



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Stage 2 fire restrictions for Apache and Navajo counties begin June 11

Holbrook, AZ – On June 7, the voting members of the White Mountain Fire Coordinating Group met to discuss the current conditions of the forests throughout the region. At that meeting a majority of the members voted to recommend the enactment of Stage 2 fire restrictions throughout Apache and Navajo County. Stage 2 Fire Restrictions will go into effect throughout unincorporated areas of both Apache and Navajo County on June 11 as well as the Town of Pinetop-Lakeside and City of Show Low.

The group meets weekly and considers a multitude of criteria. These criteria include forest conditions and fire behavior, weather forecast information, an increase in human and/or lightning ignited fires, an increase of events that attract visitors or local citizens to the forests such as hunts, and availability of firefighting resources in the region/state. The partners that provide reports are from local, state, federal and tribal entities that are experts in their fields.

Under Stage 2 Fire Restrictions the following acts are PROHIBITED in unincorporated areas of Navajo and Apache Counties as well as the Town of Pinetop-Lakeside and City of Show Low until further notice:

- Building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire or campfire (unless noted in the exemptions below) including on private property. The use of charcoal, coal and wood stoves including on private property.
- Smoking outside of an enclosed vehicle or building on forest service land. Off forest service land smoking may be permitted on/in a porch, carport, garage, parking lot or other areas that are barren or cleared of all flammable materials.
- The outdoor use of any tool that has an internal combustible engine that would produce open flames or sparks
- The outdoor use of welding, acetylene or other torches with an open flame
- The use of explosives
- The operation of a motor vehicle, including UTV's, ATV's, motorcycles off of a designated road
- Use of any and all fireworks
- The outdoor use of firearms of any kind





Exemptions:

***An exemption does not absolve an individual or organization from liability or responsibility for any fire started by the exempted activity.**

- Persons with a written permit that specifically authorizes the otherwise prohibited act.
- Persons using a device solely fueled by liquid petroleum or LPG fuels that can be turned on and off. Such devices can only be used in an area that is barren or cleared of all overhead and surrounding flammable materials within three feet of the device.
- 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.
- All land within a city boundary is exempted unless otherwise stated by city ordinance.
- Other exemptions unique to each agency/tribe.

“Our joint effort in forest management practices, especially during a drought is necessary,” said Gwendena Lee-Gatewood, Chairwoman of the White Mountain Apache Tribe. This strategy helps reduce wildfire risk that I know is a safety concern for all as we wait for conditions to improve”. The Fort Apache Indian Reservations is in Stage 2 restrictions as of June 10.

“Safety is always our priority”, said Haley Nicoll, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Manager for Apache County Emergency Management. It is important that our citizens and visitors observe all restrictions that are in place whether they are at home or in the forest.

Additional agencies entering into Stage 2 Fire restrictions include the Bureau of Land Management Gila District, Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management (in Navajo and Apache Counties), and USFS Apache-Sitgreaves Forest.

For more information on restrictions please visit

Navajo and Apache Counties at www.311info.net

U.S. Forest Service Office Apache Sitgreaves Office at <https://fs.usda.gov/asnf>

Bureau of Land Management <https://blm.gov/>

Department of Forest and Fire Management <https://dffm.az.gov/fire/information>

“One less spark means one less wildfire!”

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