



Northern Rockies Coordination Group Northwest Montana Zone

July 16, 2007

For More Information Contact:

Denise Germann, Flathead National Forest 758-5252, cell- 249-1714

Tony Conte, Kootenai National Forest 827-0750

Melissa Wilson, Glacier National Park, 888-7895

Northern Rockies
Coordination Group

NW Montana Zone
Member Agencies

Montana DNRC
Northwestern Land
Office

U.S. Forest Service
Flathead National
Forest

U.S. Forest Service
Kootenai National
Forest

National Park Service
Glacier National Park

U.S. Fish & Wildlife
Service
Flathead/Swan Area
Refuges

Flathead County

Lake County

Lincoln County

Sanders County

Fire Starts in Northwest Montana Zone

Recent lightning activity and human actions have created several fire starts across Northwest Montana in the last week. Initial attack strategies by fire management personnel from Flathead and Kootenai National Forests, Glacier National Park, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation and rural fire departments in Flathead, Lake, Lincoln and Sanders Counties have been successful in suppressing the fires.

Since July 11, there have been 13 new fire starts in Northwest Montana. Most of the fires have been small in size, with the largest at approximately 17 acres east of Lake Mary Ronan. This fire was started by haying activities on private land. Montana State Department of Natural Resources and Conservation personnel and equipment in cooperation with volunteer fire personnel from Polson, Chief Cliff and Rollins Fire Departments suppressed the fire. A fire by Holland Lake on the Flathead National Forest, south of Condon, is believed to have been initiated by human actions. The fire was controlled at approximately 1/10 of an acre. Logging operations contributed to two fire starts near Marion and southeast of Smith Lake. Both fires were suppressed with initial attack actions. Several unattended campfires were discovered on the Kootenai National Forest over the last several days. Fire Prevention Specialist Marcy Goheen said, "It is imperative that people build safe campfires. Never leave your campfire unattended, and make sure it is dead out before leaving."

Lightning sparked several fire starts over the weekend, including a three-acre fire on Crane Mountain, east of Flathead Lake, two fires near Star Meadows, west of Whitefish and one near Swan Lake. Fire crews and equipment continue suppression activities on these fires.

Dan Cassidy, DNRC Northwest Land Office Fire and Service Forestry Program Manager, said, "We are seeing conditions that we normally don't see until August." Due to the dry conditions Cassidy said state aircraft support, including a white/yellow/black Huey Helicopter, and fire engines have been routinely responding to recent fire starts.

Fire restrictions are NOT in place in Northwest Montana. It is anticipated that continued hot temperatures and lack of moisture will prompt fire restrictions in the near future.

-END-