



BOB MARSHALL WILDERNESS COMPLEX

2008 NEWSLETTER

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What Do You Have To Say?

LAC MEETING IS COMING UP

You are invited to join the Forest Service on Saturday April 5, 2008, 9:30 am – 3 pm at the Hungry Horse Ranger Station conference room for the annual “LAC” or Bob Marshall Complex public meeting.

we should try to move forward on? For those not able to participate, we will be posting the specific monitoring reports on the Flathead Forest webpage following the meeting and will welcome further discussion by anyone interested.

For those not familiar with “LAC” it stands for Limits of Acceptable Change. This meeting has been occurring for over 20 years as we the Forest Service and Montana Fish wildlife and Parks managers work and meet with interested publics to talk about the Bob Marshall, Great Bear and Scapegoat Wilderness Areas.

As in the past, we will also have updates from the Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks managers and the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation. We know there is interest about 2007 wildfires and how access and camping location might be affected for this coming season. Info will be available to help address the questions. On behalf of all the managers we appreciate the cooperation during the 2007 fire season and adjustments that many of you had to make.

This year is exciting for Forest Service managers because we have just completed the 4th five-year monitoring period. Monitoring has been occurring for the past 20 years in a means that was jointly (agency and publics) prepared. We will be highlighting the results of the monitoring – details of the last five years – allowing folks time to talk one on one about specific areas. We’ll also be focusing on the big picture and what trends we seeing. Are there areas of concern; is the monitoring telling us what we need to know; and lastly as a result of the info are there specific actions

For those able to join us, note that lunch will be on your own and there are few options in Hungry Horse and the canyon area. While you’re here we will also be showing off the new Hungry Horse Station. We moved in November and are really enjoying the new and updated office.

Thanks in advance for the current interest and participation of the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex – there remains a wide range of interests and users. Looking forward to hearing what you have to say!

INVITATION:

**ANNUAL BMWC
PUBLIC MEETING;
LIMITS OF
ACCEPTABLE CHANGE**

WHEN

Saturday, April 5th 2007
9:30am - 3:00pm

WHERE

Hungry Horse/Glacier View
Spotted Bear Ranger Station

10 Hungry Horse Road
Hungry Horse , MT

Need Directions? 406.387.3800
(Down the road from the old station)

Please contact Amber Kamps
at 406.362.4265 or
akamps@fs.fed.us
for additional information.



Rocky Mountain Ranger District

A Look Back at the 2007 Fire Season

Russ Owen

Asst. Fire Management Officer, Rocky Mountain

As 2007 was one of the most active fire seasons in recent memory for the Rocky Mountain Ranger District, it seems fitting to note some of the final statistics for the year. During this past fire season, fourteen Incident Management Teams assisted the District in managing the Ahorn, Skyland, and Fool Creek Fires. The total acreage for the Fool Creek Fire was 60,038 acres, for Ahorn the total was 52,205, and the Skyland Fire covered an area of 45,760 acres. The total acreage on the Fool Creek Fire was shared with the Flathead National Forest, while the total acreage for Skyland was shared with the Flathead National Forest, private landholders, and the Blackfeet tribe. The three fires covered an area of 104,597 acres on the Rocky Mountain Ranger District.

In contrast, the Canyon Creek Fire, the Gates Park Fire, and the Straight Creek Fire of 1988 covered a total of 121,047 acres on the Rocky Mountain Ranger District. However, the Canyon Creek Fire burned 39,874 acres of private ground

ROCKY MOUNTAIN, page 11

Photos, Top: Smoke from the Skyland fire billows over the divide in early July. **Middle:** The Fool Creek fire leaves its mark close to Teton Pass Ski hill on the Rocky Mountain Front. **Bottom:** Structure protection at Danaher Cabin on Spotted Bear Ranger District and around the Bob proved successful.



Turning Up the Heat

Challenging Season for New Fire Management Officer

Seth Carbonari

Fire Management Officer, Spotted Bear

The snow came and the fires eventually went out. Agency employees, outfitters and volunteers eventually cleared most of the trails. Lost hikers (and horses) were found. The hunter from Washington shot his first elk. Things returned to normal, as much as things can be normal in the BMWC.

