

NEWS RELEASE

USDA Forest Service -- Northern Region



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News Contact: Maggie Pittman
(406) 329-3091

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CENTRAL AND NORTHWEST ZONE FORESTS MOVE TO LEVEL RESTRICTIONS

Missoula, Mont. – Northern Regional Forester Dale Bosworth today approved Level V restrictions for national forests in the central and northwest area of Montana. The restrictions will go into effect at 12:01 a.m., Friday, August 25.

Affected are public lands in the Beaverhead-Deerlodge, Flathead, Helena, Gallatin, Kootenai, and Lewis and Clark National Forests as well as the Beartooth District on the Custer National Forest. The restrictions effectively close national forests in an effort to reduce the wildfire risk to people and resources.

"This is a serious measure in response to unprecedented conditions," Bosworth said. "We're asking the people who enjoy and even make a living in national forests to stay away. That isn't easy."

Combined with earlier, similar restrictions placed on the southwest zone of the State, more than 16 million acres of National Forest System lands in Montana are closed. Coordinated restrictions are in place on public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management and State of Montana as well as private lands.

There are some exceptions to the restrictions. People may travel on paved and numbered highways and private landowners may access their residences. All county and state roads that cross National Forest System lands will remain open unless closed for safety reasons. Livestock management activities may also take place, however, motorized access will only be allowed on existing cleared roads.

Additional exceptions exist on each of the national forests across the State. Specific questions about local exceptions should be directed to the appropriate Forest Service office.

Bosworth said the closures would remain in effect as long as extreme wildfire conditions persist.

Montana Closure Information Numbers

Central Zone:

Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF: (406) 683-3892
Custer NF (Red Lodge Dist.) (406) 446-2103
Gallatin National Forest: (406) 522-2520
Helena National Forest: (406) 449-5201
Lewis & Clark NF: (406) 791-7726

NW Montana Zone:

Flathead National Forest: (406) 758-5200
Kootenai National Forest: (406) 293-6211

SW Montana Zone:

Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF: (406) 683-3892
Bitterroot NF: (406) 375-8807
Lolo National Forest: (877) 563-2876

