

Forest Lakes Welcome Guide

WELCOME TO FOREST LAKES!

About Forest Lakes and the Pine River Valley

The Forest Lakes Community is in La Plata County, Colorado, and sits between the Town of Bayfield and the San Juan Mountains in the Pine River Valley. With the climate, elevation, and abundance of water, early settlers to the Pine River Valley found that the area was ideal for prosperous settlements and the growing of crops.

The early settlements are characterized by the trials and triumphs of these early pioneers determined to develop the land and carve a niche for themselves in the San Juan Mountains. Named Rio de Los Pinos by 18th-century Spanish explorers, the Pine River Valley boasts some of the richest land in Southwestern Colorado.

As pioneers and settlers became aware of these natural resources, towns sprouted up throughout the valley proper. One of these communities was historic Bayfield.

What is important about Forest Lakes Community?

- The community is located about 8 miles north of Bayfield, CO.
- Forest Lakes Subdivision is the largest subdivision in Southwestern Colorado.
- The subdivision encompasses approximately 1,865 acres and consists of 1,600 parcels with approximately 782 structures and 2,000 residents.

This guide provides information on FLMD services and processes; information about utility companies; and other contacts and general information you may need. Specific questions concerning District services should be directed to the District office 970-884-2925.

The District office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and from 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Please contact us for additional information and/or assistance.

Your property may be referred to by the street address and/or unit and lot number. Your monthly Metro bill provides both the property address and the account number, which is your unit and lot number. There are five (5) units in FLMD and approximately 26 miles of gravel road (Units 1, 2, 3, 4, 5).

The Forest Lakes Metro District has neither short- or long-range plans to extend services into **Unit 3**. We do not have the budget, manpower, nor time to even begin development in Unit 3. This was recognized by the Board of Directors back in 1985 when they passed a resolution that stated:

“the District would not construct or guarantee the construction of any of the public improvements to be located within Unit 3...”

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FOREST LAKES METRO DISTRICT (FLMD)

General Overview

The Forest Lakes Metropolitan District is a Special District organized July 18, 1973 in accordance with Colorado statutes to carry out the Public Works aspects for the Forest Lakes community. The District is a quasi-municipal governmental entity with taxing authority responsible for providing water, limited sewer, roads, trash, mailstop, and recreational services in Units 1, 2, 4 and 5. **District services are currently not available to all lots.**

A five- (5) member elected Board of Directors governs the District as regulated by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs. The Board meets, unless otherwise posted on the Metro bulletin board at the mail stop, the second Tuesday of each month, at 7:00 p.m. (through December 2020) via Zoom Teleconferencing. You are encouraged to attend.

Forest Lakes Metropolitan District (FLMD) is not the Forest Lakes Property Owner's Association (FLPOA). FLMD has not taken over covenant enforcement in Forest Lakes. Covenants for each of the Units can be found on the District's website.

The **District Business Offices** are in Bayfield at 271 N. Mountain View Dr., #107, by Brenda's and the Pinecone Restaurants.

Mail: P.O. Box 440, Bayfield, CO 81122

Telephone: (970) 884-2925

Fax: (970) 884-0305

Home Page: <http://www.flmd.com> visit the site for information, agendas, announcements and calendar of events.

Official Posting Place: Forest Lakes Mail Stop, 257 Alpine Forest Dr and FLMD's Website.

District's Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Shop is located at 6893 County Road 501, Bayfield, CO 81122. This is on the West Side of County Road 501, North of the main entrance to Forest Lakes; the telephone number is (970) 884-2111 (For District emergencies call (970)749-5282).

FLMD WATER & SEWER SERVICES

The District's website contains a lot of information on these services and the process you need to follow and the associated costs to have those services extended to your site using the Water/Sewer Main Extension Program. We invite you to visit FLMD's website to get information about this: www.flmd.com.



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INDIVIDUAL SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEMS (ISDS)

Dependent upon location, some lots cannot connect to our central sewer system and will require an ISDS approved by San Juan Basin Health (SJBH contact info. shown below). Please contact our office if you have questions about what type of sewer system your lot requires.

The [San Juan Basin Health Department](#) (SJBH) - (970) 259-5702, located at 281 Sawyer Dr. (P.O. Box 140), Durango, CO 81302, may be involved with your building.

SJBH is responsible for individual sewage disposal system (ISDS) permits and inspections if you are building on a lot not served by the District central sewer collection system. ISDS must be installed and maintained for continued water service from the District.

DRIVEWAYS AND CULVERTS

“All of the required FLMD Permits and Specifications are contained in the [FLMD Permit Application Handbook](#)“. It is the property owner’s responsibility to ensure that any driveway or culvert is installed in accordance with the FLMD specifications. In addition, driveways and culverts must also comply with La Plata County Driveway standards and a copy of County final approval permit is required before FLMD will approve and sign off on FLMD Excavation permit final.

