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# News Release



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## Coconino National Forest offices closed Independence Day

### Red Rock Visitor Center to remain open

**Flagstaff, Ariz., June 28, 2017, For Immediate Release** — Coconino National Forest offices will be closed Tuesday, July 4, in observance of Independence Day, but the Red Rock Visitor Center south of Sedona, Ariz. on Highway 179 will remain open to the public.

Independence Day weekend means an opportunity to camp in the cool pines of northern Arizona national forests. Currently Stage II fire restrictions are in place meaning no campfires, smoking or open flames allowed in the Coconino National Forest.

Stage II Fire Restrictions consist of:

- 1. Fires, campfires, charcoal, coal, and wood stoves.** (except using a device that is solely fueled by liquid petroleum or LPG fuels that can be turned on and off in areas that are barren or cleared of all overhead and surrounding flammable materials within three feet of the device).
- 2. Smoking** (except within an enclosed vehicle or building).
- 3. Using an explosive.**
- 4. Possessing, discharging, or using any type of firework by pyrotechnic device.**
- 5. Operating a chainsaw or any other equipment powered by an internal combustion engine from the hours of 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.** (except generators with an approved spark arresting device within an enclosed vehicle or building or in an area that is barren or cleared of all overhead and surrounding flammable materials within three feet of the generator).
- 6. Welding or operating an acetylene or other torch with open flame.**
- 7. Operating or using any internal or external combustion engine without a spark arresting device properly installed, maintained, and in effective working order** (this does not include motor vehicles. This is aimed at things such as landscaping tools).
- 8. Discharging firearms, air rifles, or gas guns** (except while engaged in a lawful hunt pursuant to state, federal or tribal laws and regulations).
- 9. Possessing or using a motor vehicle off National Forest System roads** (motorized vehicles must abide by Travel Management Regulations and travel only on open Forest Roads. In “camping corridors” where vehicles are allowed to leave a Forest Road for up to 300 feet—as well as outside camping corridors where vehicles can leave the Forest Road for up to 30 feet—vehicles can still do so, BUT ONLY

AS LONG AS THE PATH THEY DRIVE OVER IS DEVOID OF VEGETATION. The intent of this restriction is to keep sources of heat underneath a vehicle from contacting any vegetation that could start a wildfire. In short, don't drive or park over any vegetation at any time).

In addition to forest offices being closed, the Red Rock Ranger District of the Coconino National Forest will waive fees on July 4 for a "fee-free" day, fees are waived for all Red Rock Pass Fee Program sites including Palatki, Honanki, V Bar V heritage sites, and multiple trailheads.

Areas not included in the fee waiver program are campgrounds and recreation sites managed under concession contract, including Grasshopper Point, Crescent Moon Ranch and West Fork (Call of the Canyon) and the other forest districts of the Coconino National Forest.

Visitors to the forest are reminded to be safe over the Independence Day holiday.

An explanation of the different stages of fire restrictions and what is typically prohibited during those stages can be found online at [www.tinyurl.com/firestagesexplained](http://www.tinyurl.com/firestagesexplained). The public should be aware that state-managed and state-owned lands in Coconino County, south of the Colorado River, will also go into Stage II fire restrictions at the same time.

Fire restrictions will remain in place until the forest receives significant precipitation. Violation of the restrictions on national forests is punishable by a fine of up to \$5,000, imprisonment up to six months, or both.

With a long holiday weekend for many people, campgrounds are expected to start filling up before Friday. Most campsites are on a first-come, first-served basis. The earlier you arrive, the better your chances of finding a campsite. If planning to disperse camp beyond developed campgrounds, remember the 'Leave No Trace' principles. Pack out all trash when you leave. Dispose of human waste by burying or packing it out within a portable camp toilet.

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