



# EXPLORING OUR NATIONAL FORESTS

## Part I of our Virtual Twin Lakes Camp

### What are National Forests?

National Forests are public lands across the United States where we can go out and explore! There are nearly 190 million acres of National Forest across our country across 155 different forests. Combined, these forests equal roughly the size of the state of Texas! These lands are owned by us, and we the people let the government and the Forest Service manage these lands on our behalf. This is an incredible gift that we get to enjoy in the United States.



### What can we do in our National Forests?

We can recreate! We can go out and explore - we can camp, hike, swim, ski, watch wildlife and explore!

### What National Forests are close to me?

If you're in Douglas County, then one of the largest and closest we have is the Umpqua National Forest! The Umpqua National Forest is nearly 1 million acres and has many hiking trails, camp sites and beautiful waterfalls and lakes! In fact, our annual Twin Lakes camp is held in the Umpqua National Forest!

### ACTIVITY 1: National Forest Week

Did you know that July 13<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> is National Forest Week? You can celebrate with the [National Forest Foundation](https://www.nationalforestweek.org/).

Your goal this week is to find time with your family to explore and recreate in one of our nearby National Forests! Take a moment to hike on a trail, visit a river or lake or meadow and appreciate this amazing gift we have!

As part of National Forest Week, the National Forest Foundation, is holding a photo contest with lots of prizes up for grabs! You and your family can share pictures to be entered for prizes! Get out and explore!



## PHOTO CONTEST

### GRAND PRIZE

**\$200 to Level Frames • Yeti Roadie Hard Cooler • America the Beautiful Pass • Zeal Optics Sunglasses**

### SECOND PRIZE

**\$150 REI Giftcard**

### THIRD PRIZE

**2 National Forest Maps**



**SUBMIT ENTRIES JULY 13-19 AT NATIONALFORESTWEEK.ORG**

## ACTIVITY 2: Be Prepared when you Explore!

Americans take billions of trips every year onto our public lands, like National Forests. We go camping, hiking, climbing, horseback riding, hunting and more! When we are out in the wilderness, it is important to be a responsible steward of our environment, meaning that we take care of our surroundings. You can help your family be the best they can be when out exploring!

Here are some tips:



### 1. Stay on the Trail!

A trail is a set path that has already been set up for us to recreate on! It is intended for human use! By staying on the trail, we are keeping our impact to this small area. If we walked all over the forest, we would break new trails which would lead to further and further damage. It's also important to use established camp sites and avoid building new ones.

### 2. Pack out your trash

Make sure to bring out whatever you bring in! All your snack bar wrappers, juice cartons, water bottles etc., all need to come back out and get thrown away properly! It's the least we can do for all those critters who don't want to be crawling over our trash to get to their favorite food or water.

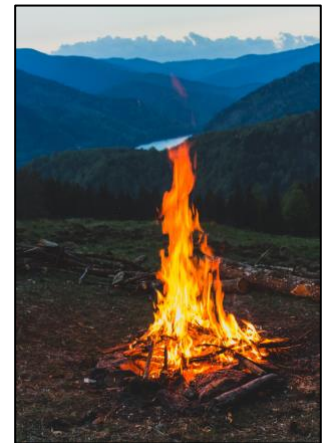


### 3. Respect Wildlife and Keep Your Distance

Even if those squirrels and chipmunks seem like they want a bite of your lunch, it's best for everyone if we keep our distance. Animals that get too comfortable around humans are often killed by cars or because they become too aggressive in their search for human food! Keep a safe distance!

### 4. Make sure your campfire is safe.

90% of wildfires in the US start from mismanaged campfires or thrown cigarettes. If your family has a fire, make sure that it is contained in a safe area, and do not leave until it is completely put out, using water to fully make sure there are no more embers!



### 5. Leave Nature where you found it!

Turns out wildlife needs all of those twigs and leaves. It's best to keep those things where you found that so that wildlife can keep using them to find food, build nests and get a full meal!

You can learn more by reviewing the [Seven Principles of Leave No Trace](#).

Thanks for conducting science with me for this Home Explorer activity from Umpqua Watersheds Education Program. We are sorry that we had to cancel our Twin Lakes Camp this year, but hope that you are all home and safe this summer!

Join me for new activities posted every week!

- Ms. Robyn

