

**Forest Service**

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# News Release

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## **Huron-Manistee National Forests Remind Users to Fish Responsibly**

CADILLAC, Mich. (April 2, 2020) – National forests are experiencing increased use following Michigan’s “Stay Home, Stay Safe” order. With season openers, more users are expected to visit popular sites, creating crowds at a time when social distancing is imperative. Recreationists can ensure their health and safety by staying home, avoiding crowded day-use sites, or recreating during “non-peak” times.

While dispersed recreation opportunities, such as fishing, remain available to the public, anglers are advised to create a back-up plan to maintain social distancing guidelines. Be prepared to find an alternative fishing spot if your preferred location is occupied, or fish on days that traditionally see fewer anglers.

To protect public health and safety, all visitors to the forests are encouraged to:

- Avoid visiting the forest if you are sick and/or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
- Follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance on personal hygiene and social distancing before and during your visit to the forest.
- Take your trash with you when you leave.
- Please plan to use the restroom before or after your visit to the forest. Unmanaged waste creates a health hazard for other visitors.
- If an area is crowded, please search for a less occupied location. Also consider avoiding the forest during high-use periods.
- Avoid activities or hard-to-reach areas that may increase your chance of injury or distress. Law enforcement and/or search and rescue operations may be limited due to staffing and COVID-19 issues.

The USDA Forest Service continues to assess and temporarily suspend access to recreation areas that attract large crowds and cannot meet social distancing guidelines recommended by the CDC. Visitors to national forests are urged to take precautions recommended by the CDC. Information from the USDA is available at: [www.usda.gov/coronavirus](http://www.usda.gov/coronavirus).

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