

## General Fire Restrictions FAQs

### **Q: When will the Forest go into fire restrictions?**

Restrictions are implemented only after reasonable prevention measures have been taken. These measures may include increased signing, public contacts, media campaigns, etc. Fire restrictions are normally considered only when very high or extreme fire danger is predicted to persist. Other considerations are the level of human-caused fire occurrences being experienced, potential high-risk occasions (4th of July, hunting season etc.), and large fire activity occurring on the forest.

### **Q: Will you close the forest due to fire danger?**

Emergency closures have an extreme impact on the public and the forest wouldn't consider closing except under the most severe conditions. A forest closure cannot be justified by fire danger alone and would be driven by high potential for human-caused fires, severe shortages of resources, numerous large fires

### **Q: How do you determine if it's time for fire restrictions?**

When conditions are identified as critical, fire management personnel within the proposed fire restriction area will confer, review conditions, recommend that a fire restriction is necessary for their area of responsibility, and include a start date.

Before the respective agency(s) applies a restriction, they will coordinate with the other agencies and public information officer responsible for the media notification in that fire restriction area in developing a schedule and plan for public notification

### **Q: What criteria is used to measure if fire restrictions are needed?**

We look at many things including: (only fire savvy should use this tip -) If at least 3 of these conditions are met the forest considers partial fire restrictions. The forest considers full restrictions after partial restrictions have been in effect and 4 or more of these conditions are met.

- 1,000 HOUR FUEL MOISTURE CONTENT IS 90<sup>th</sup> PERCENTILE OR ABOVE
- THREE-DAY MEAN ENERGY RELEASE COMPONENT (ERC) IS AT 90<sup>th</sup> PERCENTILE OR ABOVE, IN THE UNITS REP FUEL MODEL
- LIVE FUEL MOISTURE CONTENT IS 75% OR LESS

- WILDLAND FIRES ARE IMPACTING AVAILABLE SUPPRESSION RESOURCES
- AREA IS RECEIVING A HIGH OCCURRENCE OF WILDLAND FIRE
- ADVERSE FIRE WEATHER IS PREDICTED TO CONTINUE

**Q: What does Partial fire restrictions or Stage 1 restrictions mean?**

In partial fire restrictions, the following acts are prohibited on federal lands unless otherwise noted.

1. Building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire, campfire, charcoal barbecue, or grills except in designated recreation sites on federal lands. The use of portable stoves, lanterns using gas, jellied petroleum, pressurized liquid fuel or fully enclosed (shepherd type) wood burning stoves (piped) with a ¼' spark arrester type screen are permitted.
2. Welding, or operating acetylene or other torch with open flame or arc except in cleared areas of at least 10 feet in radius with a chemical pressurized fire extinguisher with a minimum rating of at least 2A.
3. Smoking, except in an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation area site, or while stopped in an area at least three feet diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials.
4. Using an explosive requiring fuse type blasting caps.
5. Operating a chainsaw without a USDA or SAE approved spark arrester properly installed and in effective working order, a chemical pressurized fire extinguisher with a minimum rating of 2A, and one round pointed shovel with an overall length of at least 36 inches.
6. Discharge of fireworks.

**Q: What is prohibited in full restrictions (stage 2 restrictions)?**

IN full fire restrictions: The following acts are prohibited on federal lands unless otherwise noted.

1. Building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire, campfire, charcoal barbecue, or grills are prohibited on federal lands. The use of portable stoves, lanterns using gas, jellied petroleum, pressurized liquid fuel or fully enclosed (shepherd type) wood burning stoves (piped) with a ¼' spark arrester type screen are permitted.
2. Smoking, except in an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation area site, or while stopped in an area at least three feet diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials.
3. Discharge of fireworks and use of explosives.

**Q: Can I have any way to cook my food during stage 1 fire restrictions?**

Building, maintaining, attending or using a fire, campfire, Bar-B-Que or charcoal grill except in designated recreation sites is not allowed in stage 1 fire restrictions. However, the use of portable stoves and lanterns using gas, jellied petroleum, pressurized liquid fuel or a fully enclosed ( shepherd type) stove with a ¼" spark arrester type screen is permitted in dispersed sites on the forest. 36CFR 261.52(a)

**Q: Will I get a ticket if I pull over and smoke on the forest during stage 1 fire restrictions?**

Smoking, except in an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation sites, or while stopped in an area at least 3 feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials is not allowed. If you pulled over on the side of a forest road that was full of vegetation on the sides, you could be issued a violation notice. 36CFR261.52(d)

**Q: I have a firewood permit. Can I still collect firewood during stage 1 fire restrictions?**

Yes, but you must be operating a chainsaw with a USDA or SAE approved spark arrester properly installed and in effective working order, AND you MUST have a chemical pressurized fire extinguisher with a minimum rating of 2A, and YOU MUST HAVE a size # 1 (8 7 /8" x 10 7 /8" minimum) round point shovel with an overall length of at least 36 inches (on site). 36CFR 261.52(j) & (g)

**Q: Can I target shoot during stage 1 fire restrictions?**

Yes. But remember using explosive requiring blasting caps. Or exploding targets is not allowed on the Forest. 36CFR 261.52(b)

**Q: What happens if I violate Stage 1 fire restrictions?**

Violating stage 1 fire restrictions is punishable by minimum of \$5000 and/or 6 months in jail

**Q: Where can I have a campfire during stage 1 fire restrictions?**

Fires are not allowed on public lands except in pre-designated campgrounds or picnic areas. Campers may see a rock ring in a dispersed campsite along the road and think it is developed or designated and they can have a fire. However, we have a specific list of locations on Forest where fires and charcoal are allowed. If a campsite is not on the list, fires are not allowed. Period. A list of designated sites is posted on the forest website along with specific restriction information. Basically, if you are not in a developed pay campground, you cannot have a campfire.