FLMD ROADS

The roads in FLMD are maintained by FLMD staff. During the months when road work can be performed, FLMD will maintain roads to the best of our ability. Throughout the subdivision, grading and gravel application will be performed to remove rough surfaces and dust suppressant will be applied.

FLMD does not perform law enforcement duties on the roads. La Plata County is responsible for monitoring the roads for traffic violations and issuing citations if needed.

Please do not park or leave any property on the roads. FLMD roads are too narrow to allow safe parking on the street because two opposing travel lanes of traffic are always active. Parking on FLMD roads is prohibited by the FLMD and the covenants.

The District is not responsible for accidents that result from vehicles or property left on the roads. We must be able to plow all roads; interference with our ability to perform plowing creates safety issues for all drivers. Please avoid a substantial towing bill by not parking or leaving any property on the roadways.

Property owners are responsible for maintaining their culverts and for the removal of snow, ice, or sleet upon any portion of the driveway approach even though it may have been deposited during the District snow removal operations.

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Please do not plow, shovel, or place any snow onto FLMD roads. Moving plowed snow from driveways back into the traveled roadway is not only dangerous to the traveling public but is prohibited under the model traffic code.

Only roads serving habitable structures with Metro water service are plowed during winter months.

CENTRALIZED TRASH COLLECTION FACILITIES

Large metal trash containers are located at the District O&M location, which is approximately ¼ mile north of the FLMD main entrance on the west side of County Road 501. Residents are required to haul their own trash to this location. Trash services are open:

Monday	-	7:30 a.m. – 6:45 p.m. (April 1 – October 31)
		7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. (November 1 – May 31)
Tuesday – Friday	-	7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Wednesday	-	6:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Saturday	-	8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Sunday	-	Closed
Holidays	-	Call (970) 884-2925 for Hours

This service is for Forest Lakes residents only. Access is closed at all other times including Sundays and Holidays to reduce illegal dumping. Each household will be issued one Key FOB that they will need to access the Trash Facilities. If a Key FOB is lost, it will cost \$30.00 to have it replaced.

Please bring only household trash, do not place construction materials, tree and yard trimmings, appliances, mattresses, furniture, hazardous, toxic, or radioactive wastes or hot ashes in the containers. FLMD's website contains a list of Prohibited Waste.

Contact the Bayfield Transfer as they will take items that FLMD will not: http://www.co.laplata.co.us/government/departments/environmental_service/yard_waste_at_the_bayfield_transfer_station

The District will continue to bill you for the District centralized trash facilities in addition to the charges billed by private trash collection services if you choose to use a private service trash service.

FLMD also provides a slash pile that is open to FLMD residents only. This service is provided for residents to drop off limbs, leaves, pine needles, and organic yard waste only (no stumps or logs). This area is in the same proximity as the central trash service area explained above. Please do not leave garbage of any kind in this area; compliance with the rules will determine the continuation of this service. The slash pile is monitored.

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An Ash Barrel is available for you to dispose of your hot/cold ashes from your wood stove. Please do not dump ashes in the trash as they may ignite the trash on fire.

The Bayfield Convenience Center located on La Plata County Road 223 West of Bayfield provides a seasonal yard waste program free to residents (no grass or sagebrush) and serves as a recycling drop off point. A use fee is imposed on household trash, construction materials, appliances, furnishings, etc.

- Copies of the restrictive covenants may be obtained from our website or the La Plata County Clerk and Recorder and/or your Realtor.

FOREST LAKES FIRE PROTECTION

Upper Pine River Fire Protection District (UPRFPD) is located at P.O. Box 341, Bayfield, CO 81122, (970) 884-9508 and they provide fire protection services to Forest Lakes.

UPRFPD Station 5 is located less than one mile from the entrance of FLMD. We currently have ISO insurance classifications: 3 areas with hydrants and class 4 areas.

Dial 911 for fire and emergency service.

FOREST LAKES MAIL STOP

The mail stop for FLMD residents is located at 257 Alpine Forest Dr., in Forest Lakes. Post office boxes are available at the Mail Stop for FLMD residents and arrangements to use these boxes can be made by contacting the Bayfield Postmaster either at the Bayfield post office or by calling (970) 884-9618.

This is also the official posting place of the Metro District. Please look for information posted on the Metro bulletin board located on the south side of the building east of the door.

LA PLATA COUNTY

Forest Lakes is located within La Plata County and regulated by various County departments. Please see website for specific department locations and phone numbers. La Plata County address is P.O. Box 99, Durango, CO 81302, or call (970) 382-6200 for information.

- The [Building Department](#) (970) 382-6250 provides the structural, mechanical, and plumbing permits and inspections for your structure. If you are building a home, please review [a](#), which is on FLMD's website.
- The State of Colorado covers electrical permits and inspections. Inspectors are located at 1474 Main Ave., Durango, CO 81301, call (970) 259-6179.
- The [Planning Department](#) (970) 382-6263 may be involved if you are consolidating your lots and/or any other planning related activity. Please note that the District reserves all rights to the public utility easements.



