



## Forest Service News Release

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### Forest Lowers Fire Danger

#### *Fire Restrictions Lifted this Thursday*

**Hamilton, MT, August 24** — Due to widespread precipitation and cooler temperatures, the Bitterroot National Forest has lowered its fire danger to “High” down from “Very High.”

The Forest will also lift Stage 2 Fire Restrictions beginning this Thursday. Restrictions have been in place since July 17<sup>th</sup>. This means campfires will again be allowed on the Forest and will also lift the restrictions (*hoot owl*) on firewood cutting in the afternoon.

Ravalli County’s restrictions on open burning remain in place. For the latest on current fire restrictions and County burns bans in place throughout Montana visit [www.mt.fireinfo.org](http://www.mt.fireinfo.org)

Although fire danger remains High, fire management officials opted to move out of restrictions because of the recent precipitation as well as fire danger indices (burning conditions/severity), which are also moving downward as the summer season moves into the summer/fall transition.

Many locations across the forest received wetting rains over the last several days. The precipitation totals from this weekend ranged from .30 to 1.48 inches. The Northern Rockies Predictive Services described this weekend’s weather event as a “fire stopper, but not a season ender.” Temperatures this week will remain slightly below normal to near normal as a southwest flow develops that may bring some smoke back into our area, along with afternoon thunderstorms. Showers and cooler conditions could return by Thursday and into the weekend.

While fire danger has lessened, fire season is not over. Although campfires can be one of the best parts of camping and provide necessary warmth to hunters and other outdoor enthusiasts, they can also spark wildfires. Please don’t forget your responsibility to maintain and extinguish all campfires. Remember, if it’s too hot to touch, it’s too hot to leave. Never leave a campfire unattended.

Firefighters have responded to and extinguished 61 wildfires this summer on the Bitterroot National Forest; 20 human-caused and 41 lightning fires.

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