

BEFORE THE FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARKS COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

In the matter of the adoption of a)
temporary emergency rule closing the) NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF A
Blackfoot River from Wisherd Bridge) TEMPORARY EMERGENCY RULE
to the confluence with the Clark Fork)
River in Missoula County)

TO: All Concerned Persons

1. The Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (department) has determined the following reasons justify the adoption of a temporary emergency rule:

(a) The West Riverside wildfire is burning near Bonner, Montana.

(b) Fire suppression efforts include several helicopters bucketing water from the Blackfoot River.

(c) The closure is necessary so helicopter crews can safely operate and maneuver without potential collisions with recreationists on the river. The closure is also necessary so recreationists, including those with limited maneuverability, are not subject to potential collision with large, heavy water buckets suspended from helicopters.

(d) Therefore, as this situation constitutes an imminent peril to public health, safety, and welfare, and this threat cannot be averted or remedied by any other administrative act, the department adopts the following temporary emergency rule. The emergency rule will be sent as a press release to newspapers throughout the state. Also, signs informing the public of the closure will be posted at access points. The rule will be sent to interested parties, and published as a temporary emergency rule in Issue No. 17 of the 2011 Montana Administrative Register.

2. The department will make reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities who wish to participate in the rulemaking process and need an alternative accessible format of the notice. If you require an accommodation, contact the department no later than 5:00 p.m. on September 22, 2011, to advise us of the nature of the accommodation that you need. Please contact Jessica Fitzpatrick, Fish, Wildlife and Parks, 1420 East Sixth Avenue, P.O. Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701; telephone (406) 444-9785; fax (406) 444-7456; or e-mail jfitzpatrick@mt.gov.

3. The temporary emergency rule is effective August 25, 2011, when this rule notice is filed with the Secretary of State.

4. The text of the temporary emergency rule provides as follows:

RULE I. BLACKFOOT RIVER TEMPORARY EMERGENCY CLOSURE

(1) A portion of the Blackfoot River is located in Missoula County.

(2) The Blackfoot River is closed from Wisherd Bridge to the confluence with the Clark Fork River to all public occupation and recreation including, but not limited to, floating, swimming, wading, and boating.

(3) This rule is effective as long as this stretch of river is needed as a source of water for fire suppression efforts.

AUTH: 2-4-303, 87-1-303, MCA

IMP: 2-4-303, 87-1-303, MCA

5. The rationale for the temporary emergency rule is as set forth in paragraph 1.

6. This rule is in effect as long as the stretch of river is needed as a source of water for fire suppression and the department determines the Blackfoot River is again safe for occupation and recreation. This will depend on the extent and duration of the fire in the area. Posted signs regarding the emergency closure will be removed when the rule is no longer effective. Notice of repeal of this emergency rule will be published in the Montana Administrative Register.

7. Concerned persons are encouraged to submit their comments to the department. They should submit their comments along with their names and addresses to Chet Crowser, Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, 3201 Spurgin Road, Missoula, MT 59804; fax (406) 542-5500; or e-mail ccrowser@mt.gov. Any comments must be received no later than October 7, 2011.

8. The department maintains a list of interested persons who wish to receive notice of rulemaking actions proposed by the department or commission. Persons who wish to have their name added to the list shall make written request that includes the name and mailing address of the person to receive the notice and specifies the subject or subjects about which the person wishes to receive notice. Such written request may be mailed or delivered to Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Legal Unit, P.O. Box 200701, 1420 East Sixth Avenue, Helena, MT 59620-0701, faxed to the office at (406) 444-7456, or may be made by completing the request form at any rules hearing held by the department.

9. The bill sponsor contact requirements of 2-4-302, MCA, do not apply.

/s/ Art Noonan

Art Noonan

Acting Director

Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks

Acting Secretary

Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commission

/s/ Rebecca Jakes Dockter

Rebecca Jakes Dockter

Rule Reviewer

Certified to the Secretary of State August 25, 2011.