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- Emergencies use 911. Law enforcement is provided by the [La Plata County Sheriff's Department](#) (970) 247-1157. The administration office is located at 742 Turner Drive, Durango, CO 81301. To report violations or dog problems use central dispatch (970) 247-1155 and/or the Humane Society (970) 259-2847.
- [La Plata County \(Noxious\) Weed program](#). Call (970)382-6462.
- [La Plata County Trash & Recycling](#). Call (970)382-6376.

UTILITY COMPANIES

Electricity – La Plata Electric Association

La Plata Electric Association, Inc. provides electricity to property in Forest Lakes. They are located at 45 Stewart, (P.O. Drawer H), Durango, CO 81302, and telephone (970) 247-5786. A utility excavation permit is required from the District for buried electrical installations located on public property, including the District owned right of ways and public utility easements. Owners and/or Contractors should arrange a meeting with the utility provider and the District, which is a requirement of the permit.

Natural Gas and Propane

Black Hills Energy is the natural gas provider for Forest Lakes. Gas is available to all the subdivision except in the areas where a water main extension needs to be installed. The number for Black Hills Energy is (888)890-5554. The best method for applying for gas service is to log on to their website: www.blackhillsenergy.com; click on “Start or Stop Services” then click on “Construction Request.” You need to apply here first, if you do not get a response within a few days then call Kevin Torres at (970)903-6823.

Propane Companies that serve the area are AmeriGas – (970)884-2629, Bob’s LP – (970)883-2290, Basin Coop – (970)247-3066 and Ferrellgas (970)247-0933.

Telephone-Century Link

CenturyLink continues to upgrade the services available to property in Forest Lakes. The number to call is 800-244-1111 for residential services. 911 emergency dialing is available in Forest Lakes. A utility excavation permit is required from the District for buried telephone installations located on public property, including the District owned right of ways and public utility easements. Owners and/or Contractors should arrange a meeting with the utility provider and the FLMD, which is a requirement of the permit.

Internet Providers

CenturyLink – (800)244-1111, Skywerx – (970)731-9790, and Cedar Networks – (970)385-2500

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WINTER DRIVING AND SNOW STORAGE REQUIREMENTS

During the winter months, please have your vehicle prepared for mountain driving. The District provides snow plowing; however, some roads have steep grades requiring adequate snow tires or chains. Four Wheel Drive vehicles are highly recommended.

When planning, keep in mind the average snow fall is 65” per year so snow removal and storage from driveways, structures, etc. must be considered. Unless you love to shovel snow, plan your structures such that snow sliding off the roof will not interfere with access to both the living areas and garages.

The District requires the use of the front set back zones for snow storage; location of structures within these areas should be avoided. The District is not responsible for damages to structures located within these areas resulting from District maintenance activities. To facilitate locating your property please put the street address on the structure facing the road from which access is obtained.

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Inside of the Neighborhood

There are opportunities for hiking in the neighborhood and into lands that are owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). If you like to fish, you can visit the neighborhood’s lake, which is called Lake Simpatico. But, please keep in mind that:

- Lake Simpatico is a private lake that is stocked annually. Use of the lake is for Forest Lakes residents only, guests must be accompanied by a Forest Lakes resident.
- No license is required, there is a 2 fish limit per day, please clean up after yourself and please follow rules posted at lake.
- No motorized boats allowed on the lake. All kayaks and boats should be removed after use. Unauthorized boats left on property will be tagged and impounded.
- Dog owners – Please keep your dog on a leash and clean up after your pet. Dog bags are available around the lake for your convenience.

In the Surrounding Area

Vallecito Lake is just two miles to the north of Forest Lakes Subdivision and Navajo Lake is about 18 miles to the southeast. Both lakes are about half an hour in driving time and both offer recreational, boating and fishing opportunities. For more information on Vallecito Lake please visit their website: <http://www.vallecitolakechamber.com/> For more information on Navajo Lake please visit their website: <http://parks.state.co.us/Parks/Navajo>.

The Weminuche Wilderness, the San Juan National Forest, and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands surround the Town on almost all sides. These areas provide hiking, backpacking, camping, snow shoeing, cross country skiing, and hunting opportunities during various times

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throughout the year. A quick access into the Weminuche wilderness is at the end of County Road 500 just past Lake Vallecito.

Two ski resorts are within one to one and a half hours drive. Wolf Creek ski area is one and a half hours to the east and Purgatory Resort is about one hour to the north of Durango on Highway 550. The San Juan National Forest also provides ample opportunity for cross country skiing within a few minutes from Bayfield.

Mountain biking, river rafting, rock climbing and many other activities make this area extremely popular with outdoors lovers.