



San Juan Public Lands Center

15 Burnett Court
Durango, CO 81301
970 247-4874

www.fs.fed.us/r2/sanjuan
www.co.blm.gov/sjra/index.html



When is a Filming/Photography Permit Necessary on the San Juan National Forest?

Commercial Film Production (Videotaping and Photography):

A special-use permit is required for all commercial film production activities on National Forest System lands.

Commercial film production is defined as the use of photography, motion picture, videotaping, sound recording, other moving image or audio recording equipment on National Forest System 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 activities associated with broadcasts for news programs. For purposes of this definition, creation of a product for sale includes but is not limited to a film, pictures, 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. A permit is also needed when photographing people engaged in activities, such as river rafting on National Forest lands, with the express purpose of selling the products to those same users.

Commercial film production will NOT be permitted if the Forest Service determines that any of the following criteria apply:

- There is a likelihood of resource damage that cannot be mitigated.
- There would be an unreasonable disruption of the public's use and enjoyment of the site (beyond short term interruption)
- The activity poses health or safety risks to the public that cannot be mitigated.

A special-use permit is not required when that activity involves breaking news. Examples of breaking news are:

- A plane crash in the forest
- A wildland fire
- A search and rescue

Non-Commercial Film Production:

National Forest visitors (professional or amateur) will need a permit if the film production will:

- Use models, sets or props that are not part of the site's natural or cultural resource or administrative facilities.
- Take place where members of the public are not generally allowed. An example would be an area closed to the public to protect winter range for wildlife.
- Take place at a location where additional administrative costs are likely. An example would be sites that are so popular for filming that the Forest Service is required to regulate use.