

Seeley Swan

PATHFINDER

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Fireworks Prohibited - Stage 1 Fire Restrictions

Pathfinder

Stage 1 Fire Restrictions have been imposed in Missoula, Flathead, Lake, Lincoln and Sanders Counties, effective 12:01 a.m. Friday, July 3.

Missoula County Commissioners decided Tuesday, June 30 that Stage 1 restrictions extend the perpetual prohibition of fireworks from county parks, Forest Service and state lands to private lands. No fireworks will be permitted on any land in Missoula County, public or private. For other counties, please contact your local fire department for fireworks restrictions.

The Seeley Lake community fireworks display is still scheduled, however the one in Condon has been cancelled. The Missoula City-County Office of Emergency Management's Missoula 9-1-1 Center is staffing a fireworks report line.

While the public will still be able to purchase fireworks, they are encouraged to report the use of fireworks to 406-258-4850. Law enforcement will respond as resources allow. To report a fire call 911.

Stage 1 Restrictions prohibit all fireworks and create severe restrictions on campfires and smoking. Stage 1 Restrictions also mean that responding agencies can hold an individual that starts a fire as a result of fireworks financially liable for the costs of fighting the fire.

This move comes on the heels of the Missoula County Fire Protection Association's determination that fire danger in Missoula County is Extreme. That determination is in consultation with all local fire agencies, land management agencies and local government and is based on information related to weather, fuels, and current and expected conditions.

