Forest Service News Release

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https://www.fs.usda.gov/r03/tonto

Tonto National Forest lifts Emergency Stage 2 Fire Restrictions

PHOENIX, Sept. 4, 2025 - In coordination with federal, state and local partners, the Tonto National Forest will terminate the current Stage 2 Fire and Recreational Target Shooting Restrictions effective Sept. 5, 2025, at 8 a.m.

The decision to lift restrictions was based on increased monsoonal weather that lowered the fire danger across the forest. Fire restrictions are implemented to reduce the risk of human-caused wildfires during periods of extreme fire danger and elevated fire weather conditions.

Tips for practicing campfire safety:

- Keep your fire small;
- Always keep water and a shovel nearby and know how to use them to put out your campfire;
- Be sure an adult is always watching the fire;
- Keep an eye on the weather;
- Sudden wind gusts can blow sparks into vegetation outside your cleared area, causing unexpected fires; and
- Make sure your campfire is dead out!

Before leaving the forest campfires and charcoal embers from BBQ grills must be completely extinguished after use. Abandoned campfires are a major cause of wildfires. Always keep enough water on hand and a tool to drown and stir fires. If it is too hot to touch, it is too hot to leave. More campfire safety and prevention tips can be found at smokeybear.com.

Vehicle fires and dragging trailer chains cause many fires on the Tonto. The Arizona climate is tough on tires and wheel bearings; tire blowouts or worn bearings can be very dangerous and can also cause wildfires. Adjust trailer chains to prevent them from dragging and sparking a fire. Many tire shops and mechanics are available in the area to provide professional assistance in inspecting vehicles and often inspection is free.

Additionally, recreational target shooting has the potential to cause wildfires when users set up targets in areas with dry grass and other highly flammable fuels. Shooting without a backstop or berm is dangerous. The use of refuse such as appliances and old vehicles can generate sparks. Items like these are prohibited on the forest. The Tonto Target Type Restrictions Order is available online.

Violators of regulations that prohibit abandoning a campfire are subject to a fine and/or imprisonment. If an abandoned campfire causes a wildfire, violators can also be held responsible for fire suppression costs.

More information about the Tonto can be found on the forest's website or calling the following district ranger stations for information:

- Cave Creek Ranger District (480) 595-3300
- Globe Ranger District (928) 402-6200
- Mesa Ranger District (480) 610-3300
- Payson Ranger District (928) 474-7900
- Tonto Basin Ranger District (602) 225-5395

About the Forest Service: The USDA Forest Service has for more than 100 years brought people and communities together to answer the call of conservation. Grounded in world-class science and technology– and rooted in communities–the Forest Service connects people to nature and to each other. The Forest Service cares for shared natural resources in ways that promote lasting economic, ecological, and social vitality. The agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to state and private landowners, maintains the largest wildland fire and forestry research organizations in the world. The Forest Service also has either a direct or indirect role in stewardship of about 900 million forested acres within the U.S., of which over 130 million acres are urban forests where most Americans live.

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