



**UPPER COLORADO RIVER
INTERAGENCY FIRE MANAGEMENT**
NPS Colorado National Monument
BLM Grand Junction and Colorado River Valley
USFS White River, Grand Mesa and
Uncompahgre National Forests



Explanation of Fire Restrictions

Stage I

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 II

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.

Stage III

Stage III is closure. This stage is selected when there are very high risks and the ability to manage those risks using Stage I or II restrictions is no longer viable. The social, economic, and political impacts of implementing a closure at this point are outweighed by the benefits associated with virtually eliminating the potential for human-caused fire starts.

Components of Stages

There are two fire restriction stages: Stage I and Stage II. There is one closure stage: Stage III. To reduce confusion and standardize the restrictions, the following conditions, by stage, should be used in all restriction documents. Additional elements may be added as conditions dictate.

Stage I

The following acts are prohibited:

Building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire or campfire except within a developed recreation site, or improved site. 36 CFR 261.52(a).

Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials. 36 CFR 261.52(d).

Operating or using any internal or external combustion engine without a spark-arresting device properly installed, maintained, and in effective working order meeting either the USDA Forest Service Standard 5100-1a (as amended), or appropriate Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) recommended practice J335(b) and J350(a) (36 CFR 261.52(j)).

Stage II

The following acts are prohibited, in addition to the prohibitions of Stage I:

1. Building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire or campfire. 36 CFR 261.52(a)
2. Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle or building. 36 CFR 261.52(c)
3. Possessing, discharging, or using any kind of firework or other pyrotechnic device. 36 CFR 261.52(f)
4. Using an explosive. 36 CFR 261.52(b)
5. Operating a chainsaw or other equipment powered by an internal combustion engine between 1:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. 36 CFR 261.52(h).
6. Operating or using any internal or external combustion engine without a spark arresting device properly installed, maintained and in effective working order meeting either:
 1. USDA Forest Service Standard 5100-1a (as amended); or
 2. Appropriate Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) recommended practice J335 (b) and J350 (a). 36 CFR § 261.52(j) and 43 CFR § 9212.1(h);
7. Welding, or operating an acetylene or other torch with open flame. 36 CFR 261.52(i)
8. Possess or use a motor vehicle off: Forest System Roads (36 CFR 261.56) Except when parking in an area devoid of vegetation within 10 feet of the roadway; and except for parking overnight in developed campgrounds and at trailheads.

Exemptions Common to Stages I and II

- Persons with a written fire entry and activity permit that specifically authorizes the otherwise prohibited act.
- Persons using a fire fueled solely by liquid petroleum or LPG fuels.
- Persons conducting activities in those designated areas where the activity is specifically authorized by written posted notice.
- Any federal, state, or local officer, or member of an organized rescue or firefighting force in the performance of an official duty.

- Resident owners and private lessees of land within the restricted area exempt from restriction 1 above, provided such fires are within a residence.

Stage III

The area is closed to all entry (36 CFR 261.52(e)) other than as follows:

- Persons with a written fire entry and activity permit that specifically authorizes the otherwise prohibited act. This may include such persons as grazing-permit holders when entry is needed to gather, move, or otherwise manage their permitted livestock, special-use authorization holders when access is needed to maintain emergency or other communications operations, and others.
- Any federal, state, or local officer, or member of an organized rescue or firefighting force in the performance of an official duty.
- Resident owners and lessees of land within the closed area.

Penalties

Violations of these regulations is punishable as a Class B misdemeanor, by a fine of not more than \$5000 for an individual or \$10,000 for an organization, or imprisonment for not more than six (6) months or both.