

Glenda Wiles

From: McKay, Tod G -FS <tgmkay@fs.fed.us>
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Subject: Fire Update - August 20th
Attachments: Fire Fact Sheet 8-20-18.docx; Goat_Mountain.JPG



FACT SHEET

Wildfire Update

August 20, 2018

Contact: Public Affairs Officer – Tod McKay
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What: 7 new fires
Discovered: August 20th
Location: Bitterroot National Forest – Darby/Sula and West Fork Ranger Districts

Summary: Firefighters are currently working on 7 new lightning-caused wildfires on the Bitterroot National Forest. Thanks to quick response by fire crews and aviation resources, all of the fires are small –1/4 acre in size or less. All of the fires are located south of Darby on the southern end of the Forest.

Containment: The Tin Cup fire is ¼ acre and is located west of Darby up Tin Cup drainage about one mile from the road. Smoke was visible this morning from Darby. The six other fires are located on the West Fork District east of Painted Rocks Lake near Jew Mountain.

Resources on Fires: 18 firefighters and two helicopters responded to the fires which are being actively suppressed, under a full suppression strategy. The helicopters assisted with bucket work (water drops) on numerous fires to help control the spread, until firefighters could reach them. All of the fires are burning in remote locations and crews had to hike-in or be flown-in by helicopter.

Lightning: There were more than 50 confirmed lightning strikes on the southern end of the Forest this morning. The storm that came through also brought minimal precipitation with most weather stations reporting light rainfall (.02 inches).

Idaho Wilderness Fire: The lightning-caused Goat Mountain Fire in Idaho's Frank Church Wilderness was discovered yesterday, August 19th. It is currently 1/10th of an acre and is located one mile SE of Salmon Mountain Lookout. Due to its remote location with no structures threatened, the fire is being allowed to play its natural role in the wilderness and will be unstaffed with a point protection strategy. See photo attached.

Special Concerns: Reminder, we remain in "Extreme" fire danger and under Stage 2 Fire Restrictions on the forest and in Ravalli County prohibiting campfires and all other fires. Camping stoves are allowed. Following today's active weather calling for thunderstorms, rain, and gusty winds, we return to more average temperatures (mid-80s) by mid-week. Please visit www.firerestrictions.us/mt for more information.

Smoke/Air Quality: There are currently 50 uncontained large wildfires burning across the west which is contributing to our smoke impacts and widespread hazy skies. As of 2:00pm, air quality in Hamilton was listed as 'Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups'. Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should limit prolonged outdoor exertion, until conditions improve. For the latest air quality information and a daily *Wildfire Smoke Update* visit <http://svc.mt.gov/deq/todaysair>.

2018 Fire Season: Firefighters have responded to 26 wildfires this summer on the Bitterroot National Forest.

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