

Commissioner's Order – Restricting Open Fires in Portions of the State

Date: July 23, 2021

Authorities: *Minnesota Statutes*, sections 88.10, 88.16, 88.17, and 88.22.

BACKGROUND

WHEREAS:

The entire state of Minnesota is abnormally dry and 98 percent of the state is affected by moderate, severe, or extreme drought; and

Weather conditions continue to contribute to significant drying of forests, brushlands and grasslands of the state, resulting in fuel conditions conducive to wildfire hazards; and

Portions of north and central Minnesota, covering Aitkin, Becker, Beltrami, Benton, Carlton, Cass, Clearwater, Cook, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, Lake of the Woods, Mahnommen, Morrison, the eastern portion of Roseau, Stearns, St. Louis, Todd, and Wadena counties are experiencing particularly high fire danger indices, reflecting conditions that allow fires to start and spread easily; and

Recent precipitation received in the state did not alleviate the long-term fire danger indices and concerns, leaving much of north and north-central Minnesota dry, and the extended forecast predicts continued hot and dry conditions; and

Fires in dispersed and remote areas hinder fire suppression efforts and additional out-of-state resources to assist in fire suppression are limited;

Partner agencies within the Minnesota Incident Command System (MNICS) support restricting open fires in portions of north and north-central Minnesota and have done so within their jurisdictions;

On June 17, 2021, the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (Commissioner) issued a Commissioner's Order restricting open fire in portions of the state that extended until revoked or modified; and

On July 12, 2021, the Commissioner modified that order to include additional counties; and

Acting on behalf of the Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources now desires to modify the order again to cover additional areas including Aitkin, Becker, Benton, Carlton, Clearwater, Mahnommen, and Stearns counties for the reasons described above.

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, pursuant to authority vested in me by law, including *Minnesota Statutes*, sections 88.10, 88.16, 88.17, and 88.22, that for the period commencing at 12:01 am, July 27, 2021, and continuing until revoked or modified by further order of the Commissioner for Aitkin, Becker, Benton, Beltrami, Carlton, Cass, Clearwater, Cook, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, Lake of the Woods, Mahnomon, Morrison, the eastern portion of Roseau, Stearns, St. Louis, Todd, and Wadena counties, excluding tribal lands (Exhibit A):

1. No burning permits may be issued except for special exceptions issued by the state or federal agency having suppression responsibilities; and
2. Campfires or recreational fires are allowed only in a designated fire receptacle designed for such use and associated with a residence, dwelling, campground, or resort; and
3. No use of fireworks is allowed outside of municipalities; use of fireworks within a municipality remains under the municipality's control.

Exhibit A: Counties subject to this Commissioner's Order.



Barb Naramore, Deputy Commissioner

Date: July 23, 2021

