



Know Before You Go

Preparing to Visit a National Forest

Floods

A flood is a high flow or overflow of water from a river or similar body of water, occurring over a period of time. Most communities in the United States can experience some kind of flooding. Floods can happen anytime during the year, such as after winter snowmelts, spring thunderstorms and fall hurricanes.

The National Weather Service issues flood watches and warnings which are transmitted on NOAA weather radios and through local media. A flood **watch** is issued when high water flow is possible in the specified time period. A flood **warning** means flood conditions are occurring, so get to safety.

Safety Checklist

- Know your area's flood risks. Monitor the NOAA weather radio all hazards bulletins, or your local news stations for vital weather information.
- Stay alert for signs of heavy rain. Watch for rising water levels.
- If flooding occurs, get to higher ground. Leave low-lying areas immediately.
- Avoid areas already flooded, especially if the water is flowing fast. Do not attempt to cross flowing streams. Remember: "Turn around - don't drown".
- If your car stalls, abandon it immediately and climb to higher ground.
- Don't try to swim to safety; wait for rescuers to come to you.
- Stay away from downed power lines and electrical wires.
- Do not let children play near flooded streams or rivers.
- Flooded streams and rivers are not safe for recreational boating.
- Visit <http://www.noaa.gov/> for weather updates.
- For safe driving tips, see <http://preview.weather.com/ready/checklists/drivingChecklist.html>.

