

NEWS RELEASE: Forest Supervisor says Forest-wide closure will continue through weekend

## **Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests**

*Fort Collins, Colorado*

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### **Forest Supervisor says Forest-wide closure will continue through weekend**

**FORT COLLINS, Colo.** (Oct. 29, 2020) – Forest Supervisor Monte Williams confirmed that the temporary closure of the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests will continue through the weekend. This decision was closely coordinated with and supported by Grand, Clear Creek, Gilpin, Boulder, Larimer and Jefferson counties and their sheriffs. Colorado Parks and Wildlife has also supported the Forest in this decision.

“I understand the tremendous impact this closure has on people wanting to hunt and recreate on the National Forest,” Williams said. “We are taking a careful, measured and deliberative approach, factoring in the forecasts, fuel conditions, and availability of firefighting personnel.”

It is estimated that the 6-18 inches of snow received across north central Colorado Sunday contained the equivalent of about one-half to 1-inch of rain. While that will help the finer fuels like grasses and sage recover, it won't help the larger fuels like trees and downed logs, which are the driest fire managers have seen in 20 years.

Cameron Peak, CalWood and East Troublesome fires are all still burning under the snow, with smoke and flames visible within their perimeters. “Both the Cameron Peak and Williams Fork fires have already been snowed on multiple times, and they both made big runs after that.” Williams said. “We are seeing conditions worse than 2012 when the Fern Lake Fire made a run through Rocky Mountain National Park toward Estes Park from under the snow in December. Fire season is not over in northern Colorado.”

The forecast for the next 8-14 days calls for a return of warmer-than-normal temperatures, with no significant moisture in the extended outlook. Southerly slopes are losing snow first. As snow melts, potential will return for new fire starts and fire growth.

“Foremost on our minds are the local firefighters, law enforcement officers, search and rescue personnel and emergency first responders who have spent the past 10 weeks protecting their communities,” Williams said. “We are also thinking of the tens of thousands of residents who live in the wildland urban interface around the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests, whose homes are surrounded by forests that remain tinder dry. And then there is the population of our greater metropolitan areas who have been breathing smoke all summer. We need to give these folks a break. We just can't risk one more fire.”

The Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest has been in Stage 1 fires restrictions, banning dispersed campfires, since April. A Stage 2 fire ban went in effect across portions of the Forest in July and the

remainder of the Forest in August. Stage 3 fire restrictions went into effect Oct. 20, banning all use of the National Forest due to extreme fire danger.

[See the Stage 3 closure order.](#)