

From: McKay, Tod G -FS <tgmkay@fs.fed.us>
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Subject: News Release: Christmas Tree Permits Available Beginning Tuesday
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Christmas Tree Permits Available Beginning Tuesday

Hamilton, Montana (November 8, 2018) - Cutting your own Christmas tree is a special holiday outing available to those who live near National Forest Lands. There's an abundant choice of trees and species on the Bitterroot National Forest. In order to remove a Christmas tree from the National Forest, you need to have a Christmas tree permit.

They may be purchased for \$5 beginning this Tuesday, November 13th at any Forest Service office or at authorized retailers including Bob Wards, Murdoch's, and Lone Pine Conoco in Hamilton, Mr. T's in Darby, Merc Fresh Market in Corvallis, and Cenex in Stevensville. Only cash or personal check will be accepted for payment.

Free Permits for 4th Graders! As part of the 'Every Kid in a Park' (EKIP) national initiative which strives to connect youth with nature, the Bitterroot National Forest is offering one free Christmas tree permit to every fourth grader. To participate in the free holiday tree program visit www.everykidinapark.gov. Fourth graders must present a valid EKIP Pass or paper voucher at their local Forest Service office (not vendors) to receive their free permit. For more information call (406) 363-7100.

Here are some tips for you to get the best tree possible, and manage the forest for years to come.

1. Taking a tree from an overcrowded area will give the remaining trees more space, moisture and light to grow.
2. Cutting is not allowed in restricted areas such as developed recreation sites and campgrounds, existing timber sale areas or previously thinned areas.
3. Please do not cut out the top of a tree or leave a stump higher than eight inches.
4. Be sure you are cutting your tree on National Forest land. Maps of the National Forest may be purchased at any Forest Service office Mon-Fri. 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Maps are \$14 each.
5. Be prepared for winter conditions and take a vehicle equipped with 4-wheel drive, snow tires or chains. Start early since winter days are shorter. Keep a watchful eye for snowmobiles and other recreationists walking, skiing, or sledding on back roads.
6. If your tree won't be set up right away, store it in a cool area. When you're ready to bring it indoors, cut at least an inch off the bottom. The tree will be thirsty so make sure there is always plenty of water in the tree stand. This will prolong the life of the tree through the holidays.

7. Permits are for personal use only and limited to three per family. If you want to remove Christmas trees for fundraising or boughs for commercial use, please visit or call the Darby/Sula Ranger District at (406) 821-3913.

For more information contact the Bitterroot National Forest office near you or visit our website at www.fs.usda.gov/bitterroot. Stay in touch with us through www.facebook.com/DiscoverBitterrootNF and www.twitter.com/BitterrootNF.

Have a safe and enjoyable outing and Happy Holidays!

Bitterroot National Forest – Hamilton 363-7100

Stevensville Ranger District - 777-5461

Darby/Sula Ranger District - 821-3913

West Fork Ranger District - 821-3269

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Tod McKay
Public Affairs Officer

Forest Service
Bitterroot National Forest

p: 406-363-7122

c: 406-531-1130

tgmckay@fs.fed.us

1801 N. First

Hamilton, MT 59840

www.fs.usda.gov/bitterroot



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