



## NEWS RELEASE

U.S. Forest Service, San Bernardino National Forest  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: John Miller at (909) 382-2788  
Twitter: [@sanbernardinof](https://twitter.com/sanbernardinof)

### Winter Weather headed for Southern California Mountains

**SAN BERNARDINO, Calif., February 26, 2014**—Winter weather is expected over the next several days, bringing rain and snow to the San Gabriel, San Bernardino and San Jacinto Mountains on the San Bernardino National Forest. Snow levels may drop to 6000 feet over the weekend.

As the lure of the mountainous winter wonderland appeals to citizens across the southland, the US Forest Service, Caltrans and the California Highway Patrol are asking visitors to ***“Know Before You Go”*** by calling ahead to check on current conditions in the local mountains. The Silver and Mountain wildfires impacted state highway 243, south of Banning and south of Idyllwild last year. Caltrans will be closely monitoring conditions during the storm and the highway may be subject to closure if conditions warrant.

Unlike some of the wildlife that lives within them, America’s forests do not hibernate for the winter. Rather, many of these areas are open to a host of recreational opportunities unique to the season. Cross-country and downhill skiing as well as snowshoeing, snowboarding, and snow play are just a few of the activities that you can enjoy on public lands.

#### Winter Tips:

- Winter weather conditions in the mountains can be extreme and change without notice. An inadequately clothed person can get hypothermia (low internal body temperature). Hypothermia can be deadly – learn to recognize the early symptoms. Keep warm and dry.
- Stay Away from ice covered lakes and streams. Over the past decade several forest visitors have fallen through thin ice and drown.
- Be extremely careful when walking on ice covered or slippery surfaces like parking areas and trails and especially steep slopes. One slip could result in a serious injury.
- Be courteous and remember that you are sharing public lands with other recreational users. Do not recreate on unauthorized areas or private property.
- Bring along extra safety items such as extra clothing, blankets, water, flashlights, maps, and a cell phone. Did you remember spare batteries?
- Park your vehicle in a safe location and do not double or triple park (blocking in others). Never park in front of closed gates, they may be needed for emergency access, and you could be cited or have your vehicle towed away.

- Do not park in restricted or "No Parking" areas. These are posted for the safety of all travelers.
- When installing tire chains or traction devices, park in a safe location well off the roadway. Never stop in traffic lanes for these purposes, you may cause other motorists to lose control when they spot your vehicle blocking lanes.
- If you are involved in a traffic accident, try to immediately drive your vehicle to the roadside, but only if safe to do so. Getting the obstructing vehicles off the roadway may prevent the accident from getting worse, involving other vehicles. Immediately call 911, or ask other travelers to call 911 for you from the nearest phone.
- **"Pack it in, Pack it out"** – Do not Litter. Take along a trash bag or other receptacle for collecting your trash so that you can deposit it in the proper trash receptacle.

The Forest Adventure Pass must be displayed on a visitor's parked vehicle when recreating in High Impact Recreation Areas and certain developed sites like campgrounds, snow play, and picnic areas. A list of designated fee sites and areas is posted on the Fee Program website at: [www.fs.usda.gov/adventurepass](http://www.fs.usda.gov/adventurepass)

Forest visitors are encouraged to **"Know Before You Go"** and call ahead to the local Ranger Station to check on location conditions and restrictions.

Big Bear Ranger Station & Discovery Center 909-382-2790  
 Idyllwild Ranger Station 909-382-2922  
 Lytle Creek Ranger Station 909-382-2852  
 Mill Creek Ranger Station 909-382-2882  
 Santa Rosa & San Jacinto Mountains National Monument 760-862-9984

For additional information about the San Bernardino National Forest, please visit: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/sbnf>

For the latest road conditions, use the California QuickMap (<http://quickmap.dot.ca.gov/>). Quickmap displays real-time traffic information on a web based map. The map shows traffic speeds, lane and road closures, incidents, and active chain control requirements. You may also call 1-800-427-7623 for road conditions, or follow Caltrans on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/caltrans8](http://www.twitter.com/caltrans8)

*About the U.S. Forest Service:*

The mission of the Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to state and private landowners, and maintains the largest forestry research organization in the world. Public lands the Forest Service manages contribute more than \$13 billion to the economy each year through visitor spending alone. Those same lands provide 20 percent of the nation's clean water supply, a value estimated at \$7.2 billion per year. The agency has either a direct or indirect role in stewardship of about 80 percent of the 850 million forested acres within the U.S., of which 100 million acres are urban forests where most Americans live.

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