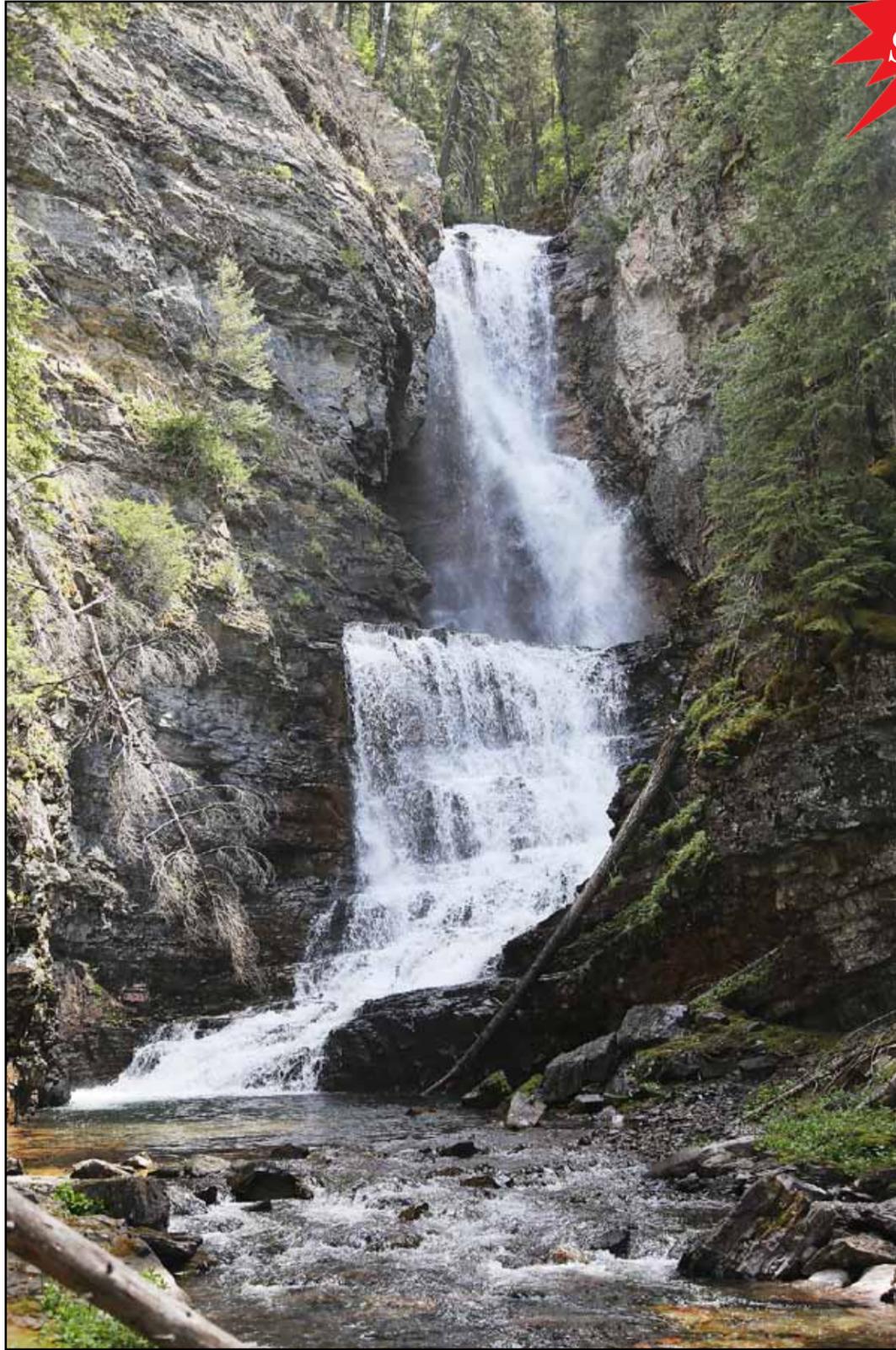


Photo by Nathan Bourne, Pathfinder

The Upper Falls on Morrell Creek is not frequented nearly as often as lower Morrell Falls. There is an unmarked trail 100 yards before you reach the lower falls that takes you to the upper falls. It is a steep climb and is not maintained; use extra caution. For full hike details see page 15.

A Look Inside:

- Local Resident Returns Home After Accident, pg. 3
- Farmers Market Offers More than Merchandise, pg. 6
- Country Cottage Supports Elementary Athletics, pg. 8
- Celebrate the Swan Race Offers Slower Pace, pg. 8
- Celebrating 50 years of Memories from SSHS, pg. 9
- A Permant Pillar in Seeley Lake, pg. 13
- Reader Photos, pgs. 15 & 16

Smith Creek School Gains New Home

by Colleen Kesterson
Pathfinder

SWAN VALLEY - The Smith Creek School house was in session during the early years of the settlement of the Swan Valley. It opened in 1918 to the children of the first settlers and homesteaders. Children in grades one through eight were taught there until its closure in 1932.

Upper Swan Valley Historical Society (USVHS) President Steve Lamar said that the Smith Creek School was one of the first schools to be built in the upper Swan Valley in 1918, along with Rumble Creek and Elk Creek. "The Smith Creek School was a valley icon

See SCHOOLHOUSE page 14



Hopping About Hoppers!

Story & photos by Sigrid Olson
Pathfinder

POTOMAC - Since mid June Potomac residents have seen many grasshoppers covering roads and fields, sometimes so thick that the ground looked as if it were moving. All across Montana they can damage cropland and rangeland. Although grasshoppers are common to Potomac during the summers, the densities seen this June are not.

Egg hatching for grasshoppers normally starts in late April to early May in Montana. The speed of development is temperature-dependent; the warmer it is, the

faster they develop, according to Ruth O'Neill, Montana State University (MSU) plant sciences and plant pathology research associate.

The grasshoppers are thick at the west end of the valley around Bear Creek Road. People moving irrigation hoses are seeing the grasshoppers completely cover the hoses. Potomac residents like the France family have questions about the number of grasshoppers this year. Katy France has seen the road on the east end of Potomac covered with alive and dead grasshoppers. "The road was even brown where the cars had driven over the grasshoppers," said France. France

wondered if it is due to weather or season lengths.

People in Potomac are seeing local movement of the grasshoppers that is encouraged by early hot and dry weather. Although the Potomac grasshoppers are not migrating, it is common to see bands of grasshoppers walking in a similar direction at times added O'Neill.

"This has been a dry spring, and grasshoppers thrive in dry and

See GRASSHOPPERS page 7



Photo by Steve Lamar

The original Smith Creek Schoolhouse in 2004 near present day Kauffman Road in Condon.

