



Flathead National Forest

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News Release

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Fall Prescribed Fire Projects Successful on the Flathead National Forest

KALISPELL, MONT. – Ranger Districts on the Flathead National Forest successfully conducted multiple fall season prescribed fire projects which accomplished multiple objectives. Fire managers appreciate the public's understanding during these burns as smoke was visible from various places in the Flathead Valley and several times was exacerbated by smoke generated mostly from wildfires across the west. A temporary smoke monitor in the Swan Valley documented that the EPA 24 hour standard stayed in the moderate range or better for the entire burn period even with the additional impacts of smoke from wildfires. Projects completed to date include:

Tally Lake Ranger District:

Good Creek – This ecosystem burn project was completed on September 25th and accomplished 142 acres reduction of encroachment of conifers into an open shrub field which should improve wildlife habitat.

Hungry Horse/Glacier View Ranger District:

Paint Emery Central Prescribed Burns – The prescribed burn was completed on September 22 and accomplished 350 acres of wildlife habitat enhancement on the east side of Hungry Horse Reservoir and northwest of Great Northern Mountain. Increased diversity and reduced downed woody material will reduce the risk of severe wildland fire and its effects on resources in the area. Smoke may still be visible from within the units.

Firefighter Mountain Prescribed Burn – On September 22, 180 acres of this project were completed on the east side Hungry Horse Reservoir on and adjacent to Firefighter Mountain by applying low to moderate intensity fire. The expected outcome will restore and enhance grass and shrub components, make the area more productive for ungulates and other foraging wildlife, and curb wildland fire spread by reducing fuel loadings and tree density in the forest area.

Swan Lake Ranger District:

Meadow Smith Area – 50 acres have been complete to date of under-burning timber stands located within the Meadow and Smith Creek areas of the Swan Valley. These treatments will use prescribed fire for fuels reduction, vegetation regeneration, and wildlife habitat improvement. If conditions permit more units may be burned.

Piper Creek Area – The Mission Upland Burning Project was completed on September 24 for a total of 1,036 acres. The project will help allow future lightning-caused fires to play a more natural role within and outside Mission Mountain Wilderness. There is a temporary closure in the area including the Piper Creek Trail # 119.

Haskill Mountain area – To date 25 acres of Logging slash from previously logged areas will be treated with fire to reduce hazardous fuels as well as create favorable conditions for natural regeneration of plant and tree species. If conditions permit more units may be burned.

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Spotted Bear Ranger District:

Spotted Bear River – 12 acres using hand ignition near Spotted Bear Lake for hazardous fuel reduction and improving winter range habitat were completed on September 24th, and 136 acres of aerial ignition were complete for white bark pine restoration.

Horse Ridge – 285 acres were completed on September 16th using hand and aerial ignition for hazardous fuel reduction and improving winter range habitat.

Soldier Addition - 416 acres were completed on September 17th using aerial ignition near the Gorge Creek trail head to improve winter range habitat. In additions, 136 acres were completed on September 25th for whitebark pine restoration objectives.

For additional information about these projects contact the appropriate Ranger Station:

Tally Lake Ranger District: 406-758-5204

Hungry Horse/Glacier View Ranger District: 406-387-3800

Spotted Bear Ranger District:406-758-5376

Swan Lake Ranger District: 406-837-7500

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