

For Immediate Release

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Governor Bullock Signs Multi-state Proclamation Designating May as Wildfire Awareness Month

Helena, MT – Governor Bullock along with Governors from Idaho, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Nevada, and California have signed a multi-state proclamation designating May as Wildfire Awareness Month. The purpose of the proclamation is to raise awareness about the importance of preparing for wildfires and encourage the public to take action.

Wildfires are a part of life for individuals living in western states and are a vital component of the ecosystem. However, as the number of people living in fire prone communities increases, it becomes more important for residents to understand how to prepare for and respond to wildfires.

“Those of us living in the West understand how our families and friends can be impacted by wildfire season and how important it is for each of us to be prepared,” Governor Bullock stated. “We must all be reminded to take the necessary steps to prepare our homes and communities so that when wildfires approach, we respond appropriately and ensure that the public is in safe hands.”

According to the National Interagency Fire Center, nearly 2.5 million acres are burned each year by human-caused wildfires, an area the size of Yellowstone National Park. In Montana, top causes of wildfires change through the course of the season: escaped debris and agricultural burns in the spring; escaped or unattended campfires in the summer; and sparks from dragging trailer chains, lawnmowers, chainsaws or field machinery in the late summer and early fall when grasses are cured and ripe for ignition.

Montanans are encouraged to take time this spring to prepare their homes and property, learn how to prevent human-caused fires, and practice emergency routes and communication plans. Several communities across the state will be hosting local wildfire preparedness events this spring where residents can learn more and get engaged. Visit www.firesafemt.org to find an event near you.

Join us for a press conference following the Governor's fire briefing on May 6th at the Capitol in Helena, MT. Estimated start time is 2:15pm.

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Wildfire Awareness Month is being organized by the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Keep Montana Green, FireSafe Montana, and the Governor's Office of Community Service. Please visit the following websites for more information:

www.firesafemt.org

www.keepgreen.org

www.ready.mt.gov

www.readysetgomontana.org

www.redcross.org/prepare

<http://dnrc.mt.gov/flood-and-fire>

