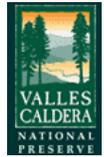


NEWS RELEASE

USDA Forest Service
Santa Fe National Forest



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VALLES CALDERA LIFTS RESTRICTIONS; SANTA FE NATIONAL FOREST - NO CHANGE

(SANTA FE, NM)—Valles Caldera National Preserve officials announce they are lifting Stage III Fire Restrictions for all of the Valles Caldera National Preserve effective immediately.

The Las Conchas Fire and the Pacheco Fire areas on the Santa Fe National Forest will remain in Stage III Fire Closures and are off limits.

“Our safety assessment of the area confirmed that recent rainfall improved conditions in the burn area of the Preserve,” said Dennis Trujillo, Interim Executive Director. “Safety remains our number one priority therefore public access to the burned area will be approved on a case by case basis by VCNP staff.” The Preserve remains open to all scheduled activities including a curtailed fishing program which is limited to the East Fork of the Jemez River. The San Antonio Creek will remain closed until fishing conditions improve.

“Though the Valles Caldera is able to open the rest of their forest land, the Santa Fe National Forest is not,” said Maria Garcia, Santa Fe National Forest Supervisor. “Safety is our number one concern,” Garcia said. “Significant safety hazards caused by the Las Conchas Fire still remain on the Santa Fe National Forest. People need to be aware that entering the burned area on the Santa Fe National Forest poses serious potential risk, including threats from flash flooding, falling trees and rolling rocks.”

Violations could result in up to five thousand dollars in fines, up to six months in jail, or both.

For more information on the Santa Fe National Forest, call (505) 438-5300. For the Valles Caldera National Preserve, call (866)382-5537.

For a copy of the Las Conchas and Pacheco Fire Area Closure Orders please visit:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/sfe/conditions>

