



## Forest Service News Release

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### Fire Danger Lowered to Very High

#### *Stage 2 Fire Restrictions Still in Place*

**Hamilton, MT, August 9** — The Bitterroot National Forest (BNF) announced today that it is lowering its fire danger from “Extreme” to “Very High” due to our recent cooler weather, rain, and current fuel conditions.

The Forest went to Extreme fire danger, the highest level possible, back on July 12th. It was the first time ever that the Bitterroot has reached Extreme fire danger levels in July.

“While we are thankful for the cooler weather and recent moisture, our fire season is still far from over,” said Mark Wilson, Fire Management Officer. “With our current fire activity across the Region and our resources stretched extremely thin, we all need to continue doing everything we can to prevent additional wildfires from starting,” said Wilson. “Now is not the time to be complacent.”

Stage 2 fire restrictions, which have been in place since July 17<sup>th</sup>, remain in effect in Ravalli County and across all Bitterroot National Forest lands in Montana including the Anaconda Pintler and Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness Areas in Montana. Stage 2 fire restrictions prohibit all campfires and smoking outside of vehicles, buildings, and flammable free areas. Firewood cutting is also prohibited after 1pm. Camping and cooking stoves that can be turned off are allowed. There have been no human-caused wildfires on the BNF in the last two weeks. Visit [www.mt.fireinfo.org](http://www.mt.fireinfo.org) to learn more about current fire restrictions in place throughout Montana.

When fire danger is “Very High” fires will start from most causes. The fires will spread rapidly and have a quick increase in intensity, right after ignition. Small fires can quickly become large fires and exhibit extreme fire intensity, such as long-distance spotting and fire whirls. These fires can be difficult to control and will often become much larger and longer-lasting fires.

For more information about fires in Montana and other fires across the country, visit <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov> or follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/DiscoverBitterrootNF](http://www.facebook.com/DiscoverBitterrootNF) for local fire information. This summer, firefighters on the Bitterroot National Forest have extinguished 56 wildfires; 17 human-caused and 39 lightning fires.

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