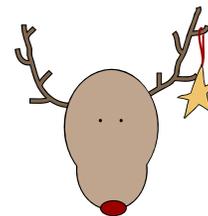




# 2015 Christmas Tree Cutting Information

## Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre & Gunnison National Forests

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/gmug>



### Permit Information

- ◆ Permits are \$8.00 per tree-limit 5 trees per household-for personal use only-*All sales are final and non-refundable.*
- ◆ 4th-graders with a valid MKIP pass receive a free permit.
- ◆ Permits will be sold **November 16 - December 31, 2015** during posted office business hours.
- ◆ Government offices are closed on observed holidays (11/26; 12/25).
- ◆ All permits expire at midnight, December 31, 2015.

### Tree Species Available for Cutting:

Subalpine fir, Engelmann spruce, Lodgepole pine, Pinyon pine, Juniper; *blue spruce on Gunnison Ranger District only.*

### Cutting Requirements:

- ◆ Trees height maximum is 20 feet.
- ◆ Topping of trees is not allowed (e.g. cutting the top of a tree and leaving the lower portion with limbs attached).
- ◆ Trees must be less than 6-inches in diameter as measured at 6-inches above ground level.
- ◆ Stumps must less than 6-inches high with all live limbs removed/cut off.
- ◆ Tree(s) should be "tagged" with the permit before leaving the cutting area and the permit must be securely fastened and clearly visible when transporting.

### Regulations to Observe:

- ◆ Cutting is permitted only on the federal lands for which the permit is issued.
- ◆ Respect private property rights and avoid private land. Know where you are and who owns/manages the lands you are on.
- ◆ All Forest Travel Management Restrictions apply to closures, designated routes and parking off designated roads.
- ◆ Cutting Christmas trees is prohibited within:
  - ◇ Forest service facilities and Administrative sites.
  - ◇ Picnic areas and campgrounds; at trailheads and scenic pullouts.
  - ◇ Within tree plantations and timber sales.
  - ◇ Within Wildernesses.
  - ◇ Areas signed or mapped as "closed to cutting."
  - ◇ Within and/or adjacent to cross-country ski areas, along Forest trails and/or downhill ski areas.
  - ◇ In other areas specific to each District. Ask before you go for any additional restricted areas.
- ◆ Keep motorized vehicles on designated routes that are open to the mode of vehicle you are using.
- ◆ Park in locations, away from the road right-of-way and where you can safely park and access to search for your tree.
- ◆ Do not drive on designated and groomed ski trails.

### Recommended Cutting Areas:

- ◆ Within powerline corridors.
- ◆ In areas where vegetation (fuels) have been mechanically treated and/or trees are densely growing.
- ◆ In areas that may be recommended by the District Office managing the permit sales.
- ◆ We recommend cutting Christmas trees no closer than 100 yards from the nearest road or trail.

### Be Prepared and Be Safe:

- ◆ Check on local road conditions, weather and travel advisories before heading out to cut your tree. There is a link on the Forests' website to CDOT's road conditions and cameras for roads in the area, including Hwy 65 over the Grand Mesa.
- ◆ Be prepared for unexpected conditions and have a full tank of gas, winter clothes and boots, a first-aid kit, food, extra water, blanket and warm liquids.
- ◆ Use of sleds or snow shoes can help access and haul out your "perfect tree."
- ◆ Take along a hand saw, axe, shovel, tarp and rope or tie-downs to cut, haul and secure your tree.
- ◆ Make sure your vehicle is suited to the road/weather conditions.
- ◆ *Be cautious/avoid areas with dead/dying trees that may fall without warning while cutting Christmas trees.*
- ◆ Watch for logging truck traffic on plowed forest roads.

### Preparing Your Tree for the House:

Cut off the end of the tree (about 1-inch) to provide for absorption of liquids. Let the tree stand in the "Fire Minimizing Mixture" until ready to bring indoors (allow several hours). Fill the tree stand reservoir twice a day with the mixture, especially in the first few days when the absorption rate is highest.

### "Fire Minimizing" Mixture:

Combine:

- ◇ 2 gallons of hot water
- ◇ 2 cups of corn syrup
- ◇ 2 ounces of bleach
- ◇ 2 pinches of Epsom salt
- ◇ 1/2 teaspoon of Borax
- ◇ 1 teaspoon of chelated iron (found in garden shops)

**Note: This mixture does NOT make the tree fireproof! It helps the tree stay moist longer, which helps to reduce the flammability potential or fire hazard.**

**Please dispose of your tree in an environmentally friendly way...**



## Tree Species Identification and Description Aids



**Subalpine fir** (needles soft to the touch): Subalpine fir needles are single (1) on the twig, blunt or notched at the tip, flattened (two-sided), white-grayish spores on undersides, soft to the touch, and are up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches long. Buds are round, almost globe-shaped, and orange-brown. Tree bark is smooth and grayish white with pitch blisters. Trees are spire-shaped and grow at upper elevations in combination with Engelmann spruce.



**Engelmann spruce** (needles sort of prickly to the touch). Engelmann spruce needles are single (1) on the twig, pointed, sharp to the touch, four-sided, same color on all sides, and are up to 1 inch long. Needles radiate in all directions on twig. The older twigs from which needles have fallen have stubby pegs on them. Tree bark is scaly. They grow at upper elevations in combination with



**Blue spruce** (needles really prickly to the touch). Similar to Engelmann spruce but with longer and sharper needles. Found at lower elevations than Engelmann. Cones are three times as large as Engelmann. **Available to cut ONLY on the Gunnison Ranger District.**



**Lodgepole Pine.** Lodgepole pine needles are clustered in groups of two (2) on the twig, flat or two-sided, and are about 2-3 inches long. Tree bark is scaly. Often found on fire-regenerated sites.

**Juniper.** Juniper needles are small green scales. Cones are small bluish berries. Junipers occur at lower elevations in conjunction with Pinyon pine.



**Pinyon Pine.** Pinyon pine needles are grouped together in twos on the twig, flat and two-sided and are about 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches long. They typically grow in the lower elevations, near the Forest Boundary and on BLM lands

