



Forest Service News Release

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SFNF Revises Plans for Stage 1 Fire Restrictions

West Side of the Forest Will Implement Campfire Restrictions May 24

SANTA FE, NM – May 20, 2021 – The recent pattern of showers and thunderstorms has provided some relief from dry conditions on the east side of the Santa Fe National Forest (SFNF), but the west side of the forest has not been as fortunate. As a result, the SFNF will implement Stage 1 fire restrictions only on forest lands located west of US Highway 84/285 at 8 a.m. Monday, May 24.

Stage 1 fire restrictions are a proactive way to reduce the very real risk of human-caused wildfire, protect natural and cultural resources, and enhance public and firefighter safety. Forest managers use several criteria to determine when to implement restrictions, including current and predicted weather, fuel moisture, fire activity levels and available firefighting resources.

Under Stage 1 restrictions, fires, campfires, charcoal grills, and coal and wood stoves are allowed only in developed campsites or picnic areas with Forest Service-built fire rings or grills. Campfires are prohibited at all dispersed camping sites on the west side of the forest.

Stoves, grills, lanterns and heaters fueled by propane or other liquified petroleum fuels may be used if they meet manufacturer's safety specifications and have on/off switches. Propane devices require an area at least 3 feet in diameter that has been cleared of flammable materials.

Smoking is allowed only in enclosed vehicles or buildings, at developed recreation sites or while standing in an area at least 3 feet in diameter that has been cleared of all flammable material. Fireworks and other pyrotechnic devices are always prohibited on national forests.

"Fortunately, the east side of the forest has received a fair amount of moisture recently, but the west side remains extremely dry with high fire danger," Forest Supervisor Debbie Cress said. "Last weekend fire patrols on the Jemez Ranger District found another 14 abandoned campfires, one of which escaped the fire ring and had potential to become a wildfire. Stage 1 restrictions are the prudent way to reduce that risk until fire conditions improve on the west side."

The SFNF's developed campgrounds are open for the season. Some require reservations through www.recreation.gov but most are first come/first served. Although Stage 1 restrictions allow campfires in developed campgrounds, visitors are asked to use extreme caution and follow [campfire safety procedures](#). Never leave a campsite until the fire is completely extinguished and cold to the touch.

Forest visitors are asked to use extreme caution when fire restrictions are in place. Violations are punishable as a Class B misdemeanor by a fine of not more than \$5,000 for individuals and \$10,000 for organizations and/or by imprisonment for not more than six months. Fire prevention and law enforcement will be patrolling, and anyone who violates Stage 1 restrictions will be ticketed.

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