The 2007 fire season started in late June with fairly docile lightning strikes but they were quickly followed by the roar of the Fool Creek Fire the first week in July. The hopes of “easing” into my new position became a distant memory as the number of fires and challenges started to add up and the season pushed on. July and August were extremely hot and dry with the mercury topping out at an unheard of 108 degrees at Spotted Bear on July 24.

Over 65,000 acres (13,500 of that Wildland Fire Use) burned on the Spotted Bear District during the summer of 2007. There were 26 fires that we managed or shared with other forests. Because of the severity of the season and lack of available resources, most fires were either initial attacked and suppressed or put into a contain/ confine strategy.

The crews at Schafer Meadows scrambled to protect cabins in the Middle Fork as the Fool Creek Fire burned over 29,000 acres and the Calbick burned over 1,000. Folks at in the South Fork prepared for the 21,500 acre Railley Fire as it moved down

NEW FMO, page 15

Spotted Bear Ranger District

Plan Ahead for Party Size in The Bob

Deb Mucklow

District Ranger, Spotted Bear

Sound familiar? This is one of the basic themes in implementing Leave No Trace practices. So what do you need to know and prepare for in visiting the Bob Marshall, Scapegoat or Great Bear Wildernesses? One example, Party Size!

Yes, there is a limit and while you might be surprised, we have seen an increase in violations of the party size limit from river floaters in the Middle Fork and in youth/adult groups. What is the limit? The correct answer is 15. So the next question is what if we have 17 scouts and if we do “Lewis and Clark” camping – i.e. camp across the river from each other, we won’t violate party size, will we? If you are traveling, cooking/eating, hiking, visiting or appear as one group – you are one group – so the answer is YES, you are violating the limit. Party size is 15! If you are taking stock in – the limit on stock is 35 head. All supplemental feed needs to be weed free and you need to have proof that it is certified as such. Many of the lakes within the wildernesses restrict stock containment 200’ from the lake shore. You are able to water stock, and then they must be contained away from the lake shore.

“We have seen an increase in violations of the party size limit from river floaters on the Middle Fork and in youth - adult groups.”

SPOTTED BEAR, page 15

Blowdown — Heads Up!

WILDFIRES AND WINDS ARE A BAD MIX

Dave Arbach

Trails Foreman, Spotted Bear

Spotted Bear Ranger District is expecting increased blow down in areas that have had recent wild fires. If you plan on traveling in the wilderness with stock this summer, make sure you have tools with you to cut through blow down (axe, hand saw or crosscut saw).

In the Spotted Bear R.S. area, the Corporal fire burned across the Silvertip Creek Trail and the Spotted Bear River Trail. The Corporal Fire crossed Spotted Bear River Trail just west of Dean Creek and burned into lower Dean Creek. Expect increased blow down in these areas. The Spotted Bear River Trail has a lot of old snags next to the trail, expect blow down even in areas that have not burned recently.

Gorge Creek and Sunburst Lake Trails have not been affected by recent fires, but blow down has been a problem on these trails.

The Fool Fire burned across Bowl Creek, Strawberry Creek, Trail Creek, Gateway Creek, Sun River Pass, Mount May and Basin Creek Trails. Expect increased blow down on these trails also.

The South Fork of The Flathead is still experiencing increased blow down from the 2003 Little Salmon Complex Fire. The areas affected are along The Main South Fork from Black Bear Creek to Big Prairie Ranger Station, the Helen Creek Trail, the lower White River Trail, and lower Bartlett Creek Trail.

The Turtlehead Fire in 2007 burned down to The White River Trail and is causing blow down on the upper portion of The White River Trail.

The Railley Mountain Fire, also last summer, burned portions of Jenny Creek, Youngs Creek, Babcock Creek and Marshall Creek Trails. Crews cleared these trails in the fall of 2007, but are expecting a heavier than normal workload throughout the Youngs Creek drainage.

