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Service Change Notice 11-09  
National Weather Service Headquarters Washington DC  
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From:         Eli Jacks  
              Chief, Fire and Public Weather Services Branch

Subject: Changes to the Boundaries of the Fire Weather Forecast Zones in Phillips, Valley, Petroleum and Garfield Counties in Montana: Effective March 15, 2011

Effective Tuesday, March 15, 2011, at 1200 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), the NWS Weather Forecast Office (WFO) in Glasgow (GGW), MT, will split the Phillips and Valley Counties (MTZ119) and the Charles M. Russell Refuge and Petroleum and Garfield Counties (MTZ121) fire weather forecast zones into four new fire weather forecast zones.

The purpose of the change is to improve services for WFO GGW fire weather partners by better associating zone areas with weather regimes. The split of the Phillips and Valley Counties (MTZ119) and the Charles M. Russell Refuge and Petroleum and Garfield Counties (MTZ121) fire weather forecast zones will separate the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge and the surrounding more rugged terrain into its own zone. The Little Rocky Mountains and surrounding higher terrain will also form a new fire weather forecast zone. Finally, the remaining two zones will encompass northern Valley and northern Phillips counties and southern Petroleum and southern Garfield counties, respectively.

Once this change has been implemented, the fire weather zone numbers, names and geographical descriptors in Table 1 will be used in all fire weather forecast products issued by WFO GGW. Montana fire weather forecast zones MTZ119 and MTZ121 will no longer be used.

Table 1:

New Fire Weather Zone Number -----	New Fire Weather Zone Name -----	Old Fire Weather Zone Number -----	Old Fire Weather Zone Name -----
MTZ134	Northern Valley and Northern Phillips Counties	MTZ119	Phillips and Valley Counties

MTZ134 Physical Description: This zone consists of Phillips and Valley counties in northeast Montana north of Beaver and Willow Creeks, excluding portions of the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation lands in Phillips County, and excluding portions of Fort Peck Indian Reservation in Valley County. This also includes portions of the Lewistown District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Montana state lands, and national wildlife refuge lands.

MTZ135	The Little Rockies	MTZ119	Phillips and Valley Counties
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MTZ135 Physical Description: This zone is defined on the north by the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation boundary, on the west by the Phillips County line, to the south by the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge boundary, and to the east by Highway 191. This zone includes the portions of the Lewistown District of the BLM and Montana state lands.

MTZ136	The Lower Missouri River Breaks including the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge	MTZ121	Charles M. Russell Refuge and Petroleum and Garfield Counties
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MTZ136 Physical Description: This zone is defined on the north by Beaver and Willow Creeks, on the west by Highway 191 and the western Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge boundary, on the south by Dovetail Creek, the Middle Fork of Lodge Pole Creek and Big Dry Creek, and on the east by the eastern Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge boundary. This zone includes the entire Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge north and South of the Missouri River, as well as portions of the Lewistown and the Miles City Districts of the BLM, and Montana state lands.

MTZ137	Southern Petroleum and Southern Garfield Counties	MTZ121	Charles M. Russell Refuge and Petroleum and Garfield Counties
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MTZ137 Physical Description: This zone consists of Petroleum and Garfield counties in northeast Montana south of Dovetail Creek, the Middle Fork of Lodge Pole Creek and Big Dry Creek. This also includes portions of the Lewistown District and the Miles City District of the BLM and Montana state lands.

Graphical depictions of the old and new fire weather forecast zones are online at:

<http://www.weather.gov/os/notification/images/ggw-old.png>

and

[http://www.weather.gov/om/notification/images/new\\_fwz.JPG](http://www.weather.gov/om/notification/images/new_fwz.JPG)

NWS watch, warning and forecast products affected by these changes are:

For Fire Weather Zones MTZ134, MTZ135, MTZ136 and MTZ137:

Product -----	WMO Heading -----	AWIPS ID -----
Fire Weather Watch	WWUS83 KGGW	RFWGGW
Red Flag Warning	WWUS83 KGGW	RFWGGW
Fire Weather Planning Forecast	FNUS53 KGGW	FWFGGW
National Fire Danger Rating	FNUS86 KGGW	FWMGGW
System Forecast		

NWS partners will need to make necessary changes to their communication systems to accommodate these fire weather forecast zone changes.

A shapefile of the new fire weather forecast zones for WFO GGW is available for download at:

[www.nws.noaa.gov/geodata/catalog/wsom/html/firezone.htm](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/geodata/catalog/wsom/html/firezone.htm)

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National Service Change Notices are online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/notification/archive>

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