

Falling Tree Kills Kevin Pellini, Logger and Former National Park Service Employee

We were saddened to hear about the death of Kevin Pellini and our thoughts are with his family and friends.

The mountain pine beetle epidemic means that there are more standing dead trees than ever before and we all need to be careful, as trees can fall at any time.

Some Guidelines for Visitors:

- Be aware of your surroundings and avoid dense patches of dead trees. They can fall without warning.
- Stay out of the forest when there are strong winds that could blow down trees. If you are already in the forest when winds kick up, head to a clearing and out of reach of any potential falling trees.
- Place tents and park vehicles in areas where they will not be hit if a tree falls.
- When driving in remote areas of the forest, park close to a main road rather than on a spur or one-way section to avoid being trapped if a tree falls across the road.
- Carry an ax or chain saw to remove fallen trees from roads in case you become trapped.
- Do not rely on cell phones for safety, as there is no coverage in many areas of the National Forest.

What the Forest Service is Doing

Recreation managers continue to make safety our top priority in recreation areas including campgrounds, trails, parking areas and along roads. Numerous dead trees will be removed. Many areas are being signed to make visitors aware of these safety issues.

This past summer, the USFS kept 31 campgrounds closed to remove hazard trees. They expected that 17 campgrounds would remain closed throughout the summer. However, they were able to open all but 14 campgrounds and work continues to remove hazardous beetle-killed trees from the remaining campgrounds.

Colorado Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, Colorado Dept. of Corrections (Inmate Crews), and USFS hotshot fire crews, more than exceeded our expectations by removing dead trees and piling slash in many campgrounds in Jackson, Grand, Routt and Summit Counties.

Next summer, expect an increase in treatment acres on roads and trails as environmental analyses are completed for those areas.