



Flathead National Forest

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Web: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/flathead>

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News Release

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Piper Fire Still Smoldering

BIGFORK, MT- August 16, 2016 –The Piper Fire burning on the Swan Lake Ranger District within the Flathead National Forest continues to burn. The fire area received significant precipitation on August 9th and 10th with amounts reaching approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch. Although significant precipitation occurred in the fire area, the fire has grown approximately three acres bringing the total area burned to approximately 15 acres. Fire spread is up drainage away from values at risk and fire activity is characterized as creeping and smoldering.

The Piper Fire is burning on a north aspect within the Piper Creek drainage. It is located in steep, dangerous, and inaccessible terrain. Due to firefighter safety, the Piper Fire is being managed with a confine and contain strategy. Fire managers have a plan in place to take action on the fire when ground resources can safely mitigate the hazards. Currently crews are monitoring the fire closely and a Type 1 helicopter is assigned to slow fire growth to the east. Due to warmer and dryer conditions, forest visitors and residents can expect to see smoke within this area for the next four to six weeks.

For public safety, the Piper Fire Area closure remains in effect until rescinded. The closure includes National Forest System Trail (NFST) 119 (Piper Creek) for its entire length and NFST 738 (Fatty Creek) from the south shoreline of Cedar Lake moving south to where it ties in with NFST 119. For additional information about this emergency closure, contact Janette Turk at 406-758-5200.

Fire activity has increased this week in the Flathead, with three fire starts yesterday. Two of the starts were lightning holdovers and one was on private land. All fires were less than an acre in size and are reported controlled. Please remain diligent when recreating outdoors, and use fire prevention practices at all times.

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