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(Neb.)-Free Firewood Permits Available For Grasslands

By: Chris Fankhauser Posted at: 01/04/2013 10:00 AM

(Chadron)-One free firewood permit per year will be available to individuals beginning January 2, 2013 from the Pine Ridge Ranger District including the Oglala National Grasslands. Permit holders can harvest up to four cords, which previously cost \$20, and allowable harvest areas have been greatly expanded. One cord of firewood is measured as four feet by four feet by eight feet (4 x 4 x 8), or approximately one-half cord for a half-ton pickup loaded.

Until now wood could only be taken from two piles located on the District, but recent modifications allow permit holders to harvest their own wood up to 150 feet off all Forest Service Roads and county roads crossing National Forest land.

John Lee, Forester on the Pine Ridge Ranger District said they are excited to offer these free permits and hope the public is interested in the firewood. This will help them meet their forest management goals.

Even though free, interested persons must come to the Pine Ridge Ranger District Office to pick them up and permits must be kept with the person while retrieving firewood. Other significant changes include the following:

Travel Management regulations prohibit permit holders from driving off designated roads to cut and collect firewood. Standing dead pine trees may be harvested if less than 24 inches in diameter and if the tree is more than 50 feet from streams to create a stream buffer. Standing hardwood cannot be cut or felled, but may be taken if they are dead and on the ground.

As a reminder, no firewood cutting of any type is allowed in established campgrounds, the Pine Ridge Job Corps or in Soldier Creek Wilderness. The free firewood permits are available at the Pine Ridge District Office, 125 N. Main Street in Chadron during business hours, Monday through Friday between 8:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. Maps and complete instructions are attached to each permit. For more information please call (308) 432-0300, visit the office or the website www.fs.fed.us/r2/nebraska.

(Story courtesy of Nebraska National Forests And Grasslands)