



Arizona State Forestry Division
Bureau of Indian Affairs: Southwest, Navajo, Western Regions
Bureau of Land Management: Arizona, New Mexico
National Park Service, Intermountain Region
New Mexico State Forestry Division
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 2
U. S. Forest Service



Southwest Interagency Fire Restriction & Closure Program

Strategic Communication Plan

Updated events on Pages 5 & 7 on March 22, 2013

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PURPOSE

This communications plan, action plan, and various communications products, summarizes the Southwest Interagency Fire Restriction and Closure Program (Program) and lays the communication foundation for how information will be shared with internal and external audiences, which will increase awareness and support.

BACKGROUND

Interagency coordination of fire restrictions and closures within the [Southwest Area](#) (SWA) has always been a challenge because of differing programs. To address this challenge, the Southwest Coordinating Group (SWCG), which consists of lead fire managers from member agency/tribes within the SWA, tasked its Prevention and Information Subcommittee with developing a standardized interagency fire restriction and closure program for the SWA. A team has been developing the program over the past year.

The Program includes the Southwest Interagency Fire Restriction and Closure Master Operating Plan (MOP) and the National Fire Restriction & Closure Website: www.firerestrictions.us. The Program standardizes: fire restriction and closure levels/stages; language; the fire restriction and closure process—initiation, implementation, and recession; and the public notification process. These standards will streamline interagency coordination and unify public notification.

CURRENT STATUS

The MOP has been approved and signed by SWCG members and is the guiding document for fire restrictions and closures in the SWA. Beginning March 15, 2013, all agencies in the SWA will use to the new Program. The National Fire Restriction and Closure Website takes effect March

GOAL

To increase internal and external awareness of the new Program through the development of various communication products and sharing information through various methods with those who are interested or affected by the new Program.

OBJECTIVES

- Establish and maintain open communication channels with internal and external audiences.
- Identify what aspects of the Program are changing and/or staying the same based on previous processes/procedures.
- Through the action plan, identify a sequence of steps that must be taken or activities that must be performed prior to and after the March 15 rollout.
- Inform and prepare those employees who are responsible for initiating, implementing, or rescinding fire restrictions and closures.

AUDIENCES

Identified audiences are those internal or external stakeholders who affect, are affected by, or have an interest or relationship to the Program.

- **Affect. Interagency employees responsible for facilitating the change:**
 - Southwest Coordinating Group
 - Southwest Interagency Fire Restriction and Closure Program Development Team
 - Project Lead Fred Hernandez
 - New Mexico State Coordinator Lawrence Lujan
 - Arizona State Coordinator Dolores Garcia

- **Affected by. Interagency employees involved in following the change. They are responsible for initiating, implementing, or rescinding fire restrictions and closures:**
 - Acquisition/contracting personnel
 - Agency Administrator and/or Tribal Chairperson
 - Area Restriction Coordinators (ARCs)
 - Engineering personnel
 - Fire management officers
 - Fire prevention officers
 - Firefighters or any other employees who post fire restriction/closure information
 - Frontliners or customer service representatives
 - Law enforcement officers
 - Legal counsel
 - Public and external affairs officers
 - Public information officers
 - Recreation/lands/minerals personnel
 - State coordinators
 - State liaisons
 - Timber/forestry personnel
 - Webmasters
 - Zone Board chairs

- **Interest or Relationship. Those internal or external audiences, who need to know about the change, may support or reject the change, or who benefit from the change.**
 - Public lands visitors
 - Special interests groups, non-government organizations
 - Local businesses or business associations/groups
 - Elected officials
 - Media
 - Chambers of commerce, travel and tourism associations or boards, convention and visitors bureaus

COMMUNICATION METHODS

Depending on the audience, the following list of methods/tools will be used to provide internal and external audiences with information about the Program. Whatever methods or combinations you choose, please remember to be consistent.

- **Communication Products.** Written documents used to summarize and communicate Program information.
 - Agency/Tribe Letter of Support template
 - Briefing Paper with key points
 - Communication Plan/Action Plan

