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For Immediate Release

Contact: Chris Johnson, 529-7751

Fire Danger Lowered to VERY HIGH in Missoula County

STAGE 1 Fire Restrictions Remain in Effect

July 13, 2015, 11:00 AM- Missoula, Montana – Interagency wildland fire officials with the Missoula County Fire Protection Association (MCFPA) have determined fire danger within Missoula County to have dropped to VERY HIGH. The rainfall over the weekend caused a short term spike in fine dead fuel moisture and lowered the fire danger from the EXTREME conditions we've faced for the last three weeks.

Rainfall amounts in the area from the weekend's storms varied, from less than a tenth of an inch in some areas to over an inch in Missoula itself.

Weather forecasters are predicting a return to seasonal temperatures and precipitation in the coming days, so the public needs to remain vigilant and support the One Less Spark campaign.

Firefighters responded to more than twenty fires ignited by this weekend's lightning. Most fires were kept under 2 acres in size because the lighting was immediately followed by rainfall. Missoula County residents need to know that our wildland firefighters face a long, arduous fire season even without having to respond to human-caused fires.

Our member agencies responded to over a dozen human-caused fires over the weekend. Causes of those fires ranged from haying equipment to folks burning debris without a valid permit (permits have been suspended due to fire danger for over a month); the majority were abandoned campfires.

Campfires must never be left unattended until they are cold to the touch. Member agencies elected to remain in Stage I Fire Restrictions this morning. Therefore, campfires are only allowed in Missoula County at designated sites that are listed, by jurisdictional agency, at www.firerestrictions.us

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www.mcfpa.org.