**Q: Why can't I have a fire here?**

You cannot have a fire here because this is not a developed recreation site, a developed recreation site will be in a hosted/ pay fee campground with a water source ( water available to extinguish the embers) , there is a camp ground host there who is someone in the area 24/7 ( this helps with fire detection) and the metal fire ring helps to prevent the fire from creeping and blowing embers into the adjacent fuels. Developed areas also tend to have less available fuels in the immediate area of the campfire ring.

These developed campgrounds are identified in the appendix of the fire restriction order, these are the only areas fires are permitted legally, any other areas or questionable fire rings on the forest , outside a developed campground, is not considered a LEGAL area for any type of open flame use and visitors may be cited and fined. When in doubt, feel free to call the district front desk and ask for clarification. If you are unsure if you can have a fire at your campsite, you most likely cannot, because you are not in a developed campground!

**Q: Can I have a fire in the designated dispersed sites around Jackson and Grand Teton?**

Campfires are not allowed anywhere in the designated dispersed areas- Shadow Mountain, Toppings, Curtis Canyon, Spread Creek, Pacific Creek and the Buffalo Valley road. Fires are **only allowed in the developed campgrounds** identified in the areas on the map in the appendix

**Q: Can I have a fire in the wilderness area?**

No.

## Covid 19 Fire Restrictions Talking Points

Each season the Forest responds to a significant amount of human caused fires, many of which are caused by escaped campfires. Fire restrictions are one tool we address these unwanted fires .

The possibility of Covid exposure will require significant and challenging measures to keep our firefighters safe as they respond to any wildland fire. We all have a responsibility to limit any unwanted fires this upcoming season. We do not want to divert our scarce wildfire resources to extinguish escaped campfires.

Any fire requiring a significant response of personnel will challenge fire organizations to maintain health and wellness amid the Covid-19 outbreak. Given the demonstrated risk of exposure to the virus from large, concentrated gatherings of people such as in fire camps, we are proactively working to help lessen the chances of needing to assemble large groups of firefighters for emergency response.

The Forest Service has a responsibility to support our local governments and the public health orders by taking steps to reduce stresses onto our emergency response systems. Law enforcement and/or search and rescue operations may be limited due to response to the current health crisis.

We must strategically conserve our resources so they are available to respond to wildland fires regardless of cause. Regardless of what level of fire restrictions we implement, not all fires can be prevented. Fires start from careless forest users, lightning, and inadvertent human-causes. We live in a fire-adapted ecosystem which depends on fire for its health, so it's never a question of IF a wildfire will start, but WHEN and HOW we will be able to respond to it.

Given the demonstrated risk of exposure to the virus from large, concentrated gatherings of people, USDA Forest Service officials are asking the recreating public to comply with all state and local health orders as well as USDA Forest Service Orders.

- Law enforcement and/or search and rescue operations may be limited due to response to the current health crisis. High risk or backcountry activities that may increase your chance of injury or distress should be avoided.

1. Federal wildland fire agencies are working closely with state and local partners in supporting the U.S. response to the current health crisis. These restrictions are in place to prevent the overtaxing of fire and medical resources of our local county and state partners.

- USDA Forest Service officials will review this guidance on an ongoing basis and will consider lifting restrictions based on conversations with states and local governments.

- As things rapidly are evolving with our response to COVID and our ability to respond to wildfires, the [FOREST] will place fire restrictions on [DATE].

- Currently, the Forest Service and our fellow federal agencies, in close coordination with state and local partners, are taking the necessary steps to ensure our ability to deploy wildland firefighting resources. While COVID-19 circumstances are rapidly evolving, wildland firefighting agencies are actively assessing potential risks and developing plans to mitigate those risks as the COVID-19 response continues.

- Many human-caused fires result from campfires. Fire restrictions enhance public safety, protect natural and cultural resources, and help prevent human-caused wildfires.

- The intent of these restrictions is to prevent the overtaxing of fire and medical resources of our local county and state partners and minimize exposing wildland firefighters to COVID.

## STAGE 2 Fire Restrictions Talking Points :

The number one reason is to protect human life, property and our natural resources. The smallest spark can turn our dry forest into a dangerous wildfire that can threaten lives and property.

We use certain criteria to determine what stage of fire restrictions to implement, which includes current and predicted weather, how many resources we have available to fight fires, fuel moisture in the forest, fire behavior and containment challenges, as well as several others. Additional details, protocols and processes are available.

