



Forest Service  
Coconino National Forest  
1824 S. Thompson Street  
Flagstaff, Arizona 86001

# News Release



Public Information: (928) 527-3600  
[www.CoconinoNationalForest.us](http://www.CoconinoNationalForest.us)

**MEDIA CONTACTS**  
Brady Smith – Public Affairs Officer  
George Jozens – Dep. Public Affairs Officer  
Media Only: (928) 224-8306

## Fossil Creek permits go on sale April 1

**CAMP VERDE, Ariz., March 1, 2019, For Immediate Release** — As the weather warms up and daydreaming of Fossil Creek’s pristine waters begin, its visitors are reminded they must possess a printed permit to park and hike there beginning May 1.

Visitors to Fossil Creek can begin making reservations through an online seasonal permit system starting April 1. Seasonal reservations and a printed permit is required May 1 through Oct. 1 for day-use in the Fossil Creek Permit Area, located within the Coconino and the Tonto National Forests. This year’s reservation season will begin one month later than last year due to administration delays.

On the first of each month, reservations open for the following month (May reservations open April 1, June reservations open May 1, etc.). Reservations are not available or required during the Fall-Winter Season, and parking and sites are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

The public can access the reservation system online by searching “Fossil Creek Wild and Scenic River” at [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov) or by calling (877) 444-6777, beginning April 1. Permits are \$6 entitling the permit holder to a single day pass which reserves a parking spot for the day in a specific parking lot. The fee is a reduction from the \$10 per reservation cost last year.

Visitors must print their permit before arriving and may only park in the Fossil Creek parking lot assigned on their parking pass for the day reserved.

Parking permit locations within the main river corridor include Mazatzal, Purple Mountain, Sally May, Homestead, Fossil Creek Bridge, Tonto Bench, Irving, and the Waterfall Trailhead. To access these parking locations, visitors should enter through Camp Verde on state Route 260 to Forest Road 708 (aka Fossil Creek Road).

In addition, permits can be reserved for the Fossil Springs Trailhead parking lot through a “Park and 8-mile Hike” permit or a horse trailer parking permit. Visitors seeking to reserve the Fossil Springs Trailhead permit should be prepared to do an 8-mile roundtrip strenuous hike if seeking water access and should enter through Strawberry off of SR 87.



Flagstaff Ranger Station: (928) 526-0866  
Mogollon Rim Ranger Station: (928) 477-2255  
Red Rock Ranger Station: (928) 282-4119



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## Additional Information

**VEHICLES:** High-clearance vehicles are recommended to travel from SR 260 down the 14-mile rough dirt Forest Road 708 to the main entrance of the Fossil Creek corridor. It is not uncommon for standard passenger vehicles to incur flat tires on the rugged roadway.

**COST:** The \$6 permit is non-refundable (except when Forest Service closes the road due to weather). If you are not able to use your permit, however, please cancel it online to make your parking space available for others.

**PERMIT TYPE:** Three permit types are available to reserve: 1. Vehicle Parking (includes Waterfall Trailhead, Irving, Tonto Bench, Fossil Creek Bridge, Homestead, Sally May, Purple Mountain and Mazatzal parking lots), 2. Park and 8-Mile Hike (Fossil Springs Trailhead), and 3. Horse Trailer Parking (Fossil Springs Trailhead).

**PERMIT DOCUMENTATION:** People reserving a permit MUST PRINT THEIR PERMIT IN ADVANCE to place on their dashboards upon entrance to Fossil Creek. Permits can be printed immediately upon making a reservation online. (The confirmation email the customer receives is NOT the permit.)

**AT THE GATE:** No permits are sold or able to be printed on site.

**CLOSED PORTION OF FR 708:** A 4-mile section of Forest Road 708 from the Fossil Springs Trailhead to the Waterfall Trailhead is closed for vehicle travel due to unsafe road conditions; therefore, it is not possible to drive in one entrance and out the other (from Camp Verde to Strawberry or vice versa). The only direct access to Fossil Creek by vehicle is from the Camp Verde side.

**FOSSIL SPRING HIKE:** Those intending to hike the Fossil Springs Trail must drive in through the Strawberry entrance. The strenuous hike to Fossil Springs is 4 miles one way with an elevation change of 1,700 feet. Summer daytime temperatures regularly exceed 100 degrees Fahrenheit. No water is available along the trail, so hikers must carry at least one gallon of water per person and wear proper hiking shoes. This hike should not be used to access the Waterfall area or middle Fossil Creek.

**CAMPING:** No camping is allowed within the Fossil Creek Permit Area during the May 1 to Oct. 1 permit reservation season, but is allowed downstream of Fossil Creek Bridge (at Mazatzal, Purple Mountain,



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Sally May and Homestead) and upstream of the historic dam site in the backcountry from Oct. 2 to April 30.

**RULES and REGULATIONS:** Please pack out what you pack in. Campfires, charcoal grills and all glass containers are prohibited year round. Gas operated grills and stoves are acceptable.

For more information about visiting Fossil Creek, please see <http://tinyurl.com/GoToFossilCreek>.  
Download a Fossil Spring map and brochure in English or Spanish at this site.

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