

## **INFORMATION FOR ACQUIRING A PERMIT TO DO MOTION FILMING AND STILL PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE COCONINO NATIONAL FOREST**

A special use permit is required for all commercial filming on National Forest lands, when a product is being produced for sale, even if the entity is a non-profit. Commercial still photography does not require a permit when shots only include scenery, do not include models or props or do not require special access to closed areas or additional oversight. Breaking news does not require permits. Filming from roads and highways on National Forest lands also require permits.

### **Proposal/application requirements:**

A. A Certificate of Insurance with the USDA Forest Service (United States), Coconino National Forest, as additional insured. A copy of a certificate can be provided for your insurance company to complete. It would be signed by both the holder of the permit and the insurance company.

B. Fee payment is due in advance of any occupancy of the location and can be made online with a credit card or by check, money order or cash in person at a Forest Service Office or far in advance by mail.

C. **As a general rule, two weeks advance notice is needed for the preparation and issuance of permits.** An initial contact with the office with a tentative date and locations is acceptable in order to determine a deadline for final application submittals. Call in advance as much as possible when considering filming activities in the Sedona area. Less notice may result in inability to obtain a permit.

D. Information needed in proposal: - Special locations where activity is proposed. - Number of crew on site, vehicles and all the equipment/props to be used. - Dates: locations and times by date. - Describe in detail what you are planning to do at each site, including special effects. - Activities which restrict traffic require traffic control by law enforcement officers. - Permits on roads may also be needed from other local jurisdictions (i.e. county and ADOT).

**General Guidelines:** A. During most times, permits will not be issued for Friday through Sunday, unless in very low use areas. High use public areas such as Oak Creek Canyon, Oak Creek Vista, along highways, Bell Rock area, Red Rock Crossing, other trailheads, Schnebly Hill Road, Snowbowl Road, Schultz Creek Trail and the Mount Elden Dry Lake Hills area will NOT be permitted on weekends. Permits for filming activities are issued to minimize conflicts with the general public and their use of these areas. There may be other times of the year when certain locations have limitations due to high public use or other concerns.

B. No altering of the landscape or vegetation: i.e., cutting trees or limbs, moving boulders, digging or earth moving activities. The area is beautiful and it can't be changed to suit filming desires.

C. Law enforcement officers, by jurisdiction, must be present when filming on major roads and highways. Traffic may be stopped for intervals as short as possible, usually 5 minutes at one time.

D. Safety and resource impacts must be considered before any activity takes place.

E. Filming in archeological sites is not permitted.

F. Filming in designated Wilderness areas and Wild and Scenic River Corridors are not allowed unless the filming activity is solely to promote protection of these resources and cannot be done using an area outside these designated areas and accomplish the same goals.

G. Filming from helicopters or using drones will not be authorized in many areas, such as within 5 miles of an airport, most areas around Sedona and over Wilderness. Locations that could be considered are south of the Sedona wastewater plant along SR 89A or south of the Village of Oak Creek along SR 179 or west of FR525. Drone use would require a commercial drone operation authorization and will require additional review time.

H. Failure to comply with the permit conditions or exceeding the permitted authorization may result in production delays, cancellation of the permit or legal action.

I. Filming along State highways or county roads require an extra permit for those jurisdictions.

J. Lines that credit the Coconino National Forest are required for length motion pictures.

K. Small crews with less equipment and vehicles are better to reduce impacts to resources and other users.

L. All activities typically must stay on designated roads and trails or hard rock surfaces.

M. Equipment must be self-supporting and require no ground disturbance.

N. Permitted areas are not exclusive use and are first come first served with the general public. Areas cannot be reserved and the general public users cannot be asked to leave an area.

O. Many areas around Sedona and Flagstaff are extremely busy and filming activities could be restricted to avoid conflicts in certain areas.

P. Filming of entities that provide services on the National Forest (outfitter and guides such as jeep tours, hiking etc.) will only be allowed in the locations and showing the activities that are authorized under their permits. If an entity does not have a current permit with the Forest Service for these activities, filming permits will not be issued.

