

	<b>Flathead National Forest</b>	<b>Media Release</b>
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November 5, 2008

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## **Firewood From National Forest Lands Requires Permit**

Gathering and cutting firewood on the Flathead National Forest requires a personal woodcutting permit. A permit may be obtained at any Flathead National Forest office or from several vendors in the area.

The personal use wood permit allows the removal of downed timber or the cutting of standing dead trees under most conditions on the forest. A permit is available for a minimum of four cords of wood for \$20. An individual may purchase a maximum of 12 cords per year. A cord measures 4' wide by 4' high in an 8' long stack; or 128 cubic feet. Firewood obtained under these permits may not be used for commercial resale.

Woodcutters are reminded that cutting western larch is prohibited from November through May on the Flathead National Forest, except if the tree can clearly be identified as dead. During this time, live larch trees lose their lost needles and appear dead. Dead standing western larch may be cut if it has loose dry bark. Swan Lake District Ranger Steve Brady said, "It is important to pay attention when looking at western larch for firewood purposes, as it is easy this time of year to confuse the live western larch with the standing dead."

The Brush Creek Wildland Fire area on the Tally Lake Ranger District, located west of Whitefish, is not available for wood gathering or cutting. Various post-fire management activities are taking place in this area and firewood cutting and gathering will not be permitted until those activities are completed. No cutting is permitted in the Coram Experimental Forest or on the paved section of Westside Reservoir Road, Forest Road #895.

General requirements for gathering and cutting wood on the Flathead National Forest

include:

- Do not cut painted or tagged trees as many of these trees provide important denning, nesting, and perching habitat for many kinds of wildlife,
- Cutting is prohibited within 300 feet of a lake, stream, or wetland to maintain healthy riparian areas,
- Please clear the road surface and ditches of tops and limbs when you are done cutting firewood, and scatter or pile the material off of the roadway, and
- All vehicles must remain on the road surface.

Woodcutters must have their permit with them while harvesting wood and follow the conditions of the permit. Woodcutters also need to have an approved and maintained spark arrester on chainsaws and splitters, and must have a shovel and fire extinguisher handy in the event of a wildfire.

Personal wood permits are available from any office of the Flathead National Forest, or from several vendors across the Flathead Valley. These vendors include:

Snappy's Sport Senter	Kalispell
Kelly Rae's Conoco	Kalispell
Mike's Conoco	Columbia Falls, Hungry Horse and Whitefish
Bear Paw (Exxon)	East Glacier
Local Joes Gas & Grub (Conoco)	Bigfork
Ronan Power Products	Ronan
Ronan Sports and Western	Ronan
Swan Ecosystem Center	Condon
Swan Lake Trading Post	Swan Lake
Swan Valley Centre	Condon
Brigg Mercantile	Olney

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