
MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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Kachina Peaks Wilderness Area Closure

Flagstaff, AZ- The Northern Arizona Emergency Operation Center is announcing the closure of the Kachina Peaks Wilderness Area on the San Francisco Peaks due to extreme avalanche danger caused by recent excessive snowfall. In the interest of public safety the Coconino National Forest has issued a temporary Forest Order closing the Kachina Peaks Wilderness area to any and all entry. This order supersedes all Kachina Peaks Winter Backcountry permits already issued this season. **This means that any backcountry skiing, snowboarding or snowshoeing from Snowbowl is prohibited until further notice, and violators are subject to criminal penalty.**

This closure is based on recent storm activity and field observations of natural avalanche activity and snow instability. This week's snowfall is on pace to be the greatest in over 30 years. Coconino County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue personnel have conducted two search and rescue operations in hazardous weather conditions this week. Search and Rescue must make risk assessment decisions and will take into account rescuer safety before deploying personnel into the field. This Forest Order will be cancelled as soon as conditions permit at which time Back Country permits will be valid again.

For additional information please refer to the Coconino National Forest at www.coconinoforest.us

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