

# MEDIA ADVISORY

## USDA Forest Service

### National Forests of Southern California



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## Announcement of Increased Fire Restrictions Coming - September 22

### ***“Know Before You Go”***

#### ***A Campaign to Underscore Elevated Wildfire Risk In Several Southern California National Forests***

Next Week, two of southern California's four national forests (Cleveland and Angeles) will raise their Fire Danger Level from "Very High" to "Extreme." This announcement, including public use restrictions, will be made via a news release from each of the forests, on Wednesday, September 22. The fire danger level on the Los Padres National and San Bernardino National Forests remains at "Very High" and fire restrictions are in effect, however no additional restrictions are planned at this time. Please note that many recreation opportunities will remain on the Los Padres and San Bernardino Forests, and in adjacent communities despite the additional restrictions being implemented on the Angeles and Cleveland National Forests.

After several years of drought, all four national forests report increasingly dry and hazardous conditions. Various restrictions on the use of fire and other activities, and some area closures, have been in place since early summer. These restrictions vary from forest to forest due to differences in topography, vegetation, climate, visitor use patterns & other factors. On the San Bernardino National Forest, summer thundershowers have left significant moisture at higher elevations, while the Los Padres Forest has less severe conditions due to the coastal weather influence. Forest managers are committed to closing high risk areas of the forests to public entry only when absolutely necessary to protect public safety.

In conjunction with these announcements, the U.S. Forest Service will kick-off the ***Know Before You Go campaign in southern California***. This public education campaign urges forest visitors to **check before they go** on conditions, fire restrictions and closures in the area of their destination *before* their trip.

#### ***Media Safety on Wildfires***

As many of you who've been covering wildfires in southern California are well aware, some of California's most dangerous and destructive fires have occurred in the fall months during Santa Ana wind events. We have prepared a *Media Safety Tips* handout, which we will be happy to provide and strongly encourage you to read. As the fire season progresses, please follow safety guidelines, including contacting the Fire Information Officer once on scene.