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Subject: Bitterroot NF - Wildfire Update - July 10, 2017
Attachments: Fire Fact Sheet 7-10-17.docx



July 10, 2017

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<p>What: 4 new fires Discovered: July 9-10th Location: Bitterroot National Forest</p>

Summary: Firefighters are working this afternoon on 4 new fires caused by lightning storms that went through the Bitterroot Valley last night and this morning. Thanks to quick response by fire crews, all of the fires are small – less than 1 acre in size. The fires are located on the West Fork, Darby/Sula and Stevensville Ranger Districts.

Current Size: The largest fire (Boulder Point) is $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre and is burning on the West Fork District just west of the Boulder Point Lookout. All other fires are .10 acre in size.

Containment: Two fires are currently contained or out. Containment is expected on the others later today or tomorrow.

Resources on Fires: There are currently 20 firefighters, one engine, and one helicopter assigned to the blazes which are being actively suppressed, under a full suppression strategy. The helicopter is assisting with bucket work on the Boulder Point fire to help control the spread.

Lightning: There were more than 500 confirmed lightning strikes on the Forest in the last 24-hours. Fire crews will be on the lookout for more fires today and over the next few days due to the amount of strikes and hot and dry conditions.

Special Concerns: Fire crews also responded to and extinguished three abandoned campfires this weekend, bringing the number of human caused fires this summer to eight. Firefighters are asking for the public's help in preventing human caused fires. Never leave a campfire

unattended and make sure your coals are cool to the touch before you leave. Remember, if it's too hot to touch, it's too hot to leave! It is illegal to have unattended campfires.

Weather: The National Weather Service is predicting more dry thunderstorms with gusty winds and small hail today as a weak cold front pushes through the region. Another ridge of high pressure will build on Wednesday bringing more hot and dry weather and a chance of more thunderstorms to Western Montana.

Open Burning: County Commissioners voted to close open burning in Ravalli County beginning this Thursday July 13th. There are no restrictions on campfires at this time.

Fire Danger: Fire Danger is currently "High" on the Bitterroot National Forest. Fires can spread rapidly and quickly increase in intensity after ignition. Small fires quickly become large fires and exhibit extreme fire behavior, such as long-term spotting and fire-whirls. These fires are difficult to control and often become longer-lasting fires.

2017 Fire Season: Firefighters have responded to 8 human caused fires and 6 lightning wildfires 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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