Due to recent high winds and high winds last fall, expect blow down in recent fire areas. Be extra cautious when traveling through these recent burned areas during high winds.

“ If you plan on traveling in the wilderness with stock this summer, make sure you have tools to cut through blow down such as an axe, hand saw or crosscut saw. ”

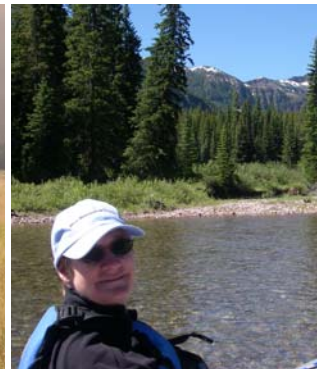
FS Trail Crew removing blowdown on South Fork trails.



Who's Who In The Bob

WHO ARE THESE GUYS & GALS?

ANSWERS ON PAGE 14



Big Grizzly Will Stay In Lincoln

REPRINTED FROM HELENA INDEPENDENT RECORD WITH PERMISSION FROM LARRY KLINE - 12/14/07

Larry Kline
IR Staff Writer

The big boy is staying home.

After receiving numerous letters from schoolchildren and residents, federal and state officials have decided to mount an 830-pound male grizzly bear at the Helena National Forest's Lincoln Ranger District office, a short distance from where it was killed in a vehicle collision on Highway 200 on Oct. 17.

The 12-year-old grizzly — the third-largest recorded in Montana — was known to inhabit the Blackfoot Valley, and some of the schoolchildren in Lincoln, Ovando, Helmville and Seeley Lake in recent weeks wrote letters to officials asking for the bear to remain in its home territory.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks officials on Thursday said they based their decision on the support and interest of locals, along with the opportunity to use the bear to promote conservation in an area where more and more of the large predators are making their home range.

"There was very broad support for having their bear back home," FWP Chief of Staff Chris Smith said. Lincoln is a good place to use the mount as an educational tool for schools, residents and visitors, he added.

"It's a good place to build local support and interest in grizzly bear conservation," agreed Chris Servheen, the Fish and Wildlife Service's grizzly bear recovery coordinator. "We're getting more and more bears in that area, and so there's more interaction between people and bears."

"It's going to make a lot of people in the community happy," Shanley said. "A lot of them look at it as getting (the bear) back. It's really kind of pulled the community together in a common cause."

The grizzly and its five-inch claws will join a great horned owl, a sharp-shinned hawk and an osprey mount in the office. Shanley is thinking about placing the bear at the front of the office near a window, where lights would enable passers-by to view it during off hours.

The bear, officials said, represents a unique educational opportunity in a number of different ways. It had several run-ins with property owners, and officials found buckshot in various places in the carcass — illustrating the close proximity between rural residents and their wild neighbors.

The animal was captured along the Rocky Mountain Front near Choteau in 1996, fitted with a radio collar and tattooed. A 2004 study of grizzly DNA in the Northern Rockies ecosystem showed the bear at four locations on either side of the Blackfoot River, which shows how far the animals travel in search of new ranges.



"It's a good place to build local support and interest in grizzly bear conservation."

-Chris Servheen, the Fish and Wildlife Service's grizzly bear recovery coordinator speaking about the mount in Lincoln.



Lincoln Ranger District

RESTRUCTURING AND REARRANGING

Ernie Lundberg

Trails Manager, Lincoln

In 2007 the Helena National Forest started the process of reorganization. This is an ongoing process and is an effort to respond to reduced budgets. The goal of the reorganization will get more boots on the ground, get the work accomplished, and keep people funded. Changes that may have some affect the Complex are, I (Ernie) will over see the Wilderness program for the Forest, Scapegoat and Gates Wildernesses, Casey will be the Wilderness Ranger for both Wildernesses, as well as working the trails on the Lincoln RD. And the last thing is we have one less position in the Lincoln Resource Shop. In October Mandy left the resource department and started her new position as Range Specialist, stationed at Townsend. The timing of her move coincided perfectly with the district move. The whole district had to move out of the office for carpet installation. It ended up being a couple of months for asbestos abatement and installation of the new flooring, painting the walls and destruction and reconstruction of some walls.

