



Office of Emergency Management

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PRESS RELEASE San Juan County, Colorado

SAN JUAN COUNTY: The San Juan County Sheriff's Department issues a stern warning to all backcountry recreation users. The San Juan County Sheriff's Department is prohibiting recreationalists from backcountry activities in the County due to the limited Medical, Emergency and Search and Rescue Services available currently due to the Coronavirus COVID 19 crisis.

The SJC Sheriff has also issued a policy/order prohibiting all but essential services in San Juan County. US HWY 550 is open to DRIVE THROUGH traffic and San Juan County residents only. Vehicles parked on the passes, and on County roads not registered in San Juan County Colorado are subject to fines and towing. This applies to all San Juan County Colorado lands and County roads, as backcountry skiers and snowmobilers unnecessarily increase the potential for emergency and medical team response.

On Wednesday March 18th, San Juan County and the Town of Silverton declared a Local Disaster Emergency Declaration due to the spread of COVID 19 in the State of Colorado.

With the limited population size of San Juan County and our geographic isolation Medical, Emergency and Search and Rescue resources could easily be overwhelmed. San Juan County is being proactive in the Local Disaster Emergency Declaration and the San Juan County Public Health Order due to the current state of limited Medical and Emergency Resources.

Public Health experts anticipate that due to the highly contagious nature of the COVID 19 virus and the high travel of international and local travelers through San Juan County daily, San Juan County could see positive cases of the virus. In recent days, neighboring jurisdictions, San Miguel County and Hinsdale County have both documented their first local COVID 19 positive cases.

COVID 19 is a highly contagious virus that originated in China and has spread to numerous countries around the world including the United States and here in Southwest Colorado. On March 11, 2020 the Governor of the State of Colorado Jared Polis declared a State of Emergency for the State of Colorado and on March 13, 2020 the President of the United States Donald Trump declared a National Emergency for the United States of America as a whole.

Colorado State Highway 550 remains open to through traffic.

Check out sanjuancolorado.us to read the San Juan County Local Emergency Declaration and the Public Health Order in its entirety. An updated and revised PUBLIC HEALTH ORDER will be amended on Monday 3/23/20.

Direct all press inquiries to San Juan County Office of Emergency Management Public Information Officer DeAnne Gallegos.

For more information on the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) go to: <https://www.colorado.gov/cdphe> SIGN UP FOR PUBLIC ALERTS ON THE NIXLE SYSTEM: TEXT 81433 to 888-777 and or sign up for public emergency information at pio@sanjuancolorado.us