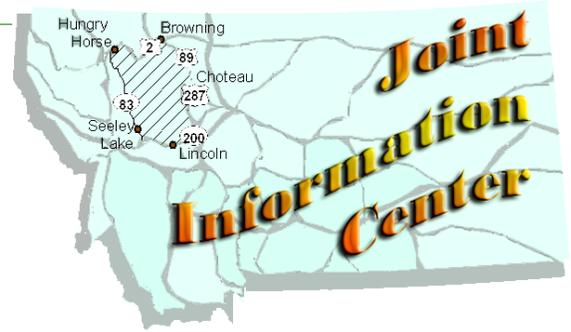


**Bob Marshall Area Joint Fire Information Center**  
Ahorn, Amphitheatre Mountain, Conger Creek, Fool Creek,  
Railley Mountain, Skyland, and Turtlehead Fires  
1-866-831-7450



## NEWS RELEASE

Thursday, Aug 16, 2007

August 16, 2007

**For Immediate Release**

Released by \_\_\_\_\_ Vicki Fox, JIC Coordinator

### Western Portion of the Scapegoat Wilderness Closed for Public Safety

Lincoln, MT – On Thursday, the western portion of the Scapegoat Wilderness on the Lincoln Ranger District of the Helena National Forest was closed to public access due to ongoing fires on the adjacent Lolo and Flathead National Forests. Lincoln District Ranger, Amber Kamps explained, “the closures are in effect to prevent the public from inadvertently hiking or horseback riding into fire areas and to protect fire crews working on these fires.” The closure includes the upper reaches of the North Fork of the Blackfoot River, East Fork and Mineral Creeks, Sourdough Creek, Camp Creek, Spaulding Creek, Crow Creek, Middle Fork Creek, Mary Ann Creek, Scotty Creek and multiple additional creeks and tributaries on the west side of the Scapegoat Wilderness. Two Point Lake, Parker Lake, Twin Lakes, and Meadow Lake are also closed. Access to the east side of the Scapegoat Wilderness remains open to hikers and backpackers. The popular Heart Lake, Bighorn Lake and Webb Lake remain open.

Several fires have prompted this closure, but the Conger Fire is the most likely to cross onto the Lincoln Ranger District. Ignited by lightning on July 15, 2007 on the Lolo National Forest, the Conger Fire is now burning nearly 10,000 acres just west of this new closure area. The fire’s recent spread into the North Fork of the Blackfoot drainage and continued easterly movement has precipitated the need for new access restrictions.

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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The area closure includes lands that fire behavior specialists predict could be affected in coming weeks if the weather does not moderate significantly. Kamps described the situation, “We are experiencing unforgiving fire behavior with the extreme temperatures and dry fuel conditions. The recent history of fire along the Rocky Mountain Front has taught us that fire can grow exponentially with fuel conditions this dry. We need to plan ahead to protect backcountry users from being caught in a moving fire situation.”

Backcountry visitors are encouraged to contact the Lincoln Ranger District at **406-362-4265** or the Joint Fire Information Center toll-free at **1-866-831-7450** for additional information. A map of the new closure area is available on the internet at [http://www.activefires.net/jic\\_mt/](http://www.activefires.net/jic_mt/). Copies can also be viewed at the Ranger District offices in Lincoln, Augusta, Choteau, Great Falls, Seeley Lake, Bigfork, Hungry Horse, and Spotted Bear.

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