



# **NATIONAL FORESTS IN NORTH • CAROLINA**

**USDA FOREST SERVICE, 160A ZILICOA STREET, ASHEVILLE, NC 28801**

## **NEWS • RELEASE**

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### **Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests Experience Significant Damage from Tropical Storm Frances**

**A number of roads and recreation facilities on the Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests received significant damage due to the heavy rains Tuesday and Wednesday from Tropical Storm Frances. The hardest hit areas include Pisgah National Forest lands in Avery, Buncombe, Caldwell, Haywood, Yancey and Transylvania counties, as well as parts of the Nantahala National Forest near Highlands.**

**Many parts of the Forest are still inaccessible, and Forest personnel are just beginning damage assessments. However, initial estimates indicate that the total damage could easily exceed 20 to 30 million dollars. Officials caution that many roads and trails and recreation facilities in the most heavily impacted parts of the Forest will likely remain closed for the near future. Visitors driving on Forest roads this weekend should exercise extreme caution, since not all damaged roads may be barricaded yet and the extremely saturated condition of the road banks make it possible for there to be additional slides.**

**One area that was particularly hard hit is FS Road 472, connecting US 80 with the Blue Ridge Parkway just north of Mount Mitchell. Major sections of this road have been washed away, and currently there is no access to Black mountain campground. This is near where major slides have been reported blocking the Blue Ridge Parkway.**

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**U.S. Forest Service personnel are also working along with the NC Division of Forest Resources to coordinate dispatching personnel to help in the relief efforts for all of the areas affected by Hurricane Frances, including Florida, Georgia and the Carolinas.**

**As more information becomes available, the Forest will provide updates on road and campground closures on its website: <http://www.cs.unca.edu/nfsnc>.**

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