

# NEWS RELEASE

## USDA Forest Service -- Northern Region



September 4, 2001

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### MANY RECENT WILDFIRES IGNITED BY HUMAN CARELESSNESS

Careless human acts have caused nearly half of the wildfires in Idaho, Montana, and North Dakota so far this year. "It is so important for the public to be aware of any activities that may cause a wildfire," said Cathy Scofield, Fire Prevention Coordinator for the Northern Rockies. "Even with restrictions in effect in many places, we are concerned about the number of abandoned campfires, and other human acts that have resulted in fires that have threatened communities, endangered our firefighters, and have added to the workload of a firefighting force that is already stretched very thin."

Campfires have been one of the leading sources of human-caused wildfires this year. If campfires are allowed, campers should keep them very small, never leave them unattended, and make sure embers are "*cool to the touch*" before leaving the area.

Even though most people think that fall conditions are here, fire danger is not expected to decrease any time soon. According to weather forecasts, the Northern Rockies area is experiencing extreme fire conditions throughout most of the region, with little relief in sight. And long-range forecasts call for dry and warm weather to persist. Even though the summer crowds are tapering off, this is an increased time for visitors to the public lands during hunting season. There may be some restrictions in place depending on the location. It is so important to "*check before you go*" and determine the current conditions and restrictions that may alter plans. Current information can be found at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/fire/nrcg>

The Northern Rockies Coordinating Group is working to help raise awareness throughout Idaho, Montana, and North Dakota of the extreme fire dangers and reduce the number of human-caused wildfires.

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