

DISASTER DECLARATION RELATED TO RISK OF WILDFIRES

WHEREAS, Freestone County has not had a significant rainfall for an extended period of time, creating hot and dry conditions which poses the threat of large, dangerous, and fast-moving wildfires; which have the potential of endangering lives and damaging property on a large scale; and

WHEREAS, the Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI), maintained by Texas A&M Agrilife Research and Texas A&M Forest Service, is an index used to determine fire potential and the current KBDI for Freestone County is at a value of 720 as of July 18, 2022, which is in the highest range on the index, indicating that the county is in severe drought and increased risk of wildfire occurrence; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Government Code Chapter 418 gives the county judge authority to declare a local disaster within the county "if the threat of disaster is imminent"; and

WHEREAS, this magnitude of potential damage in which such a fire could escalate to cause major hazards constitutes an imminent threat of disaster; and

WHEREAS, a declaration issued under Section 418.108 of the Texas Government Code may include a prohibition or restriction on the sale or use of restricted fireworks within the county; which are only those items classified under 49 C.F.R. Sec. 173.100(r) (2) (10-1-86 edition), as "skyrockets with sticks" and "missiles with fins".

WHEREAS, a local disaster declaration expires seven (7) days after it is issued, unless commissioners court consents to its continuance or renewal; and

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED by myself, Linda K. Grant, the County Judge of Freestone County, that I declare a local state of disaster based on imminent threat of large wildfires in Freestone County, Texas, and hereby ban the sale and use of restricted fireworks (as described above) in Freestone County (with the exception of commercially done displays by a bonded professional company); and

BE IT ALSO ORDERED that this state of disaster will continue until rescinded in accordance with the above cited statute, but in no instance will this declaration continue for more than seven (7) days without being authorized by the County Commissioners Court.

BE IT ALSO ORDERED that a violation of the Disaster Declaration is punishable as a Class C misdemeanor by a fine not to exceed of \$500.00 or as authorized by Government Code Section 418.713 and adopted in the county's emergency plan by a fine not to exceed \$1,000.00 or confinement in jail for a term not to exceed 180 days, whichever is greater.

This declaration shall be promptly publicized and filed with the County Clerk.

SIGNED on the 19 day of July, 2022

Linda K Grant

Linda K. Grant

Freestone County Judge

FILED FOR RECORD
At 10:07, o'clock AM

JUL 19 2022

RENEE REYNOLDS
Clerk County Court, Freestone County, Texas
By [Signature]