



## Forest Service News Release

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### Prescribed Burn Completed at Bass Creek Recreation Area

**Hamilton, MT, April 9** —The Stevensville Ranger District has completed prescribed burn operations at the Bass Creek Recreation Area northwest of Stevensville. Firefighters were successful yesterday in treating the entire target area of 600 acres. Smoke may be visible at times today and may settle in low lying areas this evening.

The burn area received rain overnight and had a skiff of snow on it this morning. While fire crews remain on scene today to patrol and monitor the area, the forest plans to re-open the Bass Creek Recreation Area to the public tomorrow, April 10<sup>th</sup>.

Forest officials would like to thank the community for their support and cooperation during the closure of the popular recreation area. “I know everyone is anxious to get back on the trails and I am grateful for the public’s patience and cooperation this week,” said Stevensville District Ranger Steve Brown

Prescribed burns are one of the most effective tools available to resource managers for restoring fire-adapted ecosystems. The burns mimic natural fires by reducing forest fuels, recycling nutrients, and increasing habitat diversity. The Larry Bass prescribed burn removed dead forest fuels, restored wildlife habitat, and better protected communities from future wildfires.

Firefighters would like to remind horseback riders, hikers, and other recreationists that some of their favorite trails at Bass Creek areas may look a little different following the prescribed burn and to be aware that some hazards may remain. Warning signs have been posted in the area to remind people of the potential hazards. Some examples are unstable dead trees that could fall over (especially in higher winds), burned-out stump and root holes, loose rocks and debris, or ash and pine needles that can make the trail slippery. If you do discover a hazardous condition, please report it to the Stevensville Ranger District (406-777-5461) as soon as possible.

For the latest information visit the *Discover Bitterroot National Forest* Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/DiscoverBitterrootNF](http://www.facebook.com/DiscoverBitterrootNF) or <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8024>.

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