



Colorado Bark Beetle Cooperative Urges Caution when Recreating in Colorado's Forests

The Colorado Bark Beetle Cooperative (CBBC) urges all visitors and residents of Colorado to exercise caution when using forests in the state. Insect and disease affected and/or killed trees exist in all of Colorado's forests. These trees are unstable and can fall especially under high wind and inclement weather conditions. Hazard trees pose danger around trails, roadways, and recreation sites frequented by the public.

The CBBC urges forest visitors to check with local, state, or federal jurisdictions about the hazard potential in the area they plan to visit. Contact your local US Forest Service ranger districts or the Colorado State Forest Service for information on current backcountry travel conditions. The US Forest Service has provided the following advice about ways to stay safe while recreating in hazard tree affected areas:

- Be aware of your surroundings. 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 the winds kick up, head to a clearing out of reach of any potential falling trees.
- Place tents and park vehicles in areas where they will not be hit if trees fall.
- When driving in remote areas of the forest, park close to a main road, rather than on a spur or one-way section. If trees fall across the road you may be trapped.
- Bring an ax or saw to remove fallen trees from roads in case you become trapped.
- Do not rely on only cell phones for safety as there is no coverage in many areas of the national forest
- Remember, your safety is your responsibility.

The CBBC is a place-based collaborative working to educate the public and policy makers about issues stemming from the mountain pine beetle epidemic of the past ten years. The five core objectives of the CBBC are 1) protect human life, 2) protect public infrastructure, 3) protect critical water supplies, 4) develop community resilience to adapt to disturbance driven ecosystems and, 5) develop and promote a short, mid, and long term vision for high elevation forests. For more information about the CBBC, go to:

<http://www.nwccog.org/index.php/programs/rural-resort-region/cbbc>.