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Schoolhouse
(continued from pg. 1)

having withstood the test of time for 93 years until its destruction in 2011,” said Lamar.

After the school was destroyed in 2011, the USVHS partnered with the US Forest Service in 2014 to rebuild the Smith Creek School. A decision had to be made where to locate the structure - in its original location, near the community hall, or at the museum grounds. Lamar said the majority of interested community members wanted it to be located at the museum grounds where it would be more accessible, as well as easier to protect and maintain.

The replica is on permanent display at the USVHS museum Highway 83 in Condon, Mont. The USVHS has numerous items from



Photo by Steve Lamar

The Smith Creek School completed and at its new home at the USVHS museum site.

the one-room schools in the upper Swan Valley that will become part of the one-room Smith Creek School exhibit.

“In many places in the United States, the one-room school was

part of the distant past, whereas, here in the Swan Valley much less so,” said Lamar. “This exhibit will be a valuable addition to the Swan Valley Museum & Heritage Site.”



Photo provided by Steve Lamar

Students in front of the Smith Creek School in 1932.

Corps (MCC), a non-profit group that employs young people who come to work in Montana’s wild places through the state’s AmeriCorps program. Logs for the project were supplied by Dick Wolf and Bill Anderson, Swan Valley residents.

2014 Sept. 8 – Community volunteers and five members of the MCC along with the FNF started working together to reconstruct the building at the Condon Work Center. MCC worked until Sept. 17. On Sept. 22 FNF employees took over the job.



Photo by Colleen Kesterson

School moved to permanent site, the Upper Swan Valley Historical Society Museum in Condon.



Photo by Colleen Kesterson

A display currently in the museum that will be moved to the schoolhouse.

Smith Creek Schoolhouse Timeline

1918 - The Smith Creek School was built in 1918 of larch logs and sited close to the then main road in the Swan Valley near present day Kauffman Road.

1932 - The Smith Creek School was permanently closed.

2011 – It remained in the same location until the school was sawed in pieces and put in a burn pile by a contractor for the Flathead National Forest (FNF).

2011 August – USVHS president Steve Lamar received word that the Smith Creek School was in pieces in a burn pile. Lamar began talks with the FNF about replacing or restoring the building.

2014 – Michael Downs, then recreation specialist for the FNF said, “We [FNF] want to make it right, to mitigate the situation.” Downs said that the FNF wanted to rebuild the school using Montana Conservation



A diamond or V-notch from the original school.

logs for the project were supplied by Dick Wolf and Bill Anderson, Swan Valley residents.

2014 Sept. 8 – Community volunteers and five members of the MCC along with the FNF started working together to reconstruct the building at the Condon Work Center. MCC worked until Sept. 17. On Sept. 22 FNF employees took over the job.

2014 October – The six foot walls are completed on the Smith Creek School at the Condon Work Center and covered for the winter.

2015 May 13 – Site preparation began at the Condon Work Station to construct the remaining log roof structure. It consists of purlins, log gable ends and the ridge pole

2015 May 18 – Gary Lazarowski, Lamar and FNF employees begin work on the roof structure at ground level which is to be placed on the wall structure at the museum site when completed.

2015 May 21 – The log wall structure was moved from the Condon Work Center to the school’s permanent site at the Upper Swan Valley Historical Society Museum. It was set up by volunteers Bill Anderson, Gary Lazarowski, Steve Lamar and two US Forest Service employees.

2015 June 8 – Roof structure consisting of purlins, gable ends and the ridge pole was moved to the museum site and set onto the log wall structure. (photo 011Bill Anderson loading it (Steve Lamar photo)

2015 June 23 – Volunteers came to the Condon Work Center to rake and pile debris left at the work site to be burned in the fall. It was decided to reseed the area in the fall when there is rainfall. Leftover log scraps will be sawed and used as firewood at Forest Service rentals.

2015 – Summer work continues at the museum site to close in the rebuilt Smith Creek School which when completed will house one-room schoolhouse memorabilia.



Photo by Steve Lamar

The roof structure at the Condon Work Center.



Photo by Steve Lamar

Bill Anderson placing the final log on the roof at the museum site.

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