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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Flagler County prepares to declare state of local emergency, enact countywide burn ban

April 25, 2017 – Flagler County officials will be asked to declare a state of local emergency, as well as enact a burn ban throughout the county at the Monday, May 1 meeting of the Board of County Commissioners.

“We are proposing to initiate the ban as an abundance of caution due to the amount of fires occurring around the state,” Flagler County Fire Rescue Chief Don Petito said. “Since January, there have been 1,775 fires around the state burning approximately 146,172 acres in the state of Florida.”

Two very large fires are still active in the state. There is the “Cow Bell Fire” in South Florida that is 21,620 acres and the “West Mims Fire” in North Florida that is currently 36,050 acres.

“The fire activity being reported around the state is aggressive fire behavior and the rapid spread rate is alarming,” Petito said. “The Florida Forest Service has suspended issuing any type of burn permits Statewide.”

Twenty-two counties have already issued burn bans in Florida. No significant rainfall is forecast for Flagler County within the next 10 days.

The burn ban prohibits the following:

- The sale, use and discharge of fireworks
- Open burning, including the use of fire pits and containers
- Charcoal-burning barbecue grills
- Throwing matches or cigarettes (or other burning materials) from car windows
- Parking vehicles with catalytic converters in high grassy areas

Anyone who violates the executive order, or willfully fails or refuses to comply can be punished by law under Florida Statutes Section 252.50.

The ban will remain in effect until further notice.

For safety tips, go to www.flaglercounty.org/firewise.

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