I accepted a detail into the Helena Forest Safety Manager position from July 07 to March 15. This saved some trails money but did add to the state of confusion this past year. The summer disappeared in a whirl of safety detail, fire assignments on and off the district, coordinating volunteer groups and outfitters.

The 07 Wilderness and trails budget was very low, the worst I have seen since I have been on the Lincoln RD. We actually started planning for only Casey and no trail crew. One concern we had was Casey's safety working alone in the backcountry on a regular basis. Most of us, that have worked in the backcountry very long, have worked alone but this should not be a requirement for employees. On what seemed the 15th round of budget calculations we managed to find enough funding for a seasonal. We were fortunate to be able to hire a crew, Cole Orth. Cole was a recent graduate of Lincoln High and had a lot of athletic abilities and some very good work skills. He had packing experience, cleared trails and liked to be in the backcountry, what more could we ask for? Maybe about four more like him! So our problem was partially solved, and we knew some of the trails would get cleared, but two people would not be able handle

LINCOLN, page 11



Photos left to right: Meadow Creek cut-off trail in the Scapegoat Wilderness, Lincoln Ranger District. Casey Burns on the Continental Divide Trail near Bighorn lake. Forest Service crew unloading packs at Webb Lake Cabin.



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Mountainfilm in Telluride 2007



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

ADVENTURE

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A Fundraiser for the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation



Do you enjoy hitting the trail and being in the backcountry?
 Want to give something back to your community?
 Looking to meet new folks with outdoor lifestyles?
 Searching for a summer family getaway?

**Join the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation
 for a Volunteer Vacation this summer!**



Participating in a Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation volunteer project will provide all these opportunities as well as supply the needed work to help keep trails in Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex open.

For many of the projects, no prior experience is necessary, and we just ask that you come motivated to work, prepared to have fun, and ready to make the project a success. The projects range in length from day trips and weekend projects to weeklong backpacking trips*. We supply the food, group gear, the planning, and a crew leader to forge the way. You just bring your personal camping gear and enthusiasm.

Go to www.bmwf.org and to check out the project dates, select one that fits your ability and goals, and send back the application packet. Easy! There is limited space, so register soon.



*Overnight camping trips require refundable deposit to secure registration spot.

More questions? Call us at 406.387.3808 or visit us online at www.bmwf.org.

Horsemanship and Saw Classes

Be sure to save the date for upcoming horsemanship classes and saw certifications in your area. If you plan on volunteering in the Bob this summer with the Forest Service or the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation you need these classes.

- April 12th: Defensive Horsemanship Course (no cost) with legendary Smoke Elser presented by the Backcountry Horsemen-Flathead Chapter. All day, 9am — at 301 Batavia, near Kila, MT. Bring lunch and a lawn chair.
- April 13th: Packing Clinic (free to BCH members, \$30 for non-members) presented by the Backcountry Horsemen-Flathead Chapter. All day, 9am — at 301 Batavia, near Kila, MT. Bring lunch and a lawn chair.
 - *Call BCH-Flathead Chapter to reserve a space: Andy Breland 406.752.0360 or Ken Ausk 406.892.4673.*
- May 16th: Horsemanship Class (no cost) with Rocky Mountain Ranger District. All day.
- May 27-29: Saw Certification for chainsaw and cross-cut use (class s212) with Rocky Mountain Ranger District (no cost). Three days.
 - *Dates with Rocky Mountain Ranger District are tentative. Be sure to call to confirm and for sign up 406.466.5341. Enrollment for s212 class is admitted on a case-by-case basis.*

Rocky Mountain Ranger District

The Trails Program on the Rocky Mountain Ranger District will be implementing work outlined by Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) in response to the 2007 wildfires on the District. The 3 major fires on the District were the Ahorn, Skyland, and Fool Creek fires. Collectively they impacted approximately 90 miles of system trails. The 2008 field season will be comprised of a 7-9 person crew working in each of the fire areas, plus 3 two person crews working trail maintenance on the District. We will be focusing on those areas that pose a safety concern to visitor travel, and those areas where erosion has its highest potential. Repairing the trails system will take us several seasons to accomplish, but we are hopeful to get a good start on it this summer.

