



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Grand Teton National Park

Denise Germann
307.739.3393



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Elk Refuge

Lori Iverson
307.733.9212, ext 6



National Forest Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Bridger-Teton National Forest

Mary Cernicek
307.739.5564

Interagency News Release

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Partial Fire Restriction Begin Tuesday, August 15 on Public Land

WESTERN WY — Stage 1 fire restrictions will be go into effect for Bridger-Teton National Forest, Grand Teton National Park, Bureau of Land Management High Desert District and National Elk Refuge beginning 12:01 a.m. Tuesday, August 15.

Stage 1 fire restrictions apply primarily to campfires and smoking. The restrictions are based in part on the current high fire danger and predictions of continued warm and dry weather. Other factors include current regional and national fire activity and increased visitation to the area during the upcoming total solar eclipse. Several geographic areas are experiencing major incidents which have the potential to exhaust all agency fire resources. "The limited number of available fire resources due to the national fire situation and the increased traffic may limit our ability to respond to fires in a timely fashion," said Mike Johnston, assistant fire management officer for the Bridger-Teton National Forest. "We want people to take the danger seriously and obey the restrictions that are in place."

Fire managers study the moisture content of various fuel types, track current and expected weather conditions, and monitor available fire-fighting resources, as well as the occurrence of human-caused fires, to determine when fire restrictions need to be applied to public lands. The Teton Interagency Dispatch Center has recorded over 73 unattended campfires so far this summer.

Teton and Sublette Counties will also begin fire restrictions this week. The Shoshone and Caribou-Targhee National Forests have implemented some form of fire restrictions as well. Teton Wilderness on the Blackrock Ranger District, and the Bridger Wilderness on the Pinedale Ranger District of the Bridger-Teton National Forest, will be exempted from the stage 1 restriction order. These areas are higher in elevation and the fuels are not as dry as the rest of the forest.

Stage 1 fire restrictions include:

- Lighting, building, maintaining, attending or using a fire, campfire, barbecue or grill is allowed only at designated recreation sites such as established campgrounds or picnic areas. Use of portable stoves and lanterns using gas, jellied petroleum or pressurized liquid fuel, or use of a fully enclosed shepherd type stove with a spark arrester screen is permitted.
- Smoking is allowed only in an enclosed vehicle, building (unless otherwise prohibited), developed recreation site, or while in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials (i.e. parking lots, developed campsites, or locations surrounded by water).

The following restrictions exist year round:

- Operating a chainsaw is prohibited in national parks and on the wildlife refuge. Operating a chainsaw on national forest lands is permitted only when equipped with a USDA or SAE approved spark

arrester that is properly installed and in effective working order. Operators must also carry a chemical pressurized fire extinguisher with a minimum rating of 2A and one round point shovel with an overall length of at least 36 inches.

- Discharge of fireworks and use of explosives requiring blasting caps are prohibited.
- Charcoal burning fires are only allowed in official campgrounds and picnic areas.
- Stoves and grills that burn contained fuel sources that can be turned off and on are allowed. Stoves and grills must be attended to all times and be setup on hardened surfaces devoid of vegetation at least three feet in diameter.

Violation of these prohibitions is punishable by a fine of up to \$5,000 for an individual or \$10,000 for an organization, and/or by imprisonment for more than six months.

Unattended or abandoned campfires can quickly escalate into wildfires, and it is extremely important that all campfires are completely extinguished and cold to the touch before campers leave their site. Visitors should NEVER leave a fire unattended, and should prepare for the unexpected by having a water bucket and shovel on hand and ready to use. The fine for an abandoned campfire as well as campfires in unapproved areas is up to \$5000 or 6-months in jail, but campers can also be held liable for suppression costs if their campfire becomes a wildfire.

A copy of the order and additional information on allowable stoves is available on www.tetonfires.com. To report a fire or smoke on the Bridger-Teton National Forest, Grand Teton National Park, or National Elk Refuge, call 307.739.3630.