

Glenda Wiles

From: McKay, Tod G -FS <tod.mckay@usda.gov>
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2019 12:09 PM
Subject: News Release: Reconstruction of Willow Mountain Roads Planned This Summer
Attachments: Willow Mountain Roads Reconstruction Project.docx; 19_D1_11_road1302_1348.jpg

Reconstruction of Willow Mountain Roads Planned This Summer

Hamilton, Montana (May 3, 2019) – The Stevensville Ranger District has announced that work will start next week on a major road reconstruction project in the Sapphire Mountains east of Corvallis. Work is scheduled to begin this Monday on Willow Mountain Road #1302 and Burnt Fork Lake Road #1348, and continue throughout the spring and summer. The project will impact travel to several popular forest locations including Willow Mountain Lookout and Burnt Fork Lake, so officials are advising the public of the following closure dates and work schedule.

Beginning May 6th, Forest Roads 1302 and 1348 will be closed to public travel Monday through Friday. There will be heavy equipment working on the roads including crushing machinery, excavators, rock hammers, dump trucks, graders and rollers. The closure is for public and road crew safety. See attached closure map.

Barricades will be posted at the junction with Gold Creek Road #969 and the public is being asked to not attempt to drive around them. Road closure signs will also be posted at the intersection of Gold Creek Road and Willow Creek Road. The closure will not impact Willow Creek Trail #300 or trailhead. People wanting to hike Palisades Mountain National Recreation Trail #44 during the week, can access it off Willow Creek Trail, instead of the trailhead which will be closed.

The closures will only be in effect on weekdays. The roads will re-open to the public on weekends and holidays as work will not be active and equipment will be stored to allow traffic to pass.

Crews will be completely reconstructing both roads, including removing the existing road surface and building a new road bed, with improved stability and drainage. Traveling on the current roads is extremely rough and treacherous with many potholes, deep ruts, washboards and large rocks.

“These roads have been in poor shape and in need of repairs for years,” said Stevensville District Ranger Nell Highfill. “The public has been asking for this work and we now have the funding to complete the project. We’re asking for the public’s patience with these closures and know they will likely impact some summer travel plans. But in the long run, it will be worth it to have a new, smoother, and safer forest road for many years to come.”

Forest officials are also advising that minor road repairs are scheduled for Gold Creek Road #969, May 6-17th. There will be large equipment working on that road including a grader, excavator and roller. The road will not be closed, but drivers should anticipate some minor delays.

For more information visit www.fs.usda.gov/bitterroot or contact the Stevensville Ranger District at 406-777-5461.

###



Tod McKay
Public Affairs Officer

Forest Service
Bitterroot National Forest

p: 406-363-7122

c: 406-531-1130

tgmckay@fs.fed.us

1801 N. First

Hamilton, MT 59840

www.fs.usda.gov/bitterroot



Caring for the land and serving people

This electronic message contains information generated by the USDA solely for the intended recipients. Any unauthorized interception of this message or the use or disclosure of the information it contains may violate the law and subject the violator to civil or criminal penalties. If you believe you have received this message in error, please notify the sender and delete the email immediately.