Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

FWP adjusts facility management in response to COVID-19; state lands remain open for day use

COVID-19 - Region 7

Friday, March 27, 2020

Montanans are lucky to have so many opportunities to get outdoors and recreate, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. And while Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks encourages recreation outside, we also encourage careful planning and prudence. The safety of the public and FWP staff is of utmost concern.

As a reminder, social distancing guidelines should be followed at all FWP sites. Keep your distance from fellow recreators. If a parking lot at a fishing access site or state park is full, consider another place to recreate. Also, in keeping with Gov. Steve Bullock's directive, FWP asks that all people stay close to home and recreate in their local community.

State parks, fishing access sites and wildlife management areas remain open for day use only.

- Overnight camping will not be allowed. Campgrounds will be systematically closed, giving current campers 72-hour notice
- Group use sites will be closed, including playgrounds
- Visitor center closures will be extended at least through April 10
- Bathrooms at many locations will be limited due to public and employee safety concerns, because of the current lack of personal protective equipment and cleaning supplies. Sites will be regularly patrolled by enforcement staff.
- Specific sites may close to address groups gathering, public health and safety, FWP employee safety or resource damage.

At this time, regularly scheduled hunting seasons are not cancelled. This includes spring turkey season, which starts April 11, and spring bear season, which starts April 15. However, hunters should practice social distancing and all COVID-19 response directives from the governor, including limiting group gatherings and keeping six feet away from people.

Hunters should also keep this in mind when planning for their hunts. If hunting on private land, landowner permission is required, but should be sought by email or phone, not in person.

"These are trying times for everyone, and we all know that going outside is one important way to stay healthy," said FWP director Martha Williams. "Like the governor, I trust Montanans to understand the importance of social distancing while recreating outside. Stay close to home when looking for a place to recreate, and please follow the governor's directives."

As a reminder, the deer and elk application deadline is April 1. FWP offices are closed to public access, but anglers and hunters can purchase licenses or apply online. For those who need assistance with their purchase, please call the FWP licensing center at 406-444-2950. Visitor centers and public meeting spaces at offices, state parks and fish hatcheries are also temporarily closed.

Please help FWP protect the resources that are so valuable to all Montanans.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Close
Menu