

NEWS RELEASE

USDA Forest Service Prescott National Forest



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Forest Service To Make Historic Groom Creek Schoolhouse Available for Rental

Prescott, AZ (November 9, 2006) - The Prescott National Forest recently completed renovation of the 100-year old Groom Creek Schoolhouse south of Prescott and anticipates renting it to the public on a daily basis. Beginning in April, 2007, groups will be able to reserve the Schoolhouse building for meetings, receptions, weddings, community gatherings and similar uses.

The Schoolhouse, built in 1902 and important to the Groom Creek community through the 1950's, is listed on the National Register of Historic Buildings as a unique example of a two-room schoolhouse from the early 1900's. The building was acquired by the Forest Service in 1967. However, the building was used very little the past 10 years and was deteriorating from lack of maintenance. A grant from the Forest Service Arizona Cabin Rental program provided funds for restoration. Rental proceeds will now provide funds to manage and maintain the building, plus provide for additional renovation and improvements at the Schoolhouse.

The building and adjacent picnic area will rent for \$150 per day. The Schoolhouse building accommodates groups of 60 people in a meeting or dining room configuration. When the building is used in conjunction with the adjacent picnic area, the facility is suitable for groups of up to 100 persons. The building is furnished with tables and chairs. The picnic area has 9 tables, a fire ring and an amphitheater.

The Schoolhouse is reached by taking South Mount Vernon Street and the Senator Road south from Prescott for seven miles. The Schoolhouse is located on the east side of Senator Road.

In April 2007, reservations can be made by contacting the Forest Service National Recreation Reservation Service, ReserveUSA, 1-877-444-6777 or www.reserveusa.com. In addition to the \$150 per day rental fee, a \$9 service fee will be charged for each reservation. The reservation service also has information about renting and reserving other Forest Service facilities, including those offered under the Arizona Cabin Rental program.

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As required by the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act of 2004 (REA), all recreation sites that charge a new fee must meet certain criteria before fees can be initiated. Rental of Groom Creek Schoolhouse meets criteria for charging reasonable recreation use fees. Proposals for new fee sites are reviewed by a Recreation Resource Advisory Committee (RRAC) composed of citizens who have recreation interests on public lands. The existing Bureau of Land Management's Arizona Resource Advisory Council (BLM RAC) has been authorized to perform this function for new fee sites in Arizona. The proposed fee for Groom Creek Schoolhouse will be reviewed at the next regular meeting of the BLM RAC in December. More information about this meeting can be obtained by calling the BLM state office at 602-417-9215.

Questions or comments regarding Forest Service plans to rent Groom Creek Schoolhouse can be directed to Doug Schmidgall, Prescott National Forest, phone 928-443-8177.

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