Keep in mind during your trip planning that trails and campsites affected by last years fires may not be accessible early in the season due to windfall or erosion. Call the respective District office for updates on trail conditions prior to your trips.



Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation

Trial By Fire for New Staff

Shannon Freix

Program Director, Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation

The nature of fieldwork in Montana usually means that folks are up to their eyeballs in projects during the summer and more mellow in the winter months. When I was hired as the new Program Director in November of 2006, I just ended a busy summer in the backcountry with the Forest Service and was looking forward to having a more relaxed winter schedule and accessible showers. Yeah right!

Well, I did have regular showers, but there was nothing relaxing about my new position with the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation. There were projects to plan for 2008 already! It was hands-on learning as Paul Travis (former Program Director) moved on and Carla Belski (BMWV Executive Director) helped me stumble through the endless logistics and details of organizing over 40 projects, 400 potential volunteers, many new faces and names to remember, meetings, fundraisers, etc. It was a whirlwind!

BOB MARSHALL, page 11

LINCOLN, FROM PAGE 7

the entire work load. Some early recon revealed we were facing some heavy blow down on some trails. The big question now was which trails to concentrate work on and then try to figure out how and if we would get to other trails.

Then came the fires, they appeared all around us, and since we had no fires here we began to see some of the displaced wilderness travelers. First the Meriwether fire decided to kick up it's heels and make some phenomenal runs. District personnel started on a rotation to assist with that fire. Casey spent a shift over there working as a Resource Advisor. Then the fires on the Front country took off and made amazing runs. And not to be out done the Conger Fire decided to get up and start moving northeast and came right up to our boundary with Seeley Lake.

There were times we had huge column on three sides of us and we were getting calls from locals to see if we had a major fire on the district. The Conger fire had our attention at this point. Amber gathered up some key district personnel and we headed for Seeley Lake to meet with the Conger IC. After looking over the map and taking into account some recent and predicted fire behavior we closed approximately 1/3 of the Helena portion of the Wilderness.

While all this was going on the district was busy with several smaller fires outside of the Wilderness, and being a small district we all pitched to work on the local fires. We also had several district personnel did tag

team fire duty on other fires on other forests.

Sometimes fate, in this case fire in the complex, brings unexpected help. Shannon Freix had scheduled several volunteer groups to work on trails in the Scapegoat and Bob Marshall and many of the areas planned for work were now closed due to fire. There were large fires burning on the Rocky Mountain, Seeley Lake, and Spotted Bear Districts. In some cases the volunteers were already on the plane headed for Great Falls expecting to hike into the Wilderness to work on trails and they had no place to work. Since we did not have any Wilderness fires she asked if we could possibly accommodate a few more groups. The BMWV has provided some good help in the past and this looked like a time we could help each other. We really needed to get more trails cleared and they needed trails to clear. It took quite a few phone calls and a fare bit of coordination to pull this off, but we did manage to get the groups from airports to trailheads and into the Wilderness. Casey and Cole kind of had to change their jobs a bit and became coordinators, packers, and drivers for these groups and trails got cleared, and even some unexpected trail maintenance was accomplished.

So that was our summer here in Lincoln and even though we had no Wilderness fires, like the rest of the complex, it was a very busy season. We were all a bit relieved when the first good rains hit and not the first snow came, things quieted down and the season came to a close.

Seeley Lake Ranger District

EYE ON HAWKWEED

Shannon Connelly

Weeds Specialist, Seeley Lake Ranger District



Do your part by removing weeds from your property, as well as washing vehicles, boots & animals that have been in infested areas.

Nonnative invasive plants are altering ecosystems around Montana and the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex with alarming speed. They outcompete native plants and ultimately change the composition and function of the ecosystems they invade. This poses a particular problem in wilderness and other natural areas that are set aside to maintain natural conditions. Hawkweed in particular has taken a front seat as an invasive species recently.

