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(Neb.)-Time Running Out For Free Firewood Permits

By: Chris Fankhauser Posted at: 10/29/2013 09:47 AM

(File Photo)

(Chadron)-Time is running out for folks to take advantage of free firewood permits available from the Pine Ridge Ranger District including the Oglala National Grasslands.

John Lee, Forester on the Pine Ridge Ranger District, said the free permits have been available since January to help the Pine Ridge Ranger District meet forest management goals, but the program is about to end as it will expire on December 31, 2013. He said the intent of free permit was only for 2013 and then starting January 1, 2014, firewood permits will return to \$20 each.

Permit holders can harvest up to four cords of wood from Forest Service Lands, up to 150 feet off all Forest Service Roads and county roads. 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.

Interested persons must come to the Pine Ridge Ranger District Office to pick up the permits, and they must be kept with the person while retrieving firewood.

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 located three miles south of Chadron on Highway #385. The office business hours are Monday through Friday between 7:30 A.M. and 4:30 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 Nebraska National Forests & Grasslands)