



GUNNISON COUNTY SHERIFF FIRE RESTRICTION ORDER # 2021-002

The Gunnison County Sheriff has determined that with the improved fire conditions in the White River National Forest, and in order to protect life and property, that part of Gunnison County (Upper Crystal River Valley/Marble Area) that lies within the White River National Forest (WRNF) will move **from Stage 2 to Stage 1** Fire Restrictions, effective 12:01 am, Friday July 9, 2021.

The following process was used to determine Fire Restrictions for Gunnison County:

Following established federal guidelines which utilize the National Fire Danger Rating System, if the Energy Release Component (ERC) and Burning Index (BI) fire indices reach the 90th percentile in the Gunnison Basin, then a meeting with the Gunnison Basin Wildfire Council must be convened to discuss restrictions. (See definitions below).

As of 10:00 am, July 7, 2021 the ERC and BI was below the 90th percentile. This information was presented by the USFS at the Gunnison Basin Wildfire Council 10:00 am, July 7, 2021.

The decision for the County to move in or out of Fire Restrictions is then based on the below criteria which were discussed in detail at the July 7 Gunnison Basin Wildfire Council meeting. A summary of current conditions for each item is included below.

- 1) **Criteria:** Is local resource availability reduced where a significant fire would be difficult to staff adequately?
 - a) **Summary:** All local resources (staff and equipment) are back in-county. The National Preparedness Level is 4, Regional is 2, and locally at 2. (See below for Preparedness Level definitions).
- 2) **Criteria:** Consider whether local area human caused occurrence are predicted to continue or is risk expected to increase.
 - a) **Summary:** Human starts have been minimal, only one reported on the GMUG in the last week.
- 3) **Criteria:** Consider if weather patterns and potential risk are predicted to continue. Are conditions going to change or remain constant?
 - a) **Summary:** Storms over the last two weeks have pushed most fire indices down to more normal levels. Weather models show a warm, drying trend over the next week, with fire indices expected to start increasing.



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- 4) **Criteria:** Are federal partners, such as the BLM Gunnison Field Office and the Gunnison National Forest, going into restrictions?
- a) **Summary:** Gunnison area USFS, BLM, and NPS are remaining in Stage 1 restrictions for at least the next week. The WRNF (UCRV / Marble) is moving to Stage 1 from Stage 2 due to improved conditions.
- 5) **Other Criteria:** TYPE ANY ADDITIONAL TOPICS HERE (IF APPLICABLE)

Therefore, a combination of the fire indices and discussion, which included the Carbondale Fire Protection District and the WRNF, of the above criteria at the Gunnison Basin Wildfire Council, leads the Council to recommend moving that part of Gunnison County that lies with-in the WRNF from Stage 2 to Stage 1 Fire Restrictions.

As Sheriff of Gunnison County, and with the authority given to me to implement fire restrictions in Gunnison County by Gunnison County Resolution 2021-16, I hereby move that part of Gunnison County that lies within the WRNF from Stage 2 to Stage 1 restrictions.

Sheriff John Gallowich
John Gallowich, Gunnison County Sheriff

7-7-2021
Date

Definitions:

Energy Release Component (ERC) - Based upon the estimated potential available energy released per unit area in the flaming zone of a fire. It is dependent upon the same fuel characteristics as the spread component (SC). The day to day variations of the ERC are caused by changes in the moisture contents of the various fuel classes, including the 1,000 hour time lag class. ERC is derived from predictions of the rate of heat release per unit area during flaming combustion and the duration of the burning. Expressed in BTU's per square foot.

Burning Index (BI) - A measure of fire intensity. BI combines the Spread Component and Energy Release Component to relate to the contribution of fire behavior to the effort of containing a fire. BI has no units, but in general it is 10 times the flame length of a fire.

National Preparedness Levels:

Level 1 - During this time, fire personnel are able to suppress wildfires in their respective geographic areas without requesting additional wildland fire resources from other areas or from the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC), based at the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho. Fire activity is typically below normal at this level.



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Level 2 - At this stage, several geographic areas are experiencing high to extreme fire danger, though they are able to manage fire activity without requesting many wildland fire suppression resources from other areas. Few of the country's IMTs are assigned to wildland fire incidents

Level 3 - This stage typically involves two or more geographic areas requiring significant amounts of wildland fire suppression resources from other areas. At this point, NICC is moving an increased amount of wildland fire suppression resources around the country, including IMTs

Level 4 - This level involves three or more geographic areas experiencing large, complex wildfires requiring IMTs. Geographic areas are competing for wildland fire suppression resources and about 60 percent of the country's IMTs and wildland firefighting personnel are committed to wild-land fire incidents.

Level 5 - This is the highest level of wildland fire activity. Several geographic areas are experiencing large, complex wildland fire incidents, which have the potential to exhaust national wildland firefighting resources. At least 80 percent of the country's IMTs and wildland firefighting personnel are committed to wildland fire incidents. At this level, all fire-qualified federal employees become available for wildfire response

The Gunnison Basin Wildfire Council is comprised of the following:

- Gunnison Volunteer Fire Department
- Crested Butte Fire Protection District
- Gunnison Sheriff's Office
- Crested Butte Marshal
- Mt Crested Butte Police
- USFS
- BLM
- NPS
- Gunnison County OEM

