



Wednesday, June 27, 2018

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**Recreation residents with road, bridge, or cabins on US Forest Property:** Karen Horn, (406) 466-5341, ext 5551128

**Teton County Information Hotline:** (406) 466-2505

**Lewis & Clark County Information Hotline:** (406) 447-1605

**ATTENTION LANDOWNERS in the Augusta or Dearborn areas who were affected by the recent flooding:** The Lewis & Clark Conservation District is hosting an information seminar in Augusta this Friday, June 29, from 10am – 2pm at the Youth/Senior Center. They will collect information on bridge, culvert, and stream damage and are prepared to answer questions on the same. Additionally, they'll provide program information from the Farm Service Agency and potential funding possibilities to assist with bridge and culvert projects. For more information contact the Lewis and Clark Conservation District at (406) 449-5000, ext 112 or email at [lccd@mt.net](mailto:lccd@mt.net).

**Helena – Lewis & Clark Forest Access Status:** The greatest proportion of rainfall and flood damage occurred on the south end of the Rocky Mountain Front to include the Dearborn, Elk Creek, Smith Creek, Benchmark, and Sun Canyon. A 15-person assessment crew began trail maintenance and assessments along the Front beginning Tuesday, June 26<sup>th</sup> and plan to continue over the next 10 days. A short synopsis of each Forest access point is detailed below:

**Swift Dam Road:** Open to Pondera County Campground & Forest trailhead.

**Blackleaf Road:** The road experienced enough rainfall to create standing water and mud pits, but remains passable to the wildlife management area. There was no measurable damage on the Forest road up to the trailhead.

**North Fork Teton Road:** County and Forest roads are open.

**South Fork Teton Road:** County and Forest roads are open. High clearance vehicles are recommended. The Forest assessment team is searching out additional information over the next 10 days.

**Sun Canyon Road:** This area received the most extensive impact from heavy rain and spring runoff. The access road into Hannon Gulch was blown out and is impassable. There is still access to the Forest Service administrative cabin and corrals. At the intersection of Norwegian Gulch and Sun Canyon Road, an extensive stream blowout occurred just to the north of the road and left a gaping, 40' deep canyon right up to the edge of the pavement. Forest engineers are assessing public safety and repair options today. Forest officials are planning a detour route to accommodate the residents of Mortimer Gulch if this occurs. The road is flagged and navigable, but motorists will need to slow and pass on the single lane that remains open. Home Gulch had minor damage, but remains passable. Gibson Overlook: Just below the overlook at the hairpin turn near where the blacktail trail #223 intersects the road, a large piece of the embankment above the road partially sloughed off. Small amounts continue to come down and Forest crews clear them. If there is any further measurable rainfall this entire embankment could come down across the road.

**Beaver-Willow Road:** Closed. Heavy equipment crews are repairing this road. There is a major blowout at Sawmill Flats. Initial temporary work was completed at this site to allow high clearance, 4 x 4 vehicles to pass. More temporary repair work is scheduled to open it to all vehicles by the end of week. Planning for permanent repairs is ongoing.

**Benchmark Road:** Closed beyond Cyanide Pit. Several segments are washed out. There was a pond of standing water 3' deep across the road last weekend, but crews were able to divert and drain this off. There is extensive heavy equipment traffic on the road. Barring any excessive rainfall over the next few days, crews expect to have this open by the weekend. The owners of private vehicles stranded in the initial flooding were allowed to retrieve their vehicles.

**Smith Creek:** The easement access road to the trailhead is heavily rutted. A few major mud bogs are still present and passage would be questionable except for high clearance 4 x 4 vehicles. Any additionally rainfall would quickly make passage on this road impossible.

**Elk Creek:** The county bridge is out and damage on the Forest road above it is anticipated. Crews will not assess this until the new bridge is installed.

**Dearborn Canyon Road:** County road is currently closed. No assessments can be done until this road is reopened.

**Rocky Mountain District Campground Status:**

Summit Campground, 12 miles west of East Glacier: Open.

Benchmark Campground, 30 miles west of Augusta: Not assessable due to road closure.

Double Falls Campground, 21 miles west of Augusta: Open

Home Gulch Campground, 20 miles northwest of Augusta: Closed on east end, but west entrance open.

Mortimer Gulch Campground, 26 miles northwest of Augusta: Open

VanDeriet fly-in Campground, 20 miles west of Augusta. Open, but only to fly-in use.

South Fork Campground, 31 miles west of Augusta: Not assessable due to Benchmark road closure.

Wood Lake Campground, 24 miles southwest of Augusta: Not assessable due to Benchmark road closure.

Cave Mountain Campground, 28 miles northwest of Choteau: Open.

West Fork Campground, 39 miles northwest of Choteau: Open.

Elko Campground, 31 miles northwest of Choteau: Open.

Mills Falls Campground, 33.8 miles northwest of Choteau: Open. High clearance vehicles recommended for access.

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