



Forest Service News Release

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Stage 1 fire restrictions expanded July 15 to all San Juan National Forest lands

Fire restrictions now include upper and lower elevations of the Forest

Durango, Colo., July 14, 2025 — San Juan National Forest Fire Management Staff are implementing Stage I Fire Restrictions on *all* National Forest System lands within the San Juan National Forest, including wilderness, beginning at 12:01 am on Tuesday, July 15 ([see full Forest Order and map](#)). The San Juan NF had previously implemented restrictions only at lower elevations. Due to the extended drying trend, higher elevations are becoming vulnerable to wildfire and restrictions will now encompass the entire Forest. Fire restrictions are designed to protect public safety and our area natural resources. Southwest Colorado is in extended drought with continued hot, dry weather creating a critical fire environment. The minimum fine for violating campfire restrictions in Stage I is \$530 in Colorado.

Stage 1 Fire Restrictions on the San Juan National Forest **PROHIBIT**:

1. Igniting, building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire (including fires fueled by charcoal or briquettes), except if it is in:
 - a. A permanent metal or concrete fire pit or grate that the U.S. Forest Service has installed and maintained at its developed recreation sites (campgrounds and picnic areas);
 - b. A device solely fueled by liquid or gas that can be turned on and off used in an area barren or cleared of all flammable materials within three feet of the device; or
 - c. A fully enclosed metal stove with a chimney at least five feet in length and a mesh screen spark arrestor with a screen opening of a ¼ inch or less used in an area that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials within 10 feet of the device.

36 CFR § 261.52(a).
2. Using an explosive. 36 C.F.R. § 261.52(b)
3. Smoking is prohibited, except in 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)

4. Welding, or operating acetylene or other torch with open flame, except if in a cleared area of at least 10 feet in diameter and a chemical pressurized fire extinguisher (with a minimum 8 oz. capacity and rating of Class 2A) is kept with the operator. 36 CFR § 261.52(h)

Temporary restrictions will remain in place until further notice and may be increased or reduced at any time due to changes in weather and fire danger. To learn more about fire restrictions, fuels management, and other wildfire related issues, visit our [fire information webpage](#).

Fire Restrictions Do Not Prevent Wildfires. It is every forest visitor's and camper's responsibility to follow best practices, properly maintain and extinguish campfires to prevent wildfires. 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.

To report a fire, call 9-1-1. For information on the San Juan National Forest, call (970) 247-4874, visit the [forest website](#), or follow us on social media ([X](#) and [Facebook](#)).

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