

Media Advisory
USDA Forest Service
Coronado National Forest
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www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado



Effective Immediately

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SABINO CANYON TO OPEN TO SHUTTLE STOP #9
Flash Flood Watch in Effect, Visitors Advised to
Use Caution Across Coronado National Forest

TUCSON, AZ (July 25, 2008) – Visitor access into Upper Sabino Canyon will be extended to Shuttle Stop #9 on Saturday, July 26, 2008. Access had been limited due to flooding and rock slides in July, 2006, and subsequent reconstruction work. Visitors will once again be able to travel the entire length of the roadway. However, the National Weather Service has issued a Flash Flood Watch through Sunday. Visitors are advised to check weather forecasts before entering water crossings and low-lying areas, and to use extreme caution.

“While we are pleased to be able to reopen the Canyon to Stop #9, we strongly encourage visitors to check forecast weather conditions before entering water crossings to enable them to make the right decisions relative to their safety,” said Sherry Tune, Deputy Santa Catalina District Ranger. “Our partners at the National Weather Service work closely to advise us when conditions may become hazardous to the public. This is one of those times, with the potential for flash flooding. Although the temptation to travel to Stop #9 may be great, people need to weigh the risks and benefits and proceed accordingly. If the potential exists for flooding, no hike is worth the risk to health and safety.”

The weather forecast calls for heavy downpours accompanied by rainfall amounts of one-half to 1 ½ inches for much of Southeast Arizona, including Pima County. Two to five inches are possible in localized areas, increasing the potential for flash flooding. As a safety precaution at any time of the year when visiting public lands to recreate, visitors are encouraged to check current weather conditions, forecasts and warnings for their destination and surrounding areas. The National Weather Service posts forecasts for southeastern Arizona at www.weather.gov/tucson. The service also provides a 24-hour weather information line at (520) 881-3333.

Contractors will finish their work in Sabino next week, with stabilization work and clean-up wrapping up the flood-related construction projects. Completion of this work will not be the end of construction projects in the canyon, however. Demolition and reconstruction work of two rest rooms will begin within one to two weeks. Rest rooms at

Rattlesnake Picnic Area and Shuttle Stop #8 will be replaced. Additionally, repair of low water crossings (bridges) is scheduled to begin sometime near the first of October.

Temporary delays may be encountered during construction activities, but no construction-related closures are anticipated at this time. A ribbon-cutting ceremony for all flood-related repair work is being scheduled for fall of this year.

Coronado National Forest officials urge the public to pay close attention to the developing weather situation this weekend with regards to all Forest recreation areas. In addition to the potential for flash flooding, recent rains have caused damage to roads and trails in some areas. Visitors are advised to check on local conditions by contacting local offices as follows:

- Coronado National Forest Supervisor's Office – (520) 388-8300
- Douglas Ranger District – (520) 364-6800
- Nogales Ranger District – (520) 281-2296
- Safford Ranger District – (928) 428-4150
- Santa Catalina Ranger District – (520) 749-8700
- Sierra Vista Ranger District – (520) 378-0311