



Flathead National Forest

Media Release

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Prescribed Fire Projects Planned on Swan Lake District

The Swan Lake District of the Flathead National Forest is planning to conduct some prescribed fire projects that may begin as early as this week, if weather conditions are favorable. The project areas are located on Blacktail Mountain, east of the town of Swan Lake, and east of Condon and Holland Lake in the Swan Valley. Smoke will be visible from various places in the Flathead Valley and the Swan Valley.

These wildlife and ecosystem burns will burn upper-elevation conifer stands and shrub fields. The introduction of fire will improve forest health and reduce the likelihood of intense wildfire, as well as increase forage for wildlife. The project areas include:

- **Blacktail Mountain Area – 50 acres** located on top of Blacktail Mountain Ski Area, involving piles of slash from fuels reduction units,
- **Swan Lake Area – 1,000 acres** located several miles east of the town of Swan Lake, including a temporary closure on the **Wire Trail #78** closed during burn operations, and
- **Condon/Holland Lake Area – 2,000 acres.** This burn is located in two areas, east of Condon and 8 miles **southeast** of Condon in the Holland Lake area. A temporary closure will be in effect on the Holland Look-Out Trail #42 during burn operations.

These areas have historically experienced infrequent moderate-intensity natural fires. Fire suppression and other factors have prevented or minimized fires within these landscapes. These areas have experienced a change in species composition, increased stress and disease levels, accumulations of woody material, and an increased risk of stand-replacing fires.

The prescribed fire projects are located and designed for the potential to be controlled, and not escape as wildfires. These projects are in compliance with Montana air quality standards and coordinated with Montana State Department of Environmental Quality.

For additional information about the prescribed fire projects contact the Swan Lake Ranger District in Bigfork at 837-7500.

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