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(Neb)-NNFG Reopening Campgrounds And Other Developed Areas

By: John Axtell Posted at: 05/21/2020 11:52 PM

CHADRON - Nebraska National Forests and Grasslands has reopened all developed recreation sites on the Pine Ridge, Ft. Pierre, Wall, and Fall River Ranger District and increased public access.

The National Grasslands Visitor Center in Wall remains closed until further notice under coronavirus rules.

Developed sites reopening include the Cliffs, Red Cloud, Roberts Tract, Toadstool, and Solider Creek campgrounds in the Pine Ridge Ranger District. A full list of open areas and up-to-date information is available on the NNFG website and social media pages.

Stage 1 fire restrictions are in place across the NNFG. They include no fires except in constructed, permanent fire pits or fire grates in developed recreation sites and no smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle, trailer, or building.

The operation of a chainsaw without an approved spark arrester and a nearby fire extinguisher and shovel is banned along with explosives, and no welding or torches with an open flame unless in an area where the ground has been cleared of vegetation for at least a 10 foot diameter

Pine Ridge District Ranger Tim Buskirk says the Forest Service understands the public may be excited to return to beloved recreation areas, but that the agency is still urging visitors to follow local, state, and federal guidelines on staying safe.

Buskirk says visitors are being asked to act responsibly and realize that since some services such as rest rooms and garbage collection may still be unavailable, they need to be prepared to pack out trash and human waste.

He encourages them to come with all the essentials for a day trip including food, water, and emergency supplies, and to follow the latest health guidance by staying at least 6-feet from others and not gathering in large groups.