



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Great Smoky Mountains
National Park

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Great Smoky Mountains News Release

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PARK SPRING FACILITY SCHEDULE

This season, Great Smoky Mountains National Park will be undertaking a number of projects to improve Park roads and facilities that includes campground/picnic restrooms, trailheads, and a popular campground. Great Smoky Mountains National Park has benefitted tremendously from funding provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act as well as previously-authorized Federal Lands Highway Program funds. As a consequence, the scheduled work will result in the temporary closure of several popular roads and delayed opening of some facilities. The Park's website (www.nps.gov/grsm) provides a map outlining the project areas and details the schedule of work and timetable for each project to help visitors better plan their visit.

The following is a snapshot of this year's facility schedule:

Operating Hours for Visitor Centers – The three visitor centers are open daily and the operating hours through March are as follows: Sugarlands Visitor Center, near Gatlinburg, TN, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. and the Oconaluftee Visitor Center near Cherokee, NC, hours will be 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The Cades Cove Visitor Center is currently closed due construction activities on the Cades Cove Loop Road.

Roads – Secondary roads that are set to open for the season on March 12 include Little Greenbrier and Straight Fork/Round Bottom. The Cades Cove Loop Road that closed on March 1 will reopen by May 21, along with Parson Branch, Rich Mountain and Forge Creek Roads. The Roaring Fork Motor Nature Trail and Heintooga Ridge/Balsam Mountain Road openings will be delayed to May 28 and the Clingmans Dome Road will open on May 29.

Campgrounds - Cades Cove Campground is year round and is not affected by the Cades Cove Loop Road construction. Five of the Park's seasonal campgrounds will open starting on March 12: Abrams Creek, Big Creek, Cataloochee, Cosby, and Elkmont. Deep Creek is scheduled to open April 1 and Look Rock will open May 14. Road repair work will result in delayed openings for Smokemont and Balsam Mountain campgrounds which are scheduled to open on May 28.

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Facility Schedule--two

Group Camping will be available starting on March 12 at Big Creek, Cataloochee, Cosby, and Cades Cove. Deep Creek will open as usual on April 1 and delayed openings will be at Elkmont (April 10), and Smokemont (May 28). Reservations for group camping must be made through the National Recreation Reservation Service. The cost for group camping ranges from \$26 to \$65 per site/night.

The National Recreation Reservation Service (NRRS) provides visitors an opportunity to make reservations to many federally-managed recreation areas, including those of the National Park Service, all across the U.S. The system allows campers to reserve specific campsites and to make reservations up to 6 months in advance. Group campsites and picnic pavilions can be reserved up to 12 months in advance. To make reservations at three of the Park's developed campgrounds, and all group campsites, horse camps, and picnic shelters, visitors can go to www.Recreation.Gov or, alternatively, book reservations by calling 877-444-6777.

Horse Camps at Anthony Creek, Big Creek, Cataloochee, Round Bottom, and Towstring will open April 1. Use is by reservations only through NRRS. The horse site fees are \$20 at all horse camps except for Big Creek where it is \$25.

Picnic Areas – There are 10 first-come, first-serve picnic areas. Open all year are Big Creek, Cades Cove, Chimney Tops, Cosby, Greenbrier, Deep Creek, and Metcalf Bottoms. Collins Creek Picnic Area will open on March 12, Look Rock on May 14, and Heintooga on May 28. The Park's largest picnic pavilion at Twin Creeks will have a delayed opening scheduled on April 28; reservations are required through NRRS. Twin Creeks fees range from \$35-\$75 depending on the number of people. In addition, picnickers can reserve five other picnic pavilions on NRRS. They are located at Collins Creek, Cosby, Deep Creek, Metcalf Bottoms, and Greenbrier picnic areas. The cost is \$20, except at Greenbrier where it is \$10.

Horseback Riding - The opening dates for the three horseback concessions located on the Tennessee side of the Park: Smoky Mountain Riding Stable will open on March 6, the Sugarlands Riding Stable will open March 13, and the Cades Cove Riding Stable will open on April 1. In addition to horseback rides which cost \$25 per horse per rider, Cades Cove Riding Stable will offer their customary carriage rides, but hay rides will not be available until the Cades Cove Loop Road opens. They will also be offering wheelchair accessible carriage and hay rides. The Smokemont Riding Stable in North Carolina will open March 27 and offers visitors a chance to experience a horse-drawn wagon ride along the route of the historic Oconaluftee Turnpike and a horseback trip to a waterfall.

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Facility Schedule--three

LeConte Lodge, accessible only by trail, will open on March 22. Reservations are required and can be made by calling 865/429-5704, fax 865/774-0045 or e:mail reservations@lecontelodge.com. One night at the lodge costs \$116 per adult and \$85 for children 10 and under (tax not included). The price includes two meals--dinner and breakfast. In addition, day hikers and backpackers can purchase a prepared bag or dining room lunch and snacks/beverages at the lodge. Reservations are required for the dining room lunch.

Campground Concessions – The Cades Cove Campground Store opens April 1. The store provides groceries, camping supplies, firewood, ice, vending, limited food service, souvenirs, and bike rentals. The Cades Cove store has multi-speed comfort or mountain bikes available for rent, in addition to single speed cruisers. However, bike rentals will not be available until the Cades Cove Loop Road opens. The Elkmont Campground concession will open March 12. The concession provides firewood, ice, camper convenience items, and vending of soft drinks, newspapers, and snacks.

CAMPGROUND SCHEDULE

<u>Campgrounds</u>	<u>Fee</u>	<u>Open</u>	<u>Group Sites</u>
North Carolina:			
*Smokemont	\$17, \$20	May 28	May 28
Balsam Mountain	\$14	May 28	
Deep Creek	\$17	April 1	April 1
Big Creek	\$14	March 12	March 12
Cataloochee	\$17	March 12	March 12
Tennessee:			
*Cades Cove	\$17, \$20	Year-round	March 12
*Elkmont	\$17, \$20	March 12	April 10
Cosby	\$14	March 12	March 12
Look Rock	\$14	May 14	
Abrams Creek	\$14	March 12	

*\$20 per site during the reservation period May 15-October 31. At Elkmont, riverside sites are \$23 during reservation period only.