



News Release

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Lincoln National Forest's Fire Danger elevates to **VERY HIGH** and Stage I Fire Restrictions Implemented on Smokey Bear and Sacramento Districts

ALAMOGORDO, RUIDOSO, CLOUDCROFT, CARLSBAD, NM - April 19, 2018 – With the steady increase in daytime temperatures and constant daily moderate – to high winds, the potential for wildland fire starts increases significantly. Based on current weather and fuel conditions, an increase in visitors and recreational activities on the Forest, and an increase in human-caused fires on the Smokey Bear and Sacramento Districts over the past two weeks, the Fire Danger Rating has elevated to **VERY HIGH**. Fire Danger Rating signs will indicate a fire danger of **VERY HIGH** effective Friday, April 20th at 8:00 am, which extends across the entire forest, including Smokey Bear, Sacramento and Guadalupe Districts.

*A fire danger rating of **VERY HIGH** means that fires start easily from all causes and, immediately after ignition, spread rapidly and increase quickly in intensity. Spot fires are a constant danger. Fires burning light fuels may quickly develop high intensity characteristics such as long-distance spotting and fire whirlwinds when they burn into heavier fuels.*

“With the fire danger rating increasing to **VERY HIGH**, **Stage I Fire Restrictions will go into effect for the Smokey Bear and Sacramento Ranger Districts on April 20th at 8:00 am**. There will be **no fire restrictions on the Guadalupe Ranger District**,” said Ryan Whiteaker Fire Staff Officer. “As the season progresses, we may still have opportunities to conduct prescribed fire operations on the Guadalupe District, but moving forward with ignitions will be dependent on site-specific conditions and prescriptions for individual projects,” Whiteaker said.

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The difference between an unwanted wildfire and a prescribed fire is that the prescribed fire is a planned event and fire is used to treat certain fuels under the oversight of a Burn Boss and firefighting resources that are on scene to ensure that the resource management objectives are being met, as the fire burns at a manageable pace. Firefighters have the advantage because they are able to control the intensity and rate of spread of the fire. With an unwanted wildfire, firefighters respond to an unknown situation and have to make appropriate on-the-spot decisions as the wildfire progresses, all the while, ensuring that firefighter and public safety are priority.

*Under Stage I Fire Restrictions (**Smokey Bear and Sacramento Districts**), fires, campfires, charcoal grills, and coal and wood stoves are allowed only in developed campsites or picnic areas where agency-built fire rings or grills are provided for use. Campfires are prohibited at all dispersed camping sites. Stoves, lanterns or heaters fueled by propane or other liquefied petroleum fuels may be used in areas cleared of flammable materials within three feet of the device, if they meet manufacturer’s safety specifications and have on/off switches. Smoking is allowed only in enclosed vehicles or buildings and developed recreation sites. Fireworks are always prohibited on all national forests.*

For additional information call or visit any of our offices listed below (8 am – 4 pm, M-F):

<p>Smokey Bear Ranger District 901 Mechem Drive Ruidoso, NM 88345 575-257-4095</p>	<p>Guadalupe Ranger District 5203 Buena Vista Drive Carlsbad, NM 88220 575-881-4181</p>
<p>Sacramento Ranger District 4 Lost Lodge Road Cloudcroft, NM 88317 575-682-2551</p>	<p>Supervisor’s Office 3463 Las Palomas Road Alamogordo, NM 88310 575-434-7200</p>

Visit www.fs.usda.gov/lincoln follow us on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/LincolnUSForest>

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO. Fire restrictions in New Mexico can be found at <https://firerestrictions.us/nm/> and fire updates are posted on the New Mexico Fire Information website at www.nmfireinfo.com.

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