



## Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest

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# Fire Update

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## Forest Service Rescinds South Sugarloaf Fire Closure

**Elko, NV., Sept. 12, 2018** – After the initial assessments of the South Sugarloaf Fire Burn Area Emergency Response Team (BAER), the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest has reopened all of the closed area on the Mountain City-Ruby Mountains-Jarbidge Ranger District today.

“I want to thank the public for being patient with us as we dealt with the South Sugarloaf Fire,” said Josh Nicholes, District Ranger for the Mountain City-Ruby Mountains-Jarbidge Ranger District. “Although the BAER Team has been addressing safety concerns, I can’t stress how important it is for recreationists, hunters, and local residents to remain vigilant about safety hazards if they are in the fire’s burned area.”

According to Nicholes, wildfires dramatically alter the terrain and ground conditions, so people who are out hunting, horseback riding, or walking in the South Sugarloaf Fire’s burned area need to keep the following hazards in mind:

- Ash and needles on trails and footpaths can make for slippery conditions.
- Burned-out stump holes make the general forest floor weak and unstable.
- Unstable dead trees can be especially hazardous in windy conditions when they can fall suddenly.
- Loose rocks and logs can create rolling debris.
- Flash flooding and mud flows may be common in areas without vegetation.

He warned that the land, particularly the steep terrain, will be changing constantly and be unstable for many years until the vegetation becomes reestablished. “Even the most experienced Forest user will need to stay alert to their surroundings and changing weather conditions, and not take unnecessary risks,” said Nicholes.

Important safety precautions to keep in mind while recreating in an area recently burned in a wildfire include:

- **Know Before You Go:** Be aware of existing and impending weather conditions and check with the National Weather Service (<http://www.weather.gov/>) frequently for updates.

- **Leave Detailed Trip Plans with a Trusted Person:** The plan should include times and dates of departure and return. It should also include estimated arrival at certain checkpoints. Alert your trusted person if plans change.
- **Do not Rely on Phones and Map Apps:** There are many places on National Forest System lands where cellular services or coverage still DO NOT exist. A cell phone does not guarantee your safety. Have the appropriate navigation equipment and knowledge of how to use that equipment. Also, be aware in a burned area that trail and road signs may have been destroyed.
- **High Wind Hazards:** Pay attention to high wind advisories and high wind warnings issued by the National Weather Service. Take shelter immediately if there are high winds.
- **Survey your surroundings.** When camping check the contour of the land and look for potential trouble spots due to rain. Areas that could flood are extremely dangerous in a burned area. In addition, look for a camp site away from burned trees.

Nicholes also reminds the public fire danger remains extreme and that stage 1 fire restrictions are in place across the Mountain City-Ruby Mountains-Jarbidge Ranger District.

**Stage I Fire Restrictions include:**

- All campfires, charcoal grills, and stove fires (wood, charcoal, and coal burning) are only allowed in designated campgrounds/areas. Portable cooking stoves utilizing liquefied or bottled fuel sources continue to be allowed on public lands.
- Smoking is only allowed in an enclosed vehicle, building, or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is void of all flammable material, including vegetation.
- Use caution when operating or parking vehicles in close proximity to vegetation.
- No welding equipment may be used, including acetylene or open flame torches, except by permit.
- Fireworks, exploding targets, and incendiary or tracer ammo are always prohibited on public lands.

For more detailed information on fire restrictions on Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, visit:

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/htnf/alerts-notice>

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