



Prescott National Forest

6-25-2021

FAQs – Full Forest Closure

General overview

- A full forest closure begins on Friday, June 25, 2021 at 8 a.m.
- This means that the public is prohibited from entering any part of Prescott National Forest at any time.
- The last time the Prescott National Forest went into a full forest closure was 2002. It began on May 24, 2002 and lasted 57 days.
- This closure order will be lifted when sufficient precipitation is received to adequately reduce the risk of wildfire, and hot, dry weather conditions are no longer forecast to continue. Thus, there is no specific end date to this closure, as it will be dictated by weather and forest conditions. We hope that with the onset of monsoon, conditions will change enough to allow the forest to reopen.
- To view the official Forest Order visit [Prescott National Forest - Alerts & Notices \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/forestmanagement/alerts-notices)

Who can access the forest and how can they do it

- We cannot restrict access to private property. Where gates exist across forest roads, they will be locked to deter other uses and inform the public of the closure. Combination codes will be given to the property owners so they can come and go as necessary during the closure.
- It will be the responsibility of the resident to allow for essential services (water, propane, deliveries, etc) and access to their residence of any kind. This does not mean they are required to get a special permit from the district for each visitor, but that they are responsible for getting access for those visitors and are responsible for them until they leave the closure area.
- Forest Supervisor and District Rangers are delegated authority to grant special permits or waivers for closures in writing on an individual case basis. Special requirements will normally be a part of any permit or waiver. The Forest Officials must be sure that granting a waiver does not cause an excessive risk of wildfire and it is in the best interest of the Forest to grant such a waiver or permit.
- The only individuals that are allowed to enter the forest are:
 - Persons with a written Forest Service letter of exemption from a Forest Official.
 - A Federal, State or local officer, member of an organized rescue or firefighting force, in the performance of their official duty.
 - Private property owners, business owners, their guests, and contracted workers may use roads in the Restricted Area for ingress/egress to access private property only.
- Members of the public who have left trailers in the forest will not be allowed to access them if they leave them behind. They will have to wait until the closure is lifted to access them. The only individuals who are allowed to enter the forest are listed above.



For people who accidentally get locked behind a gate at a developed recreation site and/or National Forest System Road/Trail:

- Please call the number of the ranger station (listed below) in which you are located.
 - **Bradshaw Ranger District: 928-443-8000**
 - **Verde Ranger District: 928-567-4121**

Fines & punishments:

- Violating a Forest Closure or any Fire Restrictions carries a **mandatory appearance in federal court**.
- Violation of these restrictions is punishable as a Class B misdemeanor, which means a fine of up to \$5,000 for an individual or \$10,000 for an organization, or imprisonment of up to six months or both. Fines and punishments are determined by a federal court judge.

How members of the public can help:

- The Prescott National Forest is part of a fire-adapted ecosystem in northern Arizona. It is dependent on fire to play a natural role in maintaining vibrant forest health. Natural fire on the landscape is critical to overall ecosystem functioning and to reducing threats posed to our communities by unnaturally severe wildfire and its sometimes-devastating after-effects, including flooding.
- However, not all fire starts are good for our forests or our communities. The Forest Service needs the public's help to reduce the number of unwanted, human-caused starts, particularly during times of the year when a wildfire's effects could be devastating for all of us.
- One of the ways members of the public can help is to be aware of current conditions and comply with any fire restrictions or forest closures that may be in effect. We need your assistance to reduce the number of unwanted, human-caused fires.
- You can help by:
 - Being aware of current conditions and complying with any fire restrictions or forest closures;
 - Never having a campfire on a windy day, even if no fire restrictions are in effect;
 - Never abandoning a campfire and always ensuring you put it out fully and properly before departing; and,
 - Adhering to the guidelines of the One Less Spark campaign, www.readyforwildfire.org/One-Less-Spark-Campaign , which provides easy-to-follow advice on preventing all the common human causes of wildfire.