



### Bitterroot National Forest

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# News Release

Media Contact: (406) 363-7122

Tod McKay

## Free Personal Use Firewood Cutting Beginning April 1<sup>st</sup>

Hamilton, Montana (March 25, 2020) – Personal firewood cutting will be free to the general public from April 1 through June 1, 2020, on the Bitterroot National Forest. No permit will be required during this time.

Woodcutters can take up to 12 cords of firewood for personal use. A cord is the amount of tightly piled wood in a stack four feet high by four feet wide by eight feet long.

Personal use firewood cutting allows you to remove downed timber or to cut standing dead trees under most conditions on National Forests and Grasslands, 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 other than those listed below.

In addition, forest officials request that woodcutters also follow these requirements:

- Do not fell green (live) trees for firewood.
- Do not cut standing dead trees or down logs with signs, tags or paint marks on them.
- Firewood gathering is prohibited in all developed recreation areas, campgrounds and wild and scenic river corridors.
- Firewood gathering is prohibited within timber sale units or other areas signed or shown on the firewood gathering area map as being closed to firewood gathering.
- Trees or logs must NOT be felled or skidded across live streams, lakes, or reservoirs. If a tree is accidentally felled into a waterway, leave the entire tree. Firewood gathering is prohibited within 150 feet of any running stream, pond, lake, marshy, or wet area.
- The following activities are prohibited: using over-the-terrain vehicles for skidding, yarding or skidding systems in excess of 100 feet, log trucks for hauling, or vehicles driven off roadways to gather firewood.

- Six feet is the maximum length piece that may be removed under the firewood program.
- The following are fire regulations for vehicles and chainsaws (during proclaimed fire season):
  - Chainsaw operators must have a serviceable fire extinguisher (liquid chemical 8 oz. or dry chemical 1 lb.) and shovel available at all times.
  - Chainsaws must be equipped with an approved spark arrester screen.
  - All vehicles must be equipped with a baffled muffler and serviceable tailpipe.
- Firewood obtained is intended for personal use only. Inquire by phone or email with your local District offices regarding commercial firewood permits.
- Pile or lop and scatter slash away from roads, power lines, telephone lines, ditches and stream courses.

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.

For more information and guidelines check the firewood cutting map and handout available at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/bitterroot/passes-permits/forestproducts>.

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

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

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