



Looking to enjoy the outdoors? The more than 15 million acres of public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management in California provide many recreation opportunities. With everyone's health and safety in mind, it is important to practice responsible recreation. Avoid high-risk outdoor activities, stick to small groups, practice social distancing, be prepared, always "pack it in and pack it out," and be respectful of others. Always check to make sure your destination is open and follow local and state health guidelines to keep you and your community safe. In addition to reading our tips below, review the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [tips for safe recreation](#).

Be Responsible

Practice social distancing. Keep 6 feet between you and others not in your household. Be mindful in parking lots and trailheads of social distancing. Share the trail and warn other users of your presence as you pass. Avoid crowds. Feeling sick? Save your outdoor adventure for another day.

Stay close to home. Enjoy the outdoors close to home whenever possible to avoid putting strain on communities and to slow the spread of COVID-19. Follow state and local public health orders. If you decide to head out of town, check with your local BLM Field Office before traveling to a campground, trailhead, OHV area or fishing hole. Some areas may be closed or have limited services.

Be careful what you touch. Keep your hands clean and avoid touching any high-traffic surfaces like railings, doors or restroom facilities. When you must be in close proximity to others not in your immediate household, wear a mask or other face covering that covers your nose and mouth.

Recreate with immediate household members. Recreation with those outside of your household creates new avenues for virus transmission. Stick with those you have been in regular contact with.

Don't take unnecessary risks. Health care workers and first responders are working hard to keep us safe, and resources are already strained. Your risky behavior would result in a rescue or health care, further straining those resources.

Be Prepared

Check what's open. Know before you go. Many recreation areas will be open, but you should confirm that the site you plan to visit is currently allowing visitors. Visit sites

that are less crowded. Respect private property. Visit our [COVID-19 closure page](#) as some areas may have limited services. [Contact your local BLM field office](#) for current local information.

Be prepared when nature calls. Restrooms and water fountains may be closed or limited so bring your own soap, water, hand sanitizer, toilet paper, and trash bag. Bring a small hand shovel. Dig a hole 6-8 inches deep and 200 feet away from water. Dispose of all trash properly. Do not litter.

Bring everything you may need. Visitors are advised to be self-sufficient, bringing all of the water, food and other supplies you need to minimize contact with the community around any destination.

Have back-up plans. Be flexible. If the recreation area is full, no parking available or your destination is closed, have a back-up plan for an alternate location. Park only in approved areas, ensuring emergency access is not blocked.

Be considerate of others. Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their outdoor experience. Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail. Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors. Follow the rules and respect private property.

Be Fire Safe – Where Permitted

Don't drive or park on dry grass. Your engine exhaust pipe or a spark from a trailer chain can cause a wildland fire, putting firefighters, other visitors and communities at risk.

Know the restrictions. Make sure you are at a site that allows campfires and that there are no burn bans. Obtain a campfire permit if required. Check with the [BLM-CA Interactive Map](#) for current fire & shooting restrictions, which can change based on weather conditions.

Use existing fire rings. Scrape away litter and any other burnable material within a 10-foot-diameter surrounding the ring. Make sure all wood fits inside the fire ring. Firewood should not be longer than your arm and not wider than your wrist. Never put anything but wood into the fire. Do not pull sticks out of the fire. If creating a new fire ring, dismantle and scatter rocks after use.

Keep an eye on it. Never leave a campfire unattended, even for a few minutes or even if there are no flames present. Many wildfires start because of abandoned fires or because someone thought a fire was out. An adult should supervise the campfire at all times.

Bring the right tools. Have a shovel, axe, and bucket of water available before lighting your campfire.

Put it out. When it's time to put the fire out, dump lots of water on it, stir it with a shovel, then dump more water on it. Make sure the fire remnants are COLD before leaving the campsite. If it is too hot to touch, it's too hot to leave! Do not bury your fire with sand or dirt! The coals can smolder and re-ignite.

Be Water Safe

Know your limits. Be sure your water skills and experience are equal to the river and the conditions. Know when and how to swim for an eddy. Tell someone where you are going, when you expect to return, and where to call if you do not.

Wear proper gear. Wear a Coast Guard-approved life vest at all times when you are on or near the river. Kayakers and canoeists should wear helmets at all times. Rafters should wear helmets in class IV and above water.

Be prepared for extremes in weather. If it is too cold, know about the dangers of hypothermia and how to deal with it. Wear a wet suit and booties in spring to early summer and always in class V water. If it is too hot, know early signs of heat exhaustion and dehydration.

Recognize hazards. Recognize and react to river hazards such as holes, wrap rocks, undercut boulders and walls, rock sieves, and horizon lines across the river. Avoid rattlesnakes and poison oak. Know how to deal with emergencies if someone is unlucky. Carry a first aid kit and know how to use it.

Be cautious. Remote rivers through isolated wilderness should be approached with caution, since aid is difficult or impossible to obtain in case of an accident. Never run a rapid unless you can see a clear path through it. Watch out for new snags after winter and spring floods. When in doubt, stop and scout. If you are still in doubt? Portage.

Dispersed Camping

14-day limit. Dispersed camping is allowed on public land for a period not to exceed 14 days within a 28 consecutive day period. Some areas may have additional requirements or restrictions for dispersed camping. [Please look up and call the local office](#) before planning your trip.

Site selection. Dispersed campsites are located along most secondary roads and may not be marked. Popular locations can be recognized by the telltale flat disturbed area that has been used as a camp site before. If possible, use existing sites to avoid creating new disturbances. Whenever possible, place tents on a non-vegetated area. Do not dig trenches around tents.

Fire permit. Some areas require a campfire permit. Make sure to check all local and state fire regulations before departing for your camping trip.

Pack it in, pack it out. Visitors are encouraged to follow [Leave No Trace](#) principles and “pack it in and pack it out” as trash pick-up in may be limited due to limited staff availability in some areas. Carry a trash bag and pick up litter left by others.

Dispose of your waste. Public restroom facilities and running water are not always available, especially in remote areas. Popular outdoor destinations attract higher numbers of visitors and receive more impact to the surrounding natural resources. This can lead to concentrations of human waste and other refuse, which pollutes the environment and presents a serious human health hazard.

Bring everything you may need. Visitors are advised to be self-sufficient, bringing all of the water, food and other supplies you need.

Here's how you can explore opportunities to recreate responsibly:

✓ Find a recreation site that matches with what you want to do. Do you want to hike? Go fishing? Camping? <https://www.blm.gov/visit>

✓ Next, make sure that site is currently open by checking our [COVID-19 closure list](#). We will remove sites from that list as they re-open.

✓ Finally, check this interactive map to see if there are any fire or target shooting restrictions: <https://go.usa.gov/xwRdk>.

Remember to plan ahead, be responsible,
be safe and above all, have fun!

#RecreateResponsibly