

NEWS RELEASE: Forest Supervisor closes three Front Range districts due to wildfire threat

Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests

Clear Creek, Boulder and Canyon Lakes Ranger Districts

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FORT COLLINS, Colo. (Oct. 20, 2020) – Due to unprecedented and historic fire conditions, the USDA Forest Service’s Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests is announcing a temporary closure of all National Forest land in Clear Creek, Jefferson, Gilpin, Boulder, and Larimer counties, effective at midnight tonight, Oct. 21. This decision will be re-evaluated daily as conditions change.

The new starts and explosive growth of fires throughout the northern Colorado Front Range over the past week, including the Cameron Peak, CalWood and Lefthand Canyon fires, has led to this decision. The impacted counties are currently experiencing severe drought; extremely low fuel moisture conditions; a high occurrence of human-caused wildfires; limited capacity for response due to multiple wildfires; and persistent fire-danger weather conditions with no immediate relief in the forecast.

“The number of large fires and extreme fire behavior we are seeing on our Forests this year is historic,” said Forest Supervisor Monte Williams. “These temporary closures are necessary to protect the public and our firefighters, and we will keep them in place until conditions improve and we are confident that the risk of new fire starts has decreased. I ask all of our local residents and visitors to take these closures and evacuations seriously to allow our firefighters to focus on the mission of safely suppressing the existing fires.”

As of Tuesday morning, nearly 442,000 acres of land are currently affected by wildfire across north central Colorado and southern Wyoming, according to the Rocky Mountain Coordination Center. About 3,000 firefighters and fire support personnel are assigned to wildfire operations in the region.

These temporary closures are in place to support the suppression of the three fires currently burning in these counties and to prevent the potential for new fire starts, which impacts the resources available for existing fires. Orders restrict access to all but emergency personnel and persons with a permit authorizing their presence in the closure areas. Drivers authorized to be in the forest are urged to use caution, as many forest roads may be busy with firefighters, fire vehicles, and heavy equipment engaged in suppression and containment efforts.

Areas not included in this closure order have existing fire restrictions in place, including campfire bans, due to high and extreme fire danger levels. Wherever you are, whatever you’re doing, please use extreme caution with fire. One small spark can cause a large wildfire and add additional strain to firefighters and available resources.

The Forest Service thanks our partners and the public for their cooperation and understanding of this monumental fire threat. Citizens with specific questions within their area may call their local ranger

district offices for more information. Hunters impacted by these closures should visit the [Colorado Parks and Wildlife website](#) and will be receiving direct communication from CPW via email.

[See the order and a map.](#)

[See a consolidated closure order and fire restrictions map.](#)