Regardless of what level of fire restrictions we implement, not all fires can be prevented. Fires start from careless forest users, lightning, and inadvertent human-causes. We live in a fire-adapted ecosystem which depends on fire for its health, so it's never a question of IF a wildfire will start, but WHEN and HOW we will be able to respond to it.

As the risks increase, the line officer may chose to move to Stage II. This stage intensifies the restrictions from Stage I by focusing on activities that, although normally managed under permit or contract, have a relatively high risk of causing a fire start.

Restrictions under Stage II will affect forest users and will have economic impacts to contractors, permittees, and others. Therefore, the decision to move to Stage II will involve a risk/benefit assessment, as well as consideration of economic and social impacts.

#### What is Prohibited:

- No igniting, building, maintaining, or using a fire, including charcoal and briquettes except in a fire structure that is provided by the Forest Service developed recreation sites (not including dispersed camping areas). Holders of Forest Service Special Use Authorizations are exempt from this restriction, provided such fires are within a fire structure, and they are within their permitted area.
- No smoking except in an enclosed vehicle or building, or in developed recreation sites, or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable material.
- No using an explosive from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- No operating a chainsaw or any other equipment powered by an internal combustion engine for felling, bucking, skidding, processing, road building and woodcutting during industrial operations or fire wood gathering capable of igniting a fire from 10 a.m to 2 p.m.
- No welding or operating an acetylene or other torch with open flame from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

#### What is Allowed:

- Petroleum-fueled stoves or grills.
- A stove fire in a designated area.
- Shooting firearms IS allowed. Just make sure to follow normal federal rules: No shooting within a 150 yards of a campsite, developed recreation site or occupied area, residence or building. No shooting across a road, trail or body of water, or in any manner or place whereby any person property is exposed to injury or damage as a result of such discharge. No shooting in a cave.

USDA Forest Service officials are providing recreation opportunities where possible, while keeping employees, the public, and our communities safe from the virus. We are also working to protect communities, as well as both natural and cultural resources, safe from unwanted human-caused wildfires.

- Until further notice, the following fire-related activities are prohibited on National Forest system lands on the Bridger-Teton NF:
  1. Igniting, building, maintaining, attending or using a fire, including charcoal grills and barbecues, coal and wood burning stoves, and shepherd's stoves.
  2. Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle, trailer, or building.

- Exceptions to the prohibited fire-related activities include:
  1. Persons with a Forest Permit, Form FS-7700-48, specifically exempting them from the effect of this Order in the areas listed above.
  2. Any Federal, State or local officer or member of an organized rescue or firefighting force in the performance of an official duty is exempt from Prohibitions.
  3. Persons using pressurized liquid or gas devices (stoves, grills or lanterns) with shut-off valves in an area at least three feet from any flammable materials are exempt from Prohibition #1.
  4. Residents, owners or lessees within the areas listed above who are using a fire in a permanent dwelling with an effective and properly installed USDA- or SAE- approved spark arrestor, are exempt from Prohibition #1.
- During this fire restriction period, igniting, building, maintaining, attending or using a fire or smoking on national forests and grasslands is a violation of the law and may result in an appearance in federal court, fines, and possible time in jail.

Fire restrictions enhance public safety, protect natural and cultural resources, and help prevent human-caused wildfires.

1. Several criteria are used to determine when to implement fire restrictions, including fire activity levels, current and predicted weather, fuel moisture, and the availability of emergency and firefighting resources.
2. Additional restrictions may be required if conditions warrant.

## STAGE 1 (Partial ) FIRE RESTRICTIONS TALKING POINTS

Fire Restrictions come in different stages and become more prohibitive with each stage. Most forests begin by implementing a Stage I Restriction and if conditions worsen, Stage II is implemented. Stage III is when conditions worsen further and a forest closure is implemented-- which means the public is not allowed to enter the boundaries of the national forest due to the danger.

The first stage occurs when there is an increasing fire danger and/or a increasing preparedness level, and the risks of keeping the forest open to all activities begins to be outweighed by the risks inherent in doing so.

Stage I imposes relatively minor restrictions aimed at preventing the start of wildfires based on human activities that are known to be high risk, specifically smoking and campfires.

### Stage I Restrictions

#### ***What is Prohibited:***

No igniting, building, maintaining, or using a fire, including charcoal and briquettes except in a fire structure that is provided by the Forest Service developed recreation sites (not including dispersed

camping areas). Holders of Forest Service Special Use Authorizations are exempt from this restriction, provided such fires are within a fire structure and they are within their permitted area.

No smoking except in an enclosed vehicle or building, or in developed recreation sites, or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable material.

***What is Allowed:***

Petroleum-fueled stoves or grills.

A stove fire in a designated area.

Shooting firearms IS allowed. Just make sure to follow normal federal rules: No shooting within a 150 yards of a campsite, developed recreation site or occupied area, residence or building. No shooting across a road, trail or body of water, or in any manner or place whereby any person property is exposed to injury or damage as a result of such discharge. No shooting in a cave.

Chainsaw use IS allowed. However, please use caution and keep from creating sparks by not cutting directly on the ground where the chain can contact rocks while rotating.