



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 15, 2015

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Loggers asked to take extra steps to reduce fires in areas under stage 2 fire restrictions

(COEUR D'ALENE) – Fire managers are asking loggers in Idaho to help reduce the risk of new fires igniting by voluntarily taking extra precautions during tree harvesting operations in areas under stage 2 fire restrictions.

Stage 2 fire restrictions already require logging operators to take extra measures to reduce the chance of a fire starting from equipment use and to aid in the control of a fire if one starts. However, conditions are so extreme that even with stage 2 restrictions in place fires have started during logging operations.

The Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) and representatives of the forest industry and the Associated Logging Contractors wrote the voluntary measures together.

The measures will be effective on Monday and until further notice. They are included at the bottom of the news release.

“Fire activity has soared in recent weeks, and the resources to fight them become tighter with every new fire that starts,” State Forester David Groeschl said. “We are grateful to the forest industry and the Associated Logging Contractors for their cooperation in helping fire managers put together a list of extra steps logging contractors can take to help us meet our mutual goal of keeping forests green.”

The IDL is requiring all its own foresters and contractors hired on IDL timber sales on endowment lands to follow the new measures until further notice.

Stage 2 fire restrictions are in effect for all lands in northern Idaho, most lands in north central Idaho, and some lands near Riggins. An interactive map showing exactly where restrictions are in place is available at <http://idahofireinfo.blogspot.com/p/fire-restrictions.html>.

IDL foresters and fire wardens also will provide copies of the voluntary measures to landowners, the public, and those who plan to conduct forest practices on their lands, and encourage them to consider implementing the measures.

VOLUNTARY FIRE RESTRICTION MEASURES FOR LOGGING OPERATIONS

Due to the continuing extreme fire conditions in northern Idaho, the Idaho Department of Lands and the forest industry have jointly developed and instituted the following **voluntary measures** on logging operations occurring on state and private forestlands currently under Stage 2 fire restrictions. Those adopting these voluntary measures plan to make them effective on Monday, August 17, 2015 until further notice.

1. LOGGING AND MASTICATION OPERATIONS: Cease all chainsaw, mastication, and tracked harvesting and skidding operations by 11:00 A.M. **OR** If using a handheld pocket weather station (e.g. – Kestrel 3000), cease all

harvesting operations when relative humidity is below 30% and wind speeds exceed 6 mph. Regardless, all harvesting and skidding operations must cease by 1 pm as required under Stage 2 restrictions.

2. LINE SKIDDING OPERATIONS: Cease all line skidding operations by 11:00 A.M. **OR** If using a handheld pocket weather station (e.g. – Kestrel 3000), cease all line skidding operations when relative humidity is below 30% and wind speeds exceed 6 mph. Regardless, all line skidding operations must cease by 1 pm as required under Stage 2 restrictions.

Exception – gravity systems without a motorized carriage and a static tailhold where the butt rigging maintains 10-foot ground clearance throughout the yarding cycle will be permitted to operate until 1:00 P.M.

3. RED FLAG WARNINGS: Suspend all harvesting and line skidding operations in areas where a red flag warning has been declared by the National Weather Service until lifted.
4. DAILY EQUIPMENT INSPECTIONS: Operators should conduct daily inspections of equipment to clear away dry organic material and other flammable debris from heat sources and ensure proper functioning of all systems and components (exhaust, tracks, spark arrestors, etc.).
5. WATER DELIVERY: Provide water delivery capabilities on all logging operations.
6. EXTENDED PATROL: An equipment operator will remain patrolling onsite until 6:00 P.M. and be capable of operating a dozer or excavator for line construction purposes, if needed. (NOTE: Personnel are encouraged to walk the harvest unit during this extended patrol period. Consider having 2 people onsite until 6:00 pm – 1 person to operate equipment and another to call in the fire and operate water delivery systems as necessary.)