



For Immediate Release: April 9, 2019

Two state campgrounds closed due to bark beetle-infested trees

(Palmer, AK) – Alaska State Parks has closed two campgrounds in Denali State Park and Nancy Lake State Recreation Area over concerns that spruce bark beetle-infested trees pose a risk to the health and safety of recreationists.

The Byers Lake Campground located in Denali State Park and the South Rolly Campground in the Nancy Lake State Recreation Area will remain closed while the agency coordinates efforts to mitigate the significant hazards posed by beetle-infested trees. The campgrounds will likely remain closed for much of this summer, and possibly into next year.

“These trees represent a significant safety issue for campers and visitors,” said Alaska State Parks Director Ricky Gease. “We have been experienced a number of rotten trees falling over in the campgrounds this season, and while the timing is unfortunate, we need to take action now to reduce this hazard and help make our parks safer.”

Pending approval of federal funds for the work, the Department of Natural Resources will contract with private business to cut down and remove the affected trees to reduce hazards to more than 100 campsites at the two affected campgrounds, and minimize the effect on residents and visitors. The state’s Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation and Division of Forestry are working together to pursue funding for the work.

To reduce the risk of spreading the beetle infestation, tree felling, chipping and removal must be timed to take advantage of colder weather conditions. While crews will be moving as quickly as possible to remove all the hazard trees and reopen campgrounds in a timely fashion, the campgrounds will be closed until the work is complete.

The closure will affect the following areas and trails:

Denali State Park

- Byers Lake Campground
- Byers Lake Trail
- Cascade Trail
- **(Note:** Byers Lake public use cabins will remain open, but access will be restricted. Parking is available at the Alaska Veterans Memorial with a trail walk into the site. No motor vehicle access is allowed beyond the Veterans Memorial.)

Nancy Lake State Recreation Area

- South Rolly Lake Campground (**Note:** Parking allowed to access trailhead only. Public use cabins will still be available.

For more information on Alaska State Parks, visit our website: alaskastateparks.org, or find us on Instagram, Facebook or Twitter.

CONTACT: Stuart Leidner, (907) 745-8935, stuart.leidner@alaska.gov

###

STAY CONNECTED:

DNR Newsroom: http://dnr.alaska.gov/commis/dnr_newsroom.htm

DNR on Social Media: http://dnr.alaska.gov/commis/social_media.htm

DNR Public Information Center: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/commis/pic/>