



Routt County Wildland Fire Multi-Agency Coordinating (MAC) Advisory & Policy Groups

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Date: April 11, 2012

Time: 1400 Hours

ROUTT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS WILL CONSIDER FIRE RESTRICTIONS

Routt County, Colorado – PURSUANT TO ORDINANCE NO. 99-1, AN ORDINANCE TO RESTRICT FIRES IN UNINCORPORATED PORTIONS OF ROUTT COUNTY DURING PERIODS OF HIGH FIRE DANGER, THE ROUTT COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS WILL CONSIDER A COUNTY-WIDE FIRE RESTRICTION ON PRIVATE AND STATE LANDS NEXT TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 2012 AT 3:00 P.M. **UNTIL THAT TIME, WE IMPORE OUR AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY TO RECOGNIZE THE SEVERITY OF THE FIRE DANGER AND VOLUNTARILY STOP ALL BURNING ACTIVITIES.**

Fire danger has increased below 9,000 feet where we have critical fuel conditions in Routt County. Fire restrictions are considered only when very high or extreme fire danger 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 Commissioner Nancy Stahoviak, "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.

If the Routt County Board of County Commissioners decide to enact the fire restrictions, it will apply to all private and state owned lands outside municipal boundaries. Please call the Routt County Sheriff's Office, your local fire department, or public land management agency for more information on fire restrictions and fire safety.

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Routt County has had several agricultural burns become large wildland fires requiring multi-agency response from fire districts and federal agencies. We are asking the agricultural community to voluntarily restrict agricultural burns until we receive significant moisture.

Activities Prohibited by Open Fire Restriction. Unless otherwise specified, from and after the effective date of the declaration until the Board shall have modified or terminated such declaration, the following activities would be prohibited in the portions of the unincorporated areas of Routt County which are subject to such restrictions:

1. Building, maintaining, attending or using any fire to burn trash, debris, fence rows or vegetation, any campfire, warming fire, charcoal grill, except in designated campgrounds, picnic areas or developed recreational sites.
2. Smoking; except within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site, or while stopped in an area of at least three (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 properly installed and in effective working order, and a chemical pressurized fire extinguisher of not less than eight (8) ounces capacity by weight, and one (1) round pointed shovel with an overall length of at least 36 inches. The extinguisher shall be with the chainsaw operator. The shovel may be kept with the fueling supplies but readily available for quick use.
4. Welding or operating an 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 Open Fire Restriction: The foregoing notwithstanding, the following persons and acts would be exempt from the prohibition:

1. Persons with a valid written permit from the jurisdictional federal agency or Routt County Sheriff and which specifically authorize the prohibited act.

NOTE: Any permit issued by a fire protection district within unincorporated Routt County prior to the inaction of these fire restrictions would be suspended until the restrictions are lifted by the Routt County Commissioners.

2. Any federal, state or local officer or member of an organized rescue or firefighting force in the performance of an official duty.

3. Any fires contained within liquid-fueled or gas-fueled stoves, fireplaces within buildings, charcoal grill fires at private residences, and permanent fire pits or fire grates located in developed picnic grounds and campgrounds.
4. Burning of irrigation ditches located within and completely surrounded by irrigated farmlands where such burning is necessary for crop survival and specific written permit has been granted in advance by the Routt County Sheriff.
5. Campfires or bonfires required in religious ceremonies and for which a valid written permit has been granted in advance by a federal agency or county sheriff.

Exemptions to this order may be granted within non-federal lands only by the Routt County Sheriff or within federal lands only by the administering federal agency, and only if the proposed action is deemed by the Sheriff or federal agency to be safe and the attendant fire danger can be satisfactorily mitigated.

Fine Schedule and Penalty Assessment Procedure. Any person who violates this order commits a class 2 petty offense and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of note 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	The maximum fine permitted by law

Should you have any questions, please call the Routt County Sheriff's Office at (970) 879-1090 or the Routt County Office of Emergency Management at (970) 870-5551. Thank you for your cooperation.

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