

Montana Travel and Tourism

Wildfire Season Dos and Don'ts When Communicating With Visitors

Summer 2018

Dos:





- Do highlight where the fire is located and that (most likely) it is not affecting many locations in Montana.
- Do remain calm and helpful when visitors inquire about a fire.
- Do remain up-to-date on the latest fire information, including road closures, destination closures, attraction closures, camping and fishing restrictions, etc.
- Do share information with all frontline employees who work with visitors— consider having a fire update meeting each morning or distributing updates from reputable sources: National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development, regional tourism bureaus, convention and visitor bureaus to all appropriate employees. See full list of links below.
- Do highlight areas of Montana and other parts of the state that are *not* affected by the fire and direct visitors to these areas and attractions.
- Do encourage visitors to continue their travel in Montana.
- Do talk about the role that fire plays in helping create the beautiful wild lands we enjoy.
- Do highlight the efforts fire crews are making to fight the fire.
- Do assure visitors that public officials have their safety in mind—if it's open, it's safe.
- Do focus on the positive and the locations that are open.
- Do highlight indoor activities in or around the area, if necessary.(museums, climbing gyms, cooking classes, wine tastings, etc.)


Don'ts:






- Don't provide false information.
- Don't dwell on the negative effects of the fire; instead, work to help the visitors have a great vacation despite the presence of fire.
- Avoid sharing photos or news of the fire on your personal or company / organization social media channels. Instead show the beauty and other activities still available.
- If you don't know the answer to a guest question about closures or the fire, do not make up an answer. Instead, help your guest check the sources listed below.

Information Resources:

Keep apprised of Glacier and Yellowstone national park closures and other advisories by following:

- Glacier National Park –  @GlacierNPS and  <https://www.facebook.com/GlacierNPS>.
- Yellowstone National Park –  @YellowstoneNPS and  <https://www.facebook.com/YellowstoneNPS>

US Forest Service updates can be found on Twitter -  at:

- Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest -  @BvrhdDrldgeNF
- Bitterroot National Forest -  @BitterrootNF
- Custer Gallatin National Forest  @CusterNF and @GallatinNF
- Flathead National Forest -  @FlatheadNF
- Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest -  @LewisandClarkNF
- Idaho Panhandle National Forest -  @ID_PanhandleNFs
- Lolo National Forest -  @LoloNF

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Don't forget the webcams:

- [Montana Department of Transportation](#)
- National Park Service
 - [Big Hole National Battlefield](#)
 - [Glacier National Park](#)
 - [Little Bighorn National Battlefield](#)
 - [Yellowstone National Park](#)
- U.S. Forest Service
 - [Bitterroot Valley](#)
 - [Gates of the Mountains \(Near Helena\)](#)
 - [Monture Mountain \(Near Ovando\)](#)

State-wide activity for wildfire and smoke related issues: TravelAware.MT.gov

Frequent updates on fires/closures: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/accessible-view/>

Posting of fishing, camping and other recreation restrictions due to drought and fire: <http://fwp.mt.gov/news>