



News Release

Color Country Interagency Fire Management

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Fire managers prepare for increased fire danger Public support needed to reduce human caused fires

ST GEORGE -- Fire managers in the Color Country Interagency Fire Management Area (southwest Utah and northwest Arizona) are working closely together to prepare for what could be a busy and challenging fire season. “Precipitation received this past winter and spring has promoted a hazardous grass crop in lower elevations and will likely pose an increased fire hazard when it dries out,” Fire Management Officer Mike Melton states. “We are also seeing a significant increase in public outdoor recreation and recognize that it could contribute to the number of ignitions,” Melton said.

Land Management agencies expect the conditions in Color Country to reach dangerous levels this summer, especially in the lower elevations where many people live, work and recreate. “There is a good possibility that many areas of Color Country may once again go into fire restrictions this season,” Melton added. The snow is quickly melting from the higher elevations and the conditions for burning will increase as the summer progresses.

Fire managers are seeing drier vegetation at lower elevations now, increasing the fire threat daily. The public is urged to be aware of this danger and take appropriate precautions when conducting any activity that could produce heat, sparks or flames. “Please be especially careful where you build campfires, completely extinguish campfires with water and be cognizant of where you park your vehicle. A hot exhaust system or embers from a campfire can result in a very dangerous situation for firefighters and the public,” Melton said. Cutting, grinding and welding of metal is also a leading wildfire cause in southwest Utah.

Fireworks are always prohibited on public lands and homeowners are encouraged to do their part to reduce fire danger by maintaining vegetation around homes to lessen the risk. The Spring season is an ideal time for reducing the amount of vegetation around homes and outbuildings. Mowers and string trimmers should be used to cut and then remove hazardous vegetation.

For more information on preventing unwanted human caused wildfires, visit www.utahfireinfo.gov and www.wildlandfire.az.gov or on Twitter [@UtahWildfire](https://twitter.com/UtahWildfire).

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