

OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE RESTRICTION

ISSUED: MAY 7, 2020 AT 12:00 P.M.

FACT SHEET

WHERE IS THE OHV RESTRICTION?

- The OHV restriction is in effect within the Forest Protection Area (FPA) of Alberta in the High Level Forest Area, Peace River Forest Area, the northwestern portion of the Slave Lake Forest Area and the rural areas surrounding Fort McMurray. Please refer to AlbertaFireBans.ca for exact locations. Cities, towns, villages and summer villages as well as Federal lands (such as National Parks) are exempt from this restriction. These jurisdictions have the authority to issue their own restrictions and may have complementary restrictions in place.

WHAT IS PROHIBITED?

- The recreational use of OHVs on public lands, including designated OHV trails.

WHAT IS AN OHV?

- An “off-highway vehicle” is a motorized vehicle designed to go beyond defined roadways, including but not limited to: Quads, Side by sides, Dirt bikes, 4x4 Jeeps, Pick-up trucks, Sport utility vehicles and snowmobiles.

WHY IS THE OHV RESTRICTION IN PLACE?

- This is a decision that has been made as part of our COVID-19 pandemic response, not necessarily because of a high wildfire hazard. Taking action in advance to reduce the number of human-caused wildfires will allow Alberta Wildfire to make the best possible use of resources when the availability of firefighters could be reduced because of the pandemic.

HOW LONG WILL THIS BE IN PLACE?

- Alberta Agriculture and Forestry will be monitoring conditions. The restriction will be amended when appropriate.

UNDER WHAT AUTHORITY IS THE OHV RESTRICTION PUT IN PLACE?

- The OHV restriction was enacted under section 14(1) of the Forest and Prairie Protection Act. This section gives the Minister the authority, by order, to close to public entry any land or prohibit the operation of equipment or off-highway vehicles on any land where the Minister considers that a fire hazard or a burning hazard warrants the closure or prohibition.

ARE THERE EXCEPTIONS?

- Indigenous people when using an OHV for traditional purposes. Traditional purposes are hunting, fishing, and trapping – including the use of an OHV to travel to the location(s) for these purposes.
- Essential industry-related activities requiring the use of OHVs.
- Off-highway vehicle use is still permitted on private lands.
- An Off-highway vehicle restriction exemption is also in place for those licenced for the spring black bear hunt.

WHAT PENALTIES ARE IN PLACE?

- If you're found to be operating an OHV recreationally during an OHV restriction, you may be issued a \$1200 ticket. Individuals found responsible for starting a wildfire may be charged and fined the cost of fighting the fire.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

- Online: albertafirebans.ca
- Facebook: Alberta Wildfire
- Twitter: @AlbertaWildfire
- Phone: 1-866-FYI-FIRE