- “How To Use The Website” Guide
 - News release - an interagency news release will be issued on Friday, March 15 at 11 a.m. MDT. Agency/tribal public affairs officers and public information officers are encouraged to forward the news release to their internal/external contacts. For fire restrictions and closures communication procedures, please refer to the Summary of Changes document.
 - Summary of Changes - highlights what’s changing with the new Program.
 - Reference Guide – lists Area Restriction Coordinators, State Coordinators, management units, and area boundaries/map.
 - Training/job aids for Area Restriction Coordinators
- **PowerPoint presentation.** An overview presentation with screenshots of the National Fire Restriction and Closure Website will be available for use during formal and informal presentations with internal and external audiences.
 - **Webinars and conference calls.** These tools will be used to share information about the Program and answer people’s questions. Upcoming webinars/calls are listed below. Webinar and call-in information will be sent out prior to the event.
 - Thursday, March 14 | 10 a.m. MDT | Open Invitation
 - Thursday, April 11 | 9 a.m. MST | Area Restriction Coordinators
 - Monday, April 15 | 10 a.m. MDT | Frontliners/Customer Service Reps
 - **Trainings.** Trainings for Area Restriction Coordinators, those responsible for posting fire restriction and closure to the new website, will be hosted on the days/times below. Job aides will be provided during the trainings.
 - Monday, April 8 | 9 a.m. MST | Coconino Supervisors Office
 - Thursday, April 11| 9 a.m. MST | Show Low Interagency Dispatch Center, Show Low, AZ
 - Others to be determined/announced
 - **Website.** This document, the products mentioned above, the MOP, and other supporting documents can be found online on the [Southwest Coordination Center’s website](#).
 - **Promotional items.** Magnets, key chains, stickers, etc. will NOT be purchased to promote the new website, since users will “link to” the new website through preexisting websites.
 - **Traditional communications methods.** Emails, phone calls, presentations, and discussions.

ACTION PLAN

	Task	Description	Who	When	Method	Audience
Prior to Rollout	Create Communication Plan and products and have them reviewed	Write, edited and finalize	Karen Takai Lawrence Lujan	March 1-15	All	Affected interagency employees and the public
	Post Plan and products to the SWCG website	Post information for future access/reference	Jay Ellington	March 14	Post to SWCG website	Affected interagency employees

Prior to Rollout	Develop site	Populate management units, disclaimers, site instructions, etc.	Development Team/Committee	Ongoing	Conference calls	Affected interagency employees public
	Update MOP	Update/edit	Fred Hernandez Lawrence Lujan	March 12	Post to SWCC Website	Affected interagency employees
	Sign up for webinar	Call IT to schedule webinar/conference call line for March 14.	Scott Wolfe	March 8	N/A	Affected interagency employees
	Send out webinar agenda	Coordinate with Fred to develop the agenda	Fred Hernandez Lawrence Lujan	Draft 3/12 Release 3/12	Email to presenters and participants	Affected interagency employees
	Rollout Webinar	Share Program, Communication Plan and products with affected interagency employees.	Fred Hernandez Lawrence Lujan Dolores Garcia	March 14 at 10 a.m. MDT	Webinar, conference call, showcase website	Affected interagency employees
	Task	Description	Who	When	Method	Audience
Rollout Day, March 15	Release interagency news release	Email news release to NM and AZ media contacts and internal interagency contacts	Lawrence Lujan	March 15 at 11 a.m. MDT	Email news release	News media and affected interagency employees
	Release interagency new release	Email news release to agency/tribal internal and external contacts	Public and external affairs officers/public information officers	March 15	Email news release	All
	Post news release and "link" new site to existing websites	Post news release and link to new site	Webmasters	March 15	Websites	All
	Market through Social Media	Post news release/information on Facebook, Twitter, etc.	Public and external affairs officers/public information officers, webmasters, or delegate	March 15	Post website blurb on social media platforms	All
	Share products with internal/external stakeholders	Determine what products need to be shared and with you	Public and external affairs officers/public information officers, state liaisons	March 15	Various	Various
	Task	Description	Who	When	Method	Audience
Week of March 18	Send out agency letter of support	A letter of support has been drafted for top level agency administrators/tribal chairs to send to employees. Tailor the letter to fit your	Public affairs officers, public information officers, and fire management officers are encouraged to	March 18	Email letter	Agency/tribe employees

**Week of
March
25 and
beyond**

	agency/tribe's needs.	work with your top level agency administrators/tribal chairs.			
Task	Description	Who	When	Method	Audience
Area Restriction Coordinators (ARCs) conference call and live training	Status update— are we ready?	Fred Hernandez Lawrence Lujan Dolores Garcia	Thursday April 11 at 9 a.m. MST	Webinar conference call	ARCs
Program/website overview webinar/conference call for frontliners/customer service reps	Share information answer questions.	Fred Hernandez Lawrence Lujan Dolores Garcia	Monday April 15 at 10 a.m. MDT	Webinar conference call	Frontliners and customer service reps
Area Restriction Coordinators (ARCs) training	Train ARCs on website posting/editing	Dolores Garcia ARCs	April 8 at 9 a.m. MDT Coconino SO	In person training	ARCs
Implement the Program during the 2013 fire season	Use the Program during the 2013 fire season	Affected interagency employees	March 15 and beyond	All	All
Share your feedback	As we move forward, if you have comments or suggestions regarding program improvements, please let us know.	Lawrence Lujan Dolores Garcia ARCs	Anytime	Email Lawrence Lujan or Dolores Garcia	Affected interagency employees
After season AAR	Evaluate what worked and didn't work	Affected interagency employees	TBD	TBD	Affected interagency employees