



News Release

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests &
Thunder Basin National Grassland
<http://fs.usda.gov/mbr>

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Recent Pole Mountain Wildfire Prompts Words of Caution from Forest Service

(LARAMIE, Wyo.) March 29, 2012 – A wildfire this past week on the Pole Mountain unit of the Medicine Bow National Forest has prompted the U.S. Forest Service to issue some cautionary messages to Forest users.

Warm temperatures are again forecasted for the upcoming weekend, and in anticipation of heavy use on lower elevation National Forest areas, such as Pole Mountain, the Laramie Ranger District would like to remind the public of the high fire danger. There is also a shooting prohibition and seasonal road closures in effect that users should be aware of.

Fuels are currently very dry in southeast Wyoming, humidity is low, temperatures are above average, and winds are expected to remain high, which combined together make for high fire danger.

A 13-acre, human-caused wildfire this past week on Pole Mountain is clear indication that conditions are ripe for fires. Fortunately in this case, crews from the Laramie Fire Department, various volunteer fire departments and the U.S. Forest Service were able to quickly respond to the wildfire on Tuesday evening, March 27, and the fire was contained by Wednesday evening. Mop up of the fire by USFS crews continued into Thursday.

The exact cause of the wildfire, located just off Forest Road 712D on the eastern edge of the Forest, is still under investigation by law enforcement, but it is certain that the fire was human caused. The fire burned grass, sagebrush and some timber in the area.

Although no fire restrictions are currently in place on Pole Mountain, campers and other public land users need to follow basic fire safety rules.

- Scrape back dead grass and forest materials from your campfire site.
- Keep your campfire small and under control; make it only as big as you need it.
- Keep a shovel and a water container nearby to douse escaped embers.
- Put your campfire dead out before leaving your campsite or going to sleep.
- Do not park vehicles in tall dry grass, since hot tailpipes can cause fine fuels to catch on fire.
- Remember that any ignition – cigarettes, campfires, gunfire, vehicles – could be the cause of a wildland fire, as grass and other vegetation is dry and extremely flammable.
- Always follow current fire restrictions.

Recreationists should also take note that by special order, the Forest Service prohibits the discharge of firearms within the Pole Mountain unit of the Medicine Bow National Forest from March 31 through September 10. Saturday marks the beginning of the prohibition period for this year and for the sake of public safety, USFS Law Enforcement will be active in the enforcement of that order throughout this period.

Additionally, it is very important that motor vehicles of all kinds stay on designated roads. Riders should refer to the Forest Service's Motor Vehicle Use Maps for roads, trails, and areas that are designated open to motor vehicle travel. Visitors should also be aware that there are seasonal road

closures in place on the Medicine Bow National Forest. These closures will be marked with signs and should be respected by the public.

For additional information on recreational use of the Pole Mountain area, please contact the Laramie Ranger District office at 307-745-2300 or visit <http://fs.usda.gov/mbr>.

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