There are both native and exotic species of hawkweeds in Montana. The noxious species include orange hawkweed (*H. aurantiacum*) and the meadow hawkweed complex (*H. pretense*, *H. piloselloides*, and *H. floribundum*). Many hawkweeds were first introduced as garden ornamentals and escaped cultivation. Although records indicate that orange hawkweed was first observed in Montana in the early 1960's, it was not until the late 1990's that concerns regarding the presence of hawkweed within the state were raised, and by the year 2000 it was estimated that orange and meadow hawkweeds infested over 57,000 acres.

Identification of non-native and native hawkweeds can be difficult as there are numerous species and they can interbreed when their populations overlap. Hawkweeds are members of the Asteraceae (Sunflower) family. The hawkweed genus is characterized by having strap-shaped (ligulate) flowers and milky sap. The species look like this:



Orange Hawkweed



Meadow Hawkweed



Mouse-Ear Hawkweed



NOXIOUS



NOXIOUS



NATIVE

Hungry Horse Ranger District

Castle Lake Weed Eradication

Colter Pence

Trails Manager, Hungry Horse



Yellow Toadflax infestation at Castle Lake

This upcoming summer the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation, Glacier Raft Company, and Hungry Horse Ranger District will be cooperating on a weed eradication project in the Castle Lake area. Volunteer crews working through the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation will be spraying and pulling Yellow Toadflax, under the supervision of Forest Service Weeds Specialists, and then will float out on the Middle Fork of the Flathead River with Glacier Raft Company where they will continue to conduct surveys for other noxious weed infestations as they move through the wilderness. Contact the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation at 406.387.3808 or online www.bmwf.org for more information or if you are interested in volunteering.

Yellow Toadflax has infested over five acres at Castle Lake, including the popular camping sites. When camping in that area, avoid contact with plants that have gone to seed to prevent more seeds from dispersed to new areas and, as always, use noxious weed seed free feed for stock. Use Leave No Trace methods to avoid disturbing areas that Yellow Toadflax will invade.

BOB MARSHALL, FROM PAGE 11

Then spring came. New crew leaders were hired, calendars were finalized, projects were posted, and volunteers signed up. We launched the season with our first project: National Trails Day in early June. Volunteer feedback was positive and our new crew leaders were old hands on the trail. This was going to be an easy season. Or so I thought...

In Early July, the first lightning strikes were reported on Lewis & Clark National Forest, but it was still business as usual as the Fool Creek fire wasn't threatening trail work. Yet. Crews were alerted and we were on watch as temperatures held steady around the 100 degree mark. Then another strike and a smoke – the Ahorn fire. This was closer to a crew we had in the field so the project was cut short by one day to give them some relief from the smoke. About this time, fires on the southwest end of the wilderness complex were flaring up and moving fast. We rerouted a crew on the Seeley Lake Ranger District to a safer spot because of the Conger Fire. A project was cancelled on the Blackfoot Divide when the Railley Creek fire started growing closer to our proposed base camp. The Rocky Mountain Ranger District closed a majority of trails on the east side and we were forced to move projects to the Scapegoat Wilderness. Then Lincoln Ranger District closed the Scapegoat Wilderness. My perfectly planned season was turned upside down!

In the end, only two projects were completely cancelled due to fires and we rerouted seven projects around the complex to avoid fire threats.



BMWF staff trip in September on Bergsicker Creek in Hungry Horse Ranger District. Paul Travis, former Program Director, passes on his wisdom in a cameo appearance on the trail. Left to right: Shannon Freix, Paul Travis, Addy Wygmans, Tara LaVelle, Casey Dunn.

MCC??

