

## Glenda Wiles

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**From:** McKay, Tod G -FS <tod.mckay@usda.gov>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 21, 2019 12:20 PM  
**Subject:** [POSSIBLE SPAM] Bitterroot NF Fire Update -- July 21st  
**Attachments:** Fire Fact Sheet 7-21-19.docx; Canyon\_Fire.JPG; Canyon\_Fire1.JPG  
**Importance:** Low



# FACT SHEET

## Wildfire Update

**July 21, 2019**

**Contact:** Public Affairs Officer – Tod McKay  
**Phone:** 406-531-1130

**What:** 2 new fires  
**Discovered:** July 20<sup>th</sup>  
**Location:** Bitterroot National Forest – Darby/Sula and Stevensville Ranger Districts

**Summary:** Firefighters are working on 2 new wildfires caused by lightning and discovered yesterday on the forest. Both fires are burning in remote locations in the Bitterroot Mountains and there are no structures threatened or closures at this time.

The Little Rock Creek Fire is 1/10<sup>th</sup> of an acre and is staffed with 4 firefighters who were flown into the area last night and rappelled to the fire from a hovering helicopter. The fire is burning in the Little Rock Creek drainage on the Darby/Sula Ranger District southwest of Lake Como. It is currently contained and is expected to be out later today.

The Canyon Fire is estimated at 3/10<sup>th</sup> of an acre and is located west of Hamilton at the top of Blodgett Canyon between Blodgett Lake and Blodgett Pass. There are currently 8 firefighters on scene who were flown in by helicopter and are working to suppress the fire which is 0% contained. The fire is located approximately 9 miles west of the Blodgett Canyon Trailhead.

**Additional Resources:** In addition to the 8 firefighters assigned to the Canyon Fire there is also one helicopter assisting with bucket work to help control the fire's spread. The helicopter will also be flying in additional resources for the crew so residents living near the area and anyone hiking the popular Blodgett Canyon Trail #19 should expect helicopter traffic throughout the day.

**Terrain Info:** Both fires are burning in remote and rugged locations. The Canyon Fire is located in extremely steep and rocky terrain. See attached photos.

**Planned Actions:** Firefighters are working to control both fires, which are being actively suppressed, under a full suppression strategy. A helicopter using buckets to drop water in key locations will check the fire's growth and aviation will continue to be utilized as needed.

**Fire Behavior:** Creeping and smoldering with some single tree torching and spotting, aided by winds. The fires are burning in timber and brush.

**Weather:** Hot and dry with low relative humidity and gusty winds late in the day. The warmest temperatures of the year so far are expected this week, with highs reaching into the mid-90s and a chance of afternoon showers and thunderstorms.

**Special/Safety Concerns:** Firefighter safety remains a top priority as the fires are burning in remote, rugged, and steep terrain.

**Fire Restrictions:** There are no fire restrictions at this time. While the Bitterroot National Forest looks green, fire danger is a key concern. The Forest is currently at MODERATE fire danger. Fires can start quickly and will burn in vegetation that seems green but is drying out.

**Prevention Message:** Fire managers would like to remind visitors and recreationalist to be extremely careful while visiting the forest. Pay attention to those items that may cause a spark, such as chains on a trailer. Ensure that all campfires are dead out by adding water and stirring dirt into hot coals until cold. Remember, if it is too hot to touch, it is too hot to leave! One spark is all it takes to start a wildfire.

**2019 Fire Season:** Firefighters have responded to 30 lightning wildfires and 10 human caused fires this summer on the Bitterroot National Forest. Due to the quick response of crews, all fires were kept under 1 acre in size.

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Tod McKay  
Public Affairs Officer

Forest Service  
Bitterroot National Forest

p: 406-363-7122

c: 406-531-1130

[tod.mckay@usda.gov](mailto:tod.mckay@usda.gov)

1801 North 1st Street

Hamilton, MT 59840

[www.fs.fed.us](http://www.fs.fed.us)



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