

Riley Creek campground modernization work to begin this September

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OLDTOWN, Idaho--The 2003 federal budget includes funding to upgrade the Riley Creek campground on the Pend Oreille River, and construction will begin following this camping season, according to the Army Corps of Engineers, which operates the campground.

The 2003 omnibus bill passed by Congress and signed by the President Feb. 20 includes nearly \$2 million to renovate the camping and recreation facilities at the Riley Creek campground on the Pend Oreille River near Laclede, Idaho.

"We've heard from users of the Riley Creek recreation area that these improvements will greatly assist the thousands of area residents who use these facilities every summer. It is one of the busiest recreation, camping, and picnic areas in North Idaho and these improvements are long overdue. The upgrades to the roads, parking areas and the sewer system at the site will also improve the area and further protect the environment," said Senator Mike Crapo, R-Idaho, who assisted the Army Corps of Engineers with the federal appropriation for the improvements.

The Corps will wait to begin work until after this summer's camping season, but will hold a groundbreaking ceremony in August to celebrate the start of the project. The work will include upgrades to the restrooms, improvements to an repaving of all roads and parking areas, realigning the camping sites to allow easier vehicle pull in and pull out. Upgrades are also planned to utilities, trails, boat ramps, picnic and playground facilities, the beach area and the amphitheater. Once modernization is completed, all facilities within the park will be accessible for people with disabilities.

The Corps of Engineers' campgrounds will open Saturday, May 10. Corps campgrounds include Priest River (better known as the "Mudhole"), Riley Creek, Albeni Cove and Springy Point. These campgrounds offer boat ramps, beaches, picnic areas, and showers. Call 1-877-444-6777 or 1-518-885-3639 internationally to make your reservations or use the Internet at <http://www.reserveusa.com>. Call Albeni Falls dam at 208-437-3133 to reserve the picnic areas at Riley Creek or Priest River. The cost is \$35 per day.