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Attachments: Fire Fact Sheet - 7-20-17.docx



July 20, 2017

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What: Bitterroot NF Fire Update
Location: Bitterroot National Forest

Dominic Butte Fire is located on the Stevensville Ranger District east of Corvallis in the Sapphire Mountains near Willow Mountain Lookout and Dominic Point. The lightning caused fire was discovered yesterday around 3pm and quickly grew to 25 acres. A heavy air tanker and two SEATs (single engine air tankers) made multiple retardant drops on the fire and helped establish a perimeter that firefighters on the ground are now working to reinforce. Three helicopters with buckets also assisted with water drops to help cool the fire and keep it from advancing.

There are currently 65 firefighters, five engines and two helicopters assigned to the blaze which is being actively suppressed. Today's plans are to continue building fire line around the perimeter and extinguish hot spots outside the fires edge to prevent it from growing. Crews are also working to establish a hose line around the north end of the fire. Helicopters are again assisting with bucket drops of water from local lakes.

Additional resources have been ordered including one 20-person hand crew, bulldozer and water tender. The fire is burning in heavy timber and brush in steep and rugged terrain. There are no structures threatened and trail and road closures are in place including for Willow Creek Road and Burnt Fork Lake. For more information visit www.inciweb.nwcg.gov

Sleeping Child Fire located on the Darby/Sula Ranger District southeast of Hamilton in the Sapphire Mountains near Sawdust Gulch Trail was called out this afternoon.

Brandy Peak Fire located up Lost Horse drainage south of Lost Horse Creek and three miles west of Lost Horse Observation Point is currently controlled. Four firefighters and one

helicopter have been working on the 1 acre, lightning fire since Tuesday. It was burning in such steep and rugged terrain that firefighters had to be flown in by helicopter (rappelling down) to reach the fire.

Tin Cup Fire was discovered last night by Bitterroot NF air patrol. It's currently estimated at 5 acres and is burning on the Darby/Sula Ranger District at the head of Tin Cup drainage near Tin Cup Lake. A medium helicopter with a bucket has been dropping water on the fire today to limit its growth. There are no structures threatened or closures in place. Firefighter safety remains a priority and due to this fire's current location in remote, rugged and inaccessible terrain firefighters are not directly engaging this fire on the ground at this time. A 20-person Hotshot Crew has been ordered to assist with this fire.

White Cap & Vance Mountain Fires are located on the West Fork Ranger District in Idaho's Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness 3 miles west of Tin Cup Lake. White Cap is 5 acres in size and Vance Mountain is estimated at 15 acres. Both are lightning caused and are remote with no access. They are located in extremely steep, rugged, and rocky terrain. These fire will not be staffed as firefighter safety is the number one priority. The fires will be managed for resource benefits and monitored by staffed lookouts and daily recon/air patrol flights.

Weather: The National Weather Service is calling for increased fire danger today and tomorrow as a dry cold front passes through our area. A Red Flag Warning is in effect for western Montana beginning this afternoon through Friday night. Low humidities and gusty winds will create erratic fire behavior and potential new fire starts.

Fire Danger: Fire Danger is currently "High" on the Bitterroot National Forest. Fires can spread rapidly and quickly increase in intensity after ignition. There are no fire restrictions at this time, but the public is reminded to use caution with any outdoor activity that may cause a spark. Never leave campfires unattended! Pour water and add dirt to your campfire until it is cold. Remember, if it's too hot to touch, it's too hot to leave.

Smoke/Air Quality: There are several larger lightning caused wilderness fires burning to our west in Idaho on the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest that may contribute to widespread hazy skies and smoke impacts in the Bitterroot Valley. For the latest air quality information visit <http://svc.mt.gov/deq/todaysair/>. This site displays particulate concentrations and health effects including a daily *Wildfire Smoke Update*. The information is measured by monitoring equipment across the state including a site in Hamilton.

2017 Fire Season: Firefighters have responded to 8 human caused fires and 25 lightning fires this summer on the Bitterroot National Forest. Due to the quick response of crews, most fires were kept small -- under 1 acre in size.

Please Note: Drones are dangerous if flown near wildfires. Drones can interfere with wildland fire air traffic that are necessary to suppress fires and could ground firefighting aircraft due to safety concerns. Learn more at <http://www.nifc.gov/drones/>

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