Section 3. Special Stipulations

CHRISTMAS TREE CUTTING

(a) Your Permit

- Keep your original permit with you while cutting your tree. We do not accept photocopies or digital copies.
- This permit is good to cut Christmas trees on **BLM lands only** and not on US Forest Service lands.
- For cutting Christmas trees on USFS lands, please visit https://www.recreation.gov/tree-permits/13bc0e3c-e7cf-11ea-ad53-eac1bc825671 to purchase a USFS Christmas Tree Permit.
- Show your permit when any BLM staff or law enforcement officer asks to see it.
- Your permit expires at midnight on the end date or when you collect your full number of trees, whichever comes first. Permits cannot be extended or reactivated once expired.
- You cannot give or sell your permit to someone else.
- You cannot get a refund for your permit.
- The map that comes with your permit shows where you can cut trees. Stay within these areas.

(b) Safety Rules

- Only build warming fires in designated fire rings. Never leave a fire unattended. Make sure your fire is completely out before leaving.
- Check fire restrictions at https://www.mtfireinfo.org before you start. Fires aren't always allowed.
- If you use tools that create heat or sparks, keep fire safety equipment within reach.
- Only build warming fires in marked fire spots, and only when fire restrictions allow them.
- Cut trees only during daylight hours when you can see clearly.

(c) Where You Can Cut

- Cut trees only on BLM lands that are open for Christmas tree cutting as indicated on your permit map. Contact the permitting office for any clarification on boundaries.
- Do not cut trees in:
    - 150 feet of any water body, including streams, ponds, lakes, and wetlands. Look for signs like cattails, moss, or damp ground.
    - Wilderness areas and Wilderness Study Areas (protected natural areas).
    - Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument.
    - Wild and Scenic River areas (specially protected waterways).
    - Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.
    - Developed campgrounds and picnic areas.
    - Areas with active logging (look for equipment, fresh cutting, or warning signs).
    - Any area marked as closed to cutting on maps or signs.

(d) How to Cut Your Tree

- Pick a tree that's 12 feet tall or shorter.
- Cut the whole tree - don't just take the top part.
- Do not cut these trees:
    - Five-needle pines (Whitebark or Limber Pine - look for needles in bundles of 5)
    - Trees with ribbons, paint, or markers
    - Trees with bird nests or animal dens
    - Very large, old trees (with thick trunks or gnarled bark)

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  - Trees with special carvings or decorations
- Clear away any snow around the base.
- Cut the stump 6 inches or less from the ground.
- Cut up any branches left on the stump and scatter them in the area.

(e) Moving Your Tree

- Park where you won't block other vehicles or emergency access.
- Drive only on open roads and established trails.
- Don't drive on wet or muddy ground.
- Leave gates exactly as you find them.
- Attach your permit to your tree before you transport it.

(f) Protecting the Land

- Protect historical items:
  - Leave old cabins, mining equipment, or Native American artifacts untouched
  - Take photos instead of souvenirs
- If you accidentally damage anything historical, tell BLM within 24 hours.
- Avoid damaging other plants while cutting your tree
- Take all your trash with you when you leave.

(g) Following the Rules

- You can only take the type and number of trees listed on your permit.
- If you need more trees, buy another permit at your local BLM office or at https://forestproducts.blm.gov/
- Follow all posted BLM signs and rules.

(h) Your Responsibility

- You are responsible for any accidents or damage that happen while cutting your tree.
- The U.S. government is not responsible for accidents, injuries, property damage, or loss of life.

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