



## Forest Service News Release

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### Fire Restrictions Lifted and Fire Danger Lowered

**Hamilton, MT, September 19-** Due to recent precipitation and cooler temperatures, the Bitterroot National Forest has lowered its fire danger to “High” down from “Extreme.”

The Forest is also lifting Stage 2 Fire Restrictions effective immediately. Restrictions have been in place since August 12<sup>th</sup>. This means campfires will again be allowed on the Forest and will also lift the restrictions (*hoot owl*) on firewood cutting in the afternoon.

Open burning is currently prohibited in Ravalli County. Camp and cooking fires are still allowed. For the latest on current fire restrictions and County burn bans in place throughout Montana visit [www.mtfireinfo.org](http://www.mtfireinfo.org).

Although fire danger remains High, fire management officials opted to move out of restrictions because of the recent precipitation as well as fire danger indices (burning conditions/severity), which are also moving downward as the summer season moves into the summer/fall transition.

Many locations across the forest received precipitation within the last week with totals ranging from a ¼ to nearly 1 inch. Temperatures this week will remain near normal, and a southwest flow will develop that is forecast to bring additional chances of precipitation Wednesday night and Thursday along with potential thunderstorms.

The Magruder Road Corridor between Darby MT. and Elk City, ID. is now open after the Forest lifted the road closure last week from the Twist Creek Fire. The Hog Trough Fire area closure up Skalkaho on the Darby Ranger District was also lifted this weekend. Please note, the Indian Ridge Fire area closure on the West Fork Ranger District remains in place -- <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8319/>

While fire danger has lessened, fire season is not over. Although campfires can be one of the best parts of camping and provide necessary warmth to hunters and other outdoor enthusiasts, they can also spark wildfires. Please don't forget your responsibility to maintain and extinguish all campfires. Remember, if it's too hot to touch, it's too hot to leave. Never leave a campfire unattended.

This summer, there have been 63 wildfires on the Bitterroot National Forest; 11 human-caused and 52 lightning fires