

Safety tips for recreating on USFS land

Crews on the Eldorado National Forest have been busy getting the forest ready for the rush of visitors expected this weekend.

Visitors are reminded to check the status of their favorite campgrounds as not all facilities are open.

Campground status: Campgrounds expected to be open for Memorial Weekend are Fashoda, Silver Creek, Wolf Creek, Yellowjacket, Ice House, Wench Creek, Gerle Creek, Sunset (sites 62 to 131), Dru Barner campground, Strawberry Point, Jones Fork, Northwind, Northshore, Middle Fork Cosumnes, Pardoes Point, South Shore, Sugar Pine Point, Stumpy Meadows, Ponderosa Cove Group, Hell Hole, Westpoint, Airport Flat, Camino Cove, Azalea Cove, Lone Rock, Bridal Veil, China Flat, Sand Flat, Capps Crossing, Silver Fork, Mokelumne, White Azalea, Pipi and Loon Lake. Campgrounds above 6,000 feet in elevation that are expected to open in mid to late June are Bear River Group, Caples Lake, Kirkwood Lake, and Silver Lake East.

Woods Lake and Wrights Lake at over 7,000 feet in elevation will be the last to open most likely in late June to early July.

Black Oak Group campground and Big Meadows campground are closed until repairs from the King fire are completed later this summer.

Sunset loops 1 and 2 (sites 1-61) are temporarily closed through mid-August due to nesting bald eagles which were found last week.

The Union Valley Reservoir area has numerous campgrounds for

campers.

Wench Creek Campground is a great alternative to Sunset Campground and doesn't require reservations.

Fire and wilderness permits: Outside of hosted campgrounds, visitors must have a California campfire permit to have a campfire, charcoal barbecue, or use a gas stove or gas lantern. The permit is your agreement to follow the campfire restrictions and regulations in effect. Remember that regulations governing campfires can change with weather conditions and the seasons. Smoking outside of an enclosed vehicle may be completely prohibited during times of high fire danger.

Wilderness permits are required for the Desolation and Mokelumne wilderness areas. Hikers and backpackers should be prepared to encounter snow in the high country. The Eldorado National Forest Interpretive Association (ENFIA) will be staffing the Carson Pass Information Station on Highway 88 Memorial Weekend to assist visitors with Mokelumne Wilderness permits and recreation information. They also staff the Pyramid Creek Trailhead on Highway 50 by Twin Bridges to provide recreation information for forest visitors.

Road conditions: Most of the roads on the Eldorado National Forest are open for vehicle travel. The higher elevation routes including the Mormon Emigrant Trail are still blocked by snow drifts or wet from melting snow. Be cautious of downed trees where crews have not yet cleared the roadways.

Hazard trees: Visitors are urged to be extra aware of the trees around them due to the ongoing hazards of fire killed trees in the King Fire area and the hazards caused by drought and insect stricken dead or dying trees.

Fish advisories: The California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment recently issued a fish advisory to provide safe eating advice for fish caught in Hell Hole Reservoir in

the Georgetown Ranger District as well as the nearby French Meadows Reservoir in the Tahoe National Forest. There is also a general statewide advisory for eating fish from California's lakes and reservoirs. Visitors who are fishing should be familiar with OEHHA's safe eating guidelines.