







DISPERSED CAMPING:


Finding a site to camp and enjoy dispersed recreation activities in remote areas or in relative solitude has become a popular form of camping throughout the Forest. At some more popular areas, toilet facilities may be provided. Contact the local Forest Service office for current information and refer to the Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) for each forest (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 office 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 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 and then bury the pit and disperse the rocks. Whenever a stove is available, we recommend its use. Camp-fires must 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. To 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!**