War on Weeds

THE BEST OFFENSE IS PREVENTION

The Spotted Bear Weeds Program is set for a great season in 2008. With the help and critical partnership of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, we are looking to have both a front country crew and backcountry crew to focus on wilderness weed sites. The last 4-5 years of biological controls and herbicide application have shown positive results on weed populations throughout the district. Without losing focus on weed patches already on record, last season's crew set out to track down more infestations and begin treatment on them. The crew surveyed the entire stretch of river from the Youngs/Danaher confluence to Black Bear Cabin for the first time in several years, unveiling plenty of new spotted knapweed sites. With the help of a new and more environmentally friendly herbicide called Milestone, the crew should be able to begin tackling those new sites without problem in 2008.

One of our main objectives this season, is to re-evaluate the leafy spurge in Bar Creek Meadows, in the Danaher area of the South Fork. There is currently a grazing restriction in this area, which will remain in effect. In addition, we will be paying special attention to those areas that were burned in last years fires. Particularly, up Youngs Creek, from the Railley Mtn. fire, and a wide area in the upper Middle Fork, from the Fool Creek fire.

The large area burned by the Little Salmon Complex in 2003 and other recent fires is faring pretty well in regards to invasive weeds. Most high-priority weeds such as yellow and orange hawkweed, leafy spurge, hounds tongue, and knapweed have shown little success populating the burn.



To limit any other additional weed infestations from occurring, we would like to remind you to only bring Certified Weed Seed Free Feed into the wilderness. Also, purge your stock of other food by feeding them Weed Seed Free feed a day or two before entering the wilderness. Inspect your clothing and animals for burrs. If you find any, bag them and burn them completely.

Remember the war on weeds starts right at home in your personal corrals and fields. Learn what weeds are noxious, and have a plan to get rid of them. Talk to your county office or local hardware and farm/ranch store for weed treatment options.

SPOTTED BEAR, FROM PAGE 3

The Food storage order is also very important for all to know and understand. This order is to prevent bears from becoming habituated to human food and attractants. There are many tools available to help visitors meet these requirements. We have loan programs for bear resistant containers (backpacker and stock panniers) at the district offices, pulley and rope kits are also available to be able to hang attractants/food – remember if hanging, items need to be at least 10 feet off the ground and 4 feet out from a tree or branches that could be climbed by a bear. Also, there are electric fence options – details of specifications are also available at the district offices. The biggest factor with compliance, is to understand that this regulation applies to all attractants – food, garbage, stock pellets/grain (not hay), as well as other things such as tooth paste, lotions that also have smells – these can be attractive to bears.

To be the most prepared and have a great trip – your call or inquiry about particulars on location, trail conditions, campsite options, special orders, wildfire conditions, fire restrictions etc. is welcome. Know when we encounter violations, Law Enforcement will be involved and that can impact the experience for all. Spotted Bear Ranger District 406-758-5376 or 406-387-3800, Hungry Horse Ranger District 406-387-3800, Rocky Mountain Ranger District 406-466-5341, Seeley Lake Ranger District 406-679-2233 and Lincoln Ranger District 406-362-4265. Our goal is for everyone to enjoy wilderness and to make sure that your experience in the wild is going to be the best it can be.

NEW FMO, FROM PAGE 3

Youngs Creek and spent more time monitoring the Turtlehead and Amphitheatre Wildland Fire Use Fires (1,408 and 377 acres) up the White River. Spotted Bear itself wasn't spared anxiety as the Corporal Fire escaped initial attack, burned around Spotted Bear Lookout and then grew to 16,000 acres.

Fires burned around or adjacent to 4 administrative sites and threatened many more, but none were lost. Over 70 miles of trail were burned over and 11 outfitter camps were displaced.

The fires offered many challenges and difficulties. Projects were put on hold, hunting camps were moved, and smoke grayed the skies. Every person and organization was effected in different ways, but they all worked together to make the best of things. The cooperation and communication that occurred in 2007 is the most important thing we can carry into 2008.

