



# Harvesting of Special Forest Products on the San Juan National Forest

## Guidelines and Regulations for Sustainable Harvest of Special Forest Products

Special Forest Products are botanical products, other than timber, that are harvested from public land. On the San Juan National Forest, this includes corral poles, firewood, tipi poles, fence stays, walking sticks, Christmas trees, boughs, pine cones, medicinal plants, berries, mushrooms, transplants, native plant seeds, basket-making material, and decorative plants.

### General Regulations

Generally, a permit is required to remove a product from public land. Permits are either free or carry a charge. Free-use permits are given for the collection of small quantities of forest products for personal use (not for resale), valued at less than \$20. Charge permits are for removal of larger quantities of products or for commercial sales (products for resale).

Unless specifically authorized by USFS personnel, harvest of forest products is not allowed in:

- ◆ Weminuche, South San Juan, or Lizard Head Wilderness
- ◆ Piedra Special Management Area
- ◆ Developed Campgrounds and Picnic Areas
- ◆ Administrative Sites

### How Permits Work

The person to whom the permit is issued is responsible for following the requirements and all other applicable laws and regulations. Violation of the terms of the permit or illegal collection of products may result in the forfeiture of all collected products; termination of the permit; and/or criminal prosecution, with a fine of not more than \$5,000 or up to 6 months in prison, or both.

### Personal Use

- ◆ The gathering of small amounts of forest botanical products (medicinal plants, material for basketry, berries, mushrooms, boughs, seeds, decorative plants, and dry pine cones) for personal use is allowed without a permit.
- ◆ A permit should be obtained if the activity results in the killing of the plants, collecting roots, more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  bushel of plants, boughs, or sprigs, or more than 1 lb. of mushrooms, or 1 cup of seeds.
- ◆ A \$20 product-removal permit is required for more than 10 lbs. of mushrooms, two bushels of plants or boughs, or more than 2 lbs. of seeds or medicinal roots.



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The removal of firewood, poles, transplants, fence stays, walking sticks, roots or Christmas trees always requires a permit.

- ◆ *Firewood permits* are \$10/cord for up to 10 cords/household for personal use.
- ◆ *Transplants* are available for \$5 for aspen, shrub, or white fir. All other trees are \$10 each. A minimum \$20 permit is required for a maximum of 20 transplants/person.
- ◆ *Pole permits* are available for a minimum of \$20. Prices vary, depending on quantity and product.
- ◆ *Christmas tree permits* are \$8/tree for a maximum of 5 trees/household for personal use.

### Commercial Permits

Removal of any product from public lands for resale requires a commercial permit or contract. Not all products are available for commercial harvest. Areas for commercial collecting are usually designated in the permit or contract. Permits or contracts may be obtained at any San Juan National Forest office. Those interested in collecting products commercially should contact us at least 2 months before harvest, to allow adequate time for response. Any forest product collected for personal use cannot be sold. Permits cannot be transferred or exchanged and are not refundable.



### Guidelines for harvesting forest products

- ◆ During collection, you are expected to exercise reasonable care in protecting resources from damage.
- ◆ Know your species. Do not eat or collect wild plants or mushrooms unless you are certain of the species.
- ◆ Know what species are at risk in your area. Never collect threatened, endangered, or sensitive plants or fungi.
- ◆ Be opportunistic and harvest from areas that are also disturbed by logging or development.
- ◆ Harvest only what you need or can reasonably use.
- ◆ Try not to disturb or compact soils.
- ◆ Leave the area as you found it. Fill in any holes and step lightly.
- ◆ Revisit and monitor the effects of your harvest in an area. Become a steward of that place. Study the plants and how they respond.
- ◆ Do not break bushes or trees that will be left. Do not strip the leaves of berry bushes.
- ◆ Collect mushrooms in a mesh bag or open-weave basket, to allow the mushrooms to spore while you are harvesting, and cover the hole where the stem was with forest litter or damp soil, to protect the mycelium from drying out.
- ◆ Spread the impacts of your harvest out and leave some behind for wildlife.
- ◆ Do not drive off roads, create ruts, or leave trash behind.