

From: McKay, Tod G -FS <tgmkay@fs.fed.us>
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Subject: News Release: New Firewood Permits Available
Attachments: Firewood Permits - 2019.docx; Firewood.jpg

New Firewood Permits Available

Hamilton, Montana (March 28, 2019) – Personal firewood cutting permits for 2019 go on sale this Monday, April 1st at all Bitterroot National Forest offices.

The permits are good for one year and allow woodcutters to take up to 12 cords of firewood. A cord is the amount of tightly piled wood in a stack four feet high by four feet wide by eight feet long.

Permits can be purchased weekdays at any Forest Service office from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The cost is \$20 for a minimum purchase of four cords. Additional cords may be purchased for \$5 per cord for a total of 12 cords per individual per year.

Personal use wood permits allow you to remove downed timber or to cut standing dead trees under most conditions on National Forests and Grasslands, and Bureau of Land Management lands within Montana, Northern Idaho, and portions of North and South Dakota. It's important to check with the local ranger district to see if there are any specific local restrictions or requirements.

Woodcutters must have their firewood permit with them while harvesting wood, keep their vehicles on designated roads and trails, have an approved spark arrester on chainsaws and splitters and carry a shovel and fire extinguisher. No wood can be cut or gathered within 150 feet of streams, creeks or waterways. Firewood gathering is also prohibited in all developed recreation areas, campgrounds and along Wild and Scenic River Corridors.

Forest officials would like to remind woodcutters of slash piling requirements and are asking the public for help in keeping ditches clear of woody debris. Piling requirements include:

- Pile slash away from roads, ditches, power lines, or telephone lines.
- A rake should be brought along for cleaning road surfaces of debris.
- Locate piles 15 feet away from the base of live trees, and keep them 6 to 10 feet in diameter and a minimum of 5 feet in height.
- Do not build piles on top of down logs or rotten stumps or have objects that extend more than 3 feet from piles which will be burned by Bitterroot National Forest crews during the appropriate conditions.

Woodcutters should also use caution while driving on Forest Service roads. Many remain snow covered and icy at higher elevations. Roads at lower elevations are wet and muddy and the soft roadbed can easily be damaged by vehicle traffic.

The Forest plans to temporarily open several roads later this summer for the public to access personal use firewood. These designated areas on each ranger district will be announced in June in an effort to provide more easily accessible firewood. Stay tuned for more details.

For more information and guidelines check the firewood permit and firewood cutting handout available at all Bitterroot National Forest offices or visit www.fs.usda.gov/bitterroot.

Please contact your local district office for updates and more information.

Supervisor's Office – Hamilton, (406) 363-7100
Stevensville Ranger District, (406) 777-5461
Darby/Sula Ranger District, (406) 821-3913
West Fork Ranger District, (406) 821-3269

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