



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: July 16, 2020

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Routt County Commissioners Enact Stage One Fire Restrictions

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, CO – Pursuant to Ordinance No. 2013-002, an ordinance to restrict fires in unincorporated portions of Routt County during periods of high fire danger, the Routt County Board of County Commissioners voted unanimously to enact Stage One Fire Restrictions effective at 8:00 a.m. Friday, July 17, 2020, and will remain in force until rescinded.

Fire restrictions are considered only when very high or extreme fire danger exists and is predicted to persist. This determination is based upon current conditions, long-term weather forecasts, and upon the heavy, dry fuel loading which creates the potential for uncontrollable fires.

Wildfires can affect entire communities by destroying homes and natural habitat and by killing wildlife. People must take all necessary safety precautions in wildlands and forests. According to Routt County Emergency Operations Director David 'Mo' DeMorat, "we put these restrictions in place to reduce the likelihood of human-caused fires." The restrictions will remain in effect until officials determine that conditions have changed sufficiently to reduce the risk of a human-caused wildfire. Rescinding the restrictions will be considered when the critical elements diminish.

The fire restrictions will apply to all private and state owned lands outside municipal boundaries. Exemptions to this order may be requested through the appropriate fire protection district fire chief for unincorporated private and state lands within a fire protection district boundaries, or through the Routt County Emergency Operations Director after consultation with the Routt County Sheriff for unincorporated private and state lands outside of a fire protection district by, and only if the proposed action is deemed by the fire protection district chief or the Emergency Manager in consultation with the Sheriff to be safe and the attendant fire danger can be satisfactorily mitigated.

STAGE ONE RESTRICTIONS:

The following acts are prohibited on all private and state owned lands outside of municipal boundaries. This does not affect federal lands within Routt County.

1. Building, maintaining, attending or using any fire to burn trash, debris, fence rows, irrigation ditches or vegetation; any campfire, warming fire, or charcoal grill, except in designated campgrounds, picnic areas or developed recreational sites.
2. Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreational site, or while stopped in an area of at least (3) feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable material.
3. Operating a chainsaw without a USDA or SAE approved spark arresting device (muffler) properly installed and in effective working order, and a chemical pressurized fire extinguisher of not less than eight (8) ounce capacity by weight, and one (1) round pointed shovel with an overall length of at least 36 inches. The extinguisher will be with the chainsaw operator. The shovel may be kept with the fueling supplies but readily available for quick use.
4. Welding or operating acetylene or other torch with open flame; except within an area that is barren or cleared of all flammable material at least 10 feet on all sides from the equipment.
5. Using explosives requiring fuses or blasting caps.

Exemptions from Stage One Restrictions:

1. Persons with a valid written permit which specifically authorizes the prohibited act from (a) the fire protection district chief if subject land is within a fire protection district or (b) the Routt County Emergency Operations Director after consultation with the Routt County Sheriff if subject land is not within a fire protection district.
2. Any federal, state or local officer or member of an organized rescue or firefighting force in the performance of an actual duty.
3. Any fires contained within stoves, fireplaces within buildings, charcoal grill fires, recreational fires at private residences with valid permit from district chief, and permanent fire pits or fire grates in developed picnic grounds and camp grounds.
4. Burning of irrigation ditches located within and completely surrounded by irrigated farm lands where such burning is necessary for crop survival with proper permit from: (a) fire protection district chief if subject land is within a fire protection district; (b) or Routt County Emergency Operations Director after consultation with the Routt County Sheriff if subject land is not within a fire protection district.
5. Hot air balloon activities and the use of UL-approved liquid-fueled or gas fueled "Camp Fire in a Can."

6. Campfires or bonfires required in religious ceremonies where a specific written permit has been granted in advance by: (a) the fire protection district chief if subject land is within a fire protection district; or (b) the Routt County Emergency Operations Director after consultation with the Routt County Sheriff if subject land is not within a fire protection district.

Fine Schedule and Penalty Assessment Procedure. Any person who violated this order commits a class 2 petty offense and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not more than six hundred dollars (\$600) for each separate offense. However, the following fine schedule shall apply:

First Offense	Not more than \$100
Second Offense	Not more than \$200
Third or Subsequent Offense	Maximum fine permitted by law – \$1,000 as of March 31, 2013

Should you have any questions, please call your Fire Protection District Chief or the Routt County Office of Emergency Management at (970) 870-5551. Thank you for your cooperation.

North Routt Fire Protection District
Mike Swinsick – (970) 879-6064

West Routt Fire Protection District
Trevor Guire – (970) 276-3511

Oak Creek Fire Protection District
Chuck Wisecup – (970) 736-8104

Yampa Fire Protection District
Machia 'Ky' Cox – (970) 846-2169

Steamboat Springs Fire Rescue
Chuck Cerasoli – (970) 879-7170

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