season begins on Memorial Day weekend, when most danger of freezing is past, and ends usually in September when RRM leaves.

Campgrounds provide parking spurs, tables, fire grates, bulletin boards, vault-type toilets, and some campgrounds have water systems. Picnic areas contain the same facilities, with group parking instead of individual spurs. Fires may be built at campgrounds without a permit where fire rings and grates are established, unless dry conditions dictate otherwise. The local Ranger Station will have this information. Firewood can usually be purchased from the camp host or deadfall can be used. Although it is usually hard to find firewood in most campgrounds, it is easily attainable outside the campground on the Forest. Cutting of standing timber, shrubs, and other vegetation is prohibited. Surface water by campsites may be contaminated and should be properly treated before consumption. Pets are welcome in all campgrounds and must be kept on a leash. Horses are not allowed except where special horse camping areas are designated. Garbage collection containers are present in most campgrounds with a “pack it in/pack it out” system in others. Visitors cooperation in keeping the campgrounds and picnic areas clean and unspoiled is appreciated. Litter and vandalism make the forest less enjoyable for everyone. Forest Service officials patrol the recreation sites and provide assistance to visitors.

