



## **GUNNISON COUNTY SHERIFF FIRE RESTRICTION ORDER # 2022-001**

The Gunnison County Sheriff has determined that in order to protect life and property, the entirety of Gunnison County will enter **Stage 1** Fire Restrictions, effective 12:01 am, Wednesday June 15, 2022.

The following process was used to determine Fire Restrictions for Gunnison County:

Utilizing established federal guidelines which utilize the National Fire Danger Rating System, if the Energy Release Component (ERC) and Burning Index (BI) fire indices reach the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile in the Gunnison Basin, then a meeting with the Gunnison Basin Wildfire Council must be convened to discuss restrictions. (See definitions below).

As of 10:00 am, June 13, 2022 the ERC and BI exceeded the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile. Therefore, a Gunnison Basin Wildfire Council meeting was convened at 10:00 am, June 14, 2022 to discuss fire conditions and the possibility of fire restrictions.

The decision for the County to move in or out of Fire Restrictions is then based on the below criteria which were discussed in detail at the Gunnison Basin Wildfire Council meeting. A summary of current conditions for each item is included below.

- 1) **Criteria:** Is local resource availability reduced where a significant fire would be difficult to staff adequately?
  - a) **Summary:** Recent fire starts in Conejos, Teller, Montrose and La Plata Counties, as well as those in New Mexico, are drawing local, state and federal resources out of Gunnison County. The National Preparedness Level is 2, Regional is 2, and locally at 4. (See below for Preparedness Level definitions).
- 2) **Criteria:** Consider whether local area human caused occurrence are predicted to continue or is risk expected to increase.
  - a) **Summary:** Human starts continue to increase, as well as numerous unattended campfires being found. The Fourth of July weekend is expected to bring many more campers/hikers to the area.
- 3) **Criteria:** Consider if weather patterns and potential risk are predicted to continue. Are conditions going to change or remain constant?
  - a) **Summary:** Weather models show warm, dry and windy conditions for the foreseeable future. Scattered thunderstorms later this week, with minimal precipitation, and high chance of dry lightning.



- 4) **Criteria:** Are federal partners, such as the BLM Gunnison Field Office and the Gunnison National Forest, going into restrictions?
  - a) **Summary:** Gunnison area USFS, BLM, and NPS all moving to Stage 1 restrictions at 12:01 am, June 15, 2022
- 5) **Other Criteria:** TYPE ANY ADDITIONAL TOPICS HERE (IF APPLICABLE)

Therefore, a combination of the fire indices and discussion on the above criteria at the Gunnison Basin Wildfire Council leads the Council to recommend Stage 1 Restrictions for all of Gunnison County.

As Sheriff of Gunnison County, and with the authority given to me to implement fire restrictions in Gunnison County by Gunnison County Resolution 2022-13, I hereby implement Stage 1 restrictions for all of unincorporated Gunnison County, effective 12:01 am Wednesday June 15, 2022.

Sheriff John Gallowich  
John Gallowich, Gunnison County Sheriff

6-14-2022  
Date

**Definitions:**

**Energy Release Component (ERC)** - Based upon the estimated potential available energy released per unit area in the flaming zone of a fire. It is dependent upon the same fuel characteristics as the spread component (SC). The day to day variations of the ERC are caused by changes in the moisture contents of the various fuel classes, including the 1,000 hour time lag class. ERC is derived from predictions of the rate of heat release per unit area during flaming combustion and the duration of the burning. Expressed in BTU's per square foot.

**Burning Index (BI)** - A measure of fire intensity. BI combines the Spread Component and Energy Release Component to relate to the contribution of fire behavior to the effort of containing a fire. BI has no units, but in general it is 10 times the flame length of a fire.

**National Preparedness Levels:**

Level 1 - During this time, fire personnel are able to suppress wildfires in their respective geographic areas without requesting additional wildland fire resources from other areas or from the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC), based at the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho. Fire activity is typically below normal at this level.



Level 2 - At this stage, several geographic areas are experiencing high to extreme fire danger, though they are able to manage fire activity without requesting many wildland fire suppression resources from other areas. Few of the country's IMTs are assigned to wildland fire incidents

Level 3 - This stage typically involves two or more geographic areas requiring significant amounts of wildland fire suppression resources from other areas. At this point, NICC is moving an increased amount of wildland fire suppression resources around the country, including IMTs

Level 4 - This level involves three or more geographic areas experiencing large, complex wildfires requiring IMTs. Geographic areas are competing for wildland fire suppression resources and about 60 percent of the country's IMTs and wildland firefighting personnel are committed to wild-land fire incidents.

Level 5 - This is the highest level of wildland fire activity. Several geographic areas are experiencing large, complex wildland fire incidents, which have the potential to exhaust national wildland firefighting resources. At least 80 percent of the country's IMTs and wildland firefighting personnel are committed to wildland fire incidents. At this level, all fire-qualified federal employees become available for wildfire response

**The Gunnison Basin Wildfire Council is comprised of the following:**

- Gunnison Volunteer Fire Department
- Crested Butte Fire Protection District
- Gunnison Sheriff's Office
- Crested Butte Marshal
- Mt Crested Butte Police
- USFS
- BLM
- NPS
- Gunnison County OEM

The GBWC coordinates closely with the Carbondale Fire Protection District and the White River National Forest.