## Fees

Permit fees are based on the number of days (or any part of a day) filming will take place and crew size. It is not based on a per location basis. There may be changes to this fee schedule in the future. Current fees are:

### Still Photography

Crew Size	Cost
1 - 10	\$50/day (or minimum fee for one day)
11 - 30	\$150/day
30 or more	\$250/day

### Motion Photography

Crew Size	Cost
1 - 10	\$150/day
11 - 30	\$200/day
31 - 60	\$500/day
61 or more	\$600/day

## Additional Policy information: 45.51b - Evaluation of Proposals

A special use permit may be issued (when required by sections 45.51a and 45.52a) to authorize the use of National Forest System lands for still photography or commercial filming when the proposed activity:

1. Meets the screening criteria in 36 CFR 251.54(e);
2. Would not cause unacceptable resource damage;
3. Would not unreasonably disrupt the public's use and enjoyment of the site where the activity would occur;

4. Would not pose a public health and safety risk; and
5. Meets the following additional criteria, if the proposed activity, other than noncommercial still photography (36 CFR 251.51), would be in a congressionally designated Wilderness area:
  - a. Has a primary objective of dissemination of information about the use and enjoyment of Wilderness or its ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value (16 U.S.C. 1131(a) and (b));
  - b. Would preserve the Wilderness character of the area proposed for use, i.e., would leave it untrammelled, natural, and undeveloped and would preserve opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation (16 U.S.C. 1131(a));
  - c. Is Wilderness-dependent, i.e., a location within a Wilderness area is identified for the proposed activity and there are no suitable locations outside of a Wilderness area (16 U.S.C. 1133(d)(6));
  - d. Would not involve use of a motor vehicle, motorboat, or motorized equipment, including landing of aircraft, unless authorized by the enabling legislation for the Wilderness area (36 CFR 261.18(a) and (c));
  - e. Would not involve the use of mechanical transport, such as a hang glider or bicycle, unless authorized by the enabling legislation for the Wilderness area (36 CFR 261.18(b));
  - f. Would not violate any applicable order (36 CFR 261.57); and
  - g. Would not advertise any product or service (16 U.S.C. 1133(c)).

#### **45.51 - Still Photography 45.51a - Permit Requirements**

A special use permit is not required for still photography when that activity involves breaking news (sec. 45.5). A special use permit:

1. Is required for all still photography (sec. 45.5) activities on National Forest System (NFS) lands that involve the use of models, sets, or props that are not a part of the natural or cultural resources or administrative facilities of the site where the activity is taking place. 2. May be required for still photography activities not involving models, sets, or props when the Forest Service incurs additional administrative costs as a direct result of the still photography activity, or when the still photography activity takes place at a location where members of the public generally are not allowed.

**Definitions.** The following terms are used to describe components of still photography and commercial filming activities: a. **Actor.** An individual who either: (1) Portrays a character or himself/herself in the reenactment of an event or incident, or (2) Narrates a storyline for commercial filming purposes. News broadcasters and correspondents, as well as witnesses, victims, or other parties interviewed by a news broadcaster or correspondent, who appear before a camera in the reporting of breaking news, are not considered actors for purposes of this definition.

b. **Breaking News.** An event or incident that arises suddenly, evolves quickly, and rapidly ceases to be newsworthy.

c. **Commercial Filming.** Use of motion picture, videotaping, sound recording, or any other type of moving image or audio recording equipment on NFS lands that involves the advertisement of a product or service, the creation of a product for sale, or the use of actors, models, sets, or props, but not including activities associated with broadcasting breaking news. For purposes of this definition, creation of a product for sale includes a film, videotape, television broadcast, or documentary of historic events, wildlife, natural events, features, subjects or participants in a sporting or recreation event, and so forth, when created for the purpose of generating income.

d. **Model.** An individual who poses for the commercial filming or still photography of a product or service for the purpose of promoting its sale or use. A model may also include inanimate objects, such as vehicles, boats, off

highway vehicles, articles of clothing, food and beverage products, and so forth, placed on NFS lands so that they may be filmed, photographed, or recorded to promote their sale or use.

e. **Sets and Props.** Items constructed or placed on NFS lands to accommodate commercial filming or still photography, such as backdrops, generators, microphones, stages, lighting banks, camera tracks, vehicles specifically designed to accommodate camera or recording equipment, rope and pulley systems, rigging for climbers, and structures. Sets and props also include trained animals and inanimate objects, such as camping equipment, campfires, wagons, and so forth, when used to stage a specific scene. A set or prop does not include any of the preceding items when they are used to report breaking news, nor does a prop include a hand-held camera or a camera mounted on a tripod.

f. **Still Photography.** The use of photographic equipment to capture still images on film, digital format, and other similar technologies on NFS lands that: (1) Takes place at a location where members of the public are generally not allowed or where additional administrative costs are likely, or (2) Uses models, sets, or props that are not a part of the site's natural or cultural resources or administrative facilities.