

For Immediate Release

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**Notice of Emergency Closure of Public Lands in Pima and Santa Cruz Counties**

*Lands are located within the Las Cienegas National Conservation Area*

**TUCSON, Ariz. –** The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Gila District is issuing a temporary emergency closure of public lands in Pima and Santa Cruz Counties. This closure affects public lands within the Las Cienegas National Conservation Area to include areas between Highway 82 and Interstate 10 and Highway 83 to Highway 90.

This emergency closure is necessary to ensure public safety after the Sawmill Fire. There are many smoldering trees and grasslands that present hazards. Gusty winds, ongoing suppression efforts, and restoration activities also make the area unsafe for public access. BLM Law Enforcement will make periodic patrols in the areas affected by this closure to ensure public safety.

In the coming weeks, fire and resource personnel will conduct post-fire assessments for reclamation and public safety. As these actions occur, the agency will re-evaluate and update the temporary closures.

The Sawmill Fire was reported on Sunday, April 23, off Highway 83, near Sonoita, Ariz.

The fire has currently burned approximately 47,000 acres and is 40 percent contained. Additional information on the Sawmill Fire is available at <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/state/3/>.

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*The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land, the most of any Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America's public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. In Fiscal Year 2015, the BLM generated $4.1 billion in receipts from activities occurring on public lands.*