

Snow may hamper weekend fun in Eldorado National Forest

The U.S. Forest Service is preparing for the usual Fourth of July crowds that come to the Eldorado National Forest, despite the unusual amount of snow in the higher elevations.

“Many of the popular campgrounds are open and ready for campers,” Eldorado National Forest Recreation Officer Lester Lubetkin said in a statement. “However, the following campgrounds remain closed due to snow or reconstruction: Wrights Lake, Wentworth Springs, Loon Lake, North Shore, Gerle Creek, Pleasant, Red Fir, Woods Lake, and Kirkwood Lake.

The Forest Service is preparing as many campgrounds as possible for holiday use. Current campground and road status is available on the Eldorado National Forest website. Lubetkin says a few more campgrounds may be opened before the weekend and that the Eldorado National Forest website will be updated with any changes.

Snow drifts continue to linger on some popular higher elevation forest roads. The most notable of these is the Mormon Emigrant Trail that’s located between Sly Park and Highway 88. Three feet of snow remains on portions of the road near Highway 88. Expect this road to be closed over the holiday weekend.

If you have fireworks, plan to leave at home. Lubetkin says you are never allowed to possess or use fireworks in a National Forest, regardless of how wet or dry the conditions are.

Hiking in the Desolation and Mokelumne Wilderness Areas will be more difficult this year due to snow. Snow drifts continue to cover many popular hiking trails and snow is prevalent in many areas of the wilderness.

Camping outside of campgrounds is allowed in many areas of the National Forest. Visitors should keep two things in mind if this is their camping style: 1) they will need to obtain an annual campfire permit before building a campfire and 2) to park their vehicle no more than one car length off a designated road.