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News Release



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Fossil Creek sections closed for Toilet Installations starting May 1

Sedona, Arizona, March 31, 2017, For Immediate Release — Portions of the Fossil Creek Wild and Scenic River Corridor will be temporarily closed May 1 through May 14 to allow for installation of vault toilets.

During this time, reservations will be unavailable for the Waterfall, Irving, Tonto Bench, Fossil Creek Bridge, Homestead, Sally May, Purple Mountain, and Mazatzal parking lots. Reservations for the Fossil Springs Trailhead can still be made.

The public is warned that there is no direct access to Fossil Creek from the Fossil Springs Trailhead. This trail is a very difficult, eight-mile round-trip hike. Hundreds of people are rescued on this trail each year, which puts a substantial burden on local emergency responders. Do not attempt this hike unprepared.

Reservations are required for day-use visitation in the Fossil Creek Permit Area beginning tomorrow (April 1) and will be required through October 1, 2017. The Forest Service implemented a reservation system in 2016 to manage high recreational use. The reservation system provides 148 designated parking spots or approximately 740 visitors per day within the Fossil Creek Wild and Scenic River Corridor. "We are very pleased with the success of the reservation system last summer, and we are looking forward to its second year," said Nicole Branton, district ranger for the Red Rock Ranger District. "I recognize that closing portions of the area next month may pose an inconvenience, but I believe visitors' experience will be made more pleasant and resources better protected in the long run with improved toilet facilities."

Vault toilets are needed to provide better sanitation for the existing visitor use in the Fossil Creek Wild and Scenic River Corridor. The Coconino and Tonto national forests will replace temporary porta potties with vault-style toilets at eight locations for human health and safety and for resource protection. Since 2011, the Forest Service has implemented several interim management measures in Fossil Creek, including the seasonal reservation system in 2016, to manage use and protect resources.

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Reservations for Fossil Creek can be made online by searching “Fossil Creek Wild and Scenic River” at www.recreation.gov or by calling (877) 444-6777. Permits cost \$6, entitling the permit holder to a single day pass that reserves a parking spot for the day in a specific parking lot.

For more information about visiting Fossil Creek, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/GoToFossilCreek>, where you can download a Fossil Creek map and brochure in English or Spanish. The Fossil Creek Hotline is also available at (928) 226-4611.

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