Who's Who

DID YOU KNOW? FROM PAGE 5

Left to Right, Top: Bill Workman, Head Packer, Spotted Bear Ranger District. **1st row:** Kraig Lang, Wilderness Manager, Rocky Mountain Ranger District. Casey Burns, Wilderness Trails, Lincoln Ranger District. Will Snodgrass, Assistant Engine Foreman, and Joel Howard, Firefighter, Rocky Mountain Ranger District. Chris Ryan, Region 1 Wilderness and Wild and Scenic River Program Manager, on the Middle Fork of Flathead River. **2nd Row:** Colter Pence, Wilderness River Manager, Hungry Horse and Glacier View Ranger Districts on the Middle Fork of Flathead River. Tad Wehunt, Wilderness Ranger S. Fork Flathead River/Big Prairie Guard Station, Spotted Bear Ranger District. Deb Mucklow, District Ranger and Llama Packer, Spotted Bear Ranger District. Carla Belski, Executive Director, Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation hiking with daughter, Piper. **3rd Row:** Anna Bengston, Jumbo Lookout, Spotted Bear Ranger District. Kib Mills (left), Trails Foreman, and Ian Bardwell (right), Trails Manager, Rocky Mountain Ranger District. Hans Castren, Wilderness Manager, Spotted Bear Ranger District.

SEELEY LAKE, FROM PAGE 12

Native Hawkweed Characteristics:

- More leaves up the stem
- Lack well developed cluster of basal leaves when flowering
- Basal and lower leaves are deciduous, dropping off as plant matures
- Leaves are attached directly to the main stalk and reduce in size up the stem
- Stems and leaves are somewhat hairy
- Lack stolons
- Grow as individual plants and can grow up to 4.5 feet tall

Exotic Hawkweed Characteristics:

- Produce stolons or rhizomes
- Form dense mats of rosettes
- Persistent rosettes of basal leaves
- Leafless or nearly leafless stems
- Flowers in terminal clusters

Hawkweeds are likely to be found on roadsides, in abandoned fields, moist or forested pastures, mountain meadows, or forest clearings. They prefer full sun, but can tolerate some shade and will grow in forest openings. Hawkweeds thrive on soil that is well-drained and moderately low in organic matter. These weeds do well in mid to high elevation sites, and therefore pose a great threat in areas of western Montana.

Invasive hawkweeds are perennial weeds that reproduce primarily by seeds, rhizomes, and stolons. Stolons are a type of reproductive stem that grows horizontal to the ground. A rhizome is an underground stem that has reproductive buds that can form roots and emergent plants. These plants, from the stolons and rhizomes, form dense vegetative mats, which often excludes native vegetation.

There are no approved biological control agents currently available for hawkweed control; however five species of hawkweed-specific insects are under consideration for use in North America. Preliminary screening showed that the weedy hawkweeds in North America were suitable host for these insects, thus, additional screening of native North American

hawkweed species and other related plants is required prior to approval for field release in the United States. Additional surveys are being conducted to find additional agents.

Herbicides are effective in suppressing hawkweeds, but reinvasion occurs unless other plants fill in behind. Herbicides such as aminopyralid, 2,4-D, clopyralid, and picloram have resulted in the greatest degree of control. Follow labels exactly as written and only use products appropriate for the site. Sites need to be re-visited annually for follow-up treatments.

Early detection and eradication are important to prevent new infestations of orange and meadow hawkweeds. The Forest Service is actively trying to control the spread of hawkweeds. Do your part by removing this weed from your property and washing vehicles, boots and animals that have been in infested areas. If you find a non-native hawkweed growing on public lands, please report the infestation to your local Forest Service Ranger Station.

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immediately to the east of the Rocky Mountain Ranger District's boundary—a number that overshadows the 11,263 acres of tribal and private lands burned by the Skyland Fire in 2007. Suppression costs for the Canyon Creek Fire in 1988 ran to 8 million dollars (not adjusted for inflation), while the most up-to-date costs for managing the Skyland Fire stand at 17,300,000, followed by the Ahorn Fire at 16,225,000, and the Fool Creek Fire at 4,350,000. There are no fire growth numbers from 2007 that compare with the figures for Canyon Creek on September 6, 1988. On that day, the jet stream surfaced—in an extremely rare event—and pushed a sustained fire run covering approximately 160,000 acres.