



Flathead National Forest

Media Release

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Jungle Creek Fire Determined to be Human Caused

An investigation by Flathead National Forest Law Enforcement has determined that a campfire was the cause of the Jungle Creek Fire on the Spotted Bear Ranger District this past week. Anyone with information related to this incident is encouraged to contact the Forest Service at 387-3839.

The four-acre Jungle Creek Fire was reported on Monday, August 7, along the South Fork Flathead River, approximately four miles south of the Spotted Bear District Office.

The investigation concluded that someone started a campfire in a rock ring along the river. It appears that this campfire violated Stage I Fire Restrictions that have been in effect in Northwest Montana since July 31. The investigation also determined that someone tried to put it out, but was unsuccessful due to pine needles and duff located under the rocks. The fire was not “dead out” before individuals left the site.

Spotted Bear Ranger Deb Mucklow said, “This incident shows the importance of putting your campfire ‘dead out’ and the value of the fire being cold to the touch prior to leaving.” Mucklow continued, “Many times a campfire may have embers underneath rocks and this will allow the fire to remain for long periods of time.” She reminds everyone that Stage I Fire Restrictions do not allow for rock ring fires.

It is estimated that the campfire was used approximately one week prior to detection of the escaped fire, approximately the first week of August. Forest officials believe that folks floating the river may be responsible for the campfire.

Anyone that may have been in this area during the past couple weeks or knows anything about the fire is encouraged to contact Forest Service Law Enforcement at 387-3839.

REMINDER: Stage I Fire Restrictions are in effect across Northwest Montana. For more information, please visit www.fs.fed.us/r1/flathead or call your local Forest Service office.

Anyone causing a wildfire can be held financially responsible for damages and the cost of putting out that fire.

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