



# RISTWATCH

RCVFD Quarterly Newsletter P. O. Box 2, Bellvue, CO 80512 Issue No. 114 April 2025

## Letter from the President

### Déjà vu All Over Again.

Yogi Berra originally said it. This winter gives me and others that feeling again. We have enjoyed a remarkably warm and dry winter this year. While this has meant that we have not had to deal with so much snow or cold weather, the feeling that I can't get past is the last time we had a similarly mild winter was 2011/2012. Many will remember how that June was spent. Most of us were evacuated from the High Park Fire while our intrepid firefighters worked their tails off to save what they could of our little piece of nirvana.

If you have allowed things on your place to get a little dangerous from a fire standpoint, this would be a good time to take care of some of those items. Clean dead needles from your deck, cut back

those trees that are a little too close, move stored fuel. And when the grasses start growing again, keep them cropped short all around your house and other buildings. As the saying goes, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Don't forget about the assessments our firefighters can perform free of charge. Contact your area representative if you are interested.

And of course, remember that our fire department doesn't run on hopes and wishes, we need hard cash. So please be generous when donating to RCVFD!

Stay tuned for special 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary happenings!

**Neil Faber  
President - 2025**

# Chief's Report

## Greetings from Chief Neuroth

There is quite a bit going on with the Fire Department this Spring.

Rist Canyon VFD is hosting a 12-week online EMT/ EMR (Emergency Medical Technician / Emergency Medical Responder) class. There will be six attending from Rist Canyon. We are cooperating with the other mountain volunteer fire departments, so there will be participation from some of the other departments as well. At the end of the course, the attendees will have the equivalent of 12 credit hours. Thompson Valley is also partnering with us to provide in-person skills testing and instruction. We are continuing to seek out ways to make our fire department better.

A recent structure/wildland fire gave some of our recruits some actual fire experience. We had a great response and were able to man six (6) trucks and had containment within a few hours. This gave our firefighters a chance to use the skills they are learning during training.

Our grants team continues to do a great job as well. They recently obtained grant money to purchase three (3) new infrared cameras that can be used for detecting hot spots in structure/ chimney fires. Their time and effort put

towards writing and securing grant funds is very much appreciated.

Thanks to the community for your support, we are using the resources you provide to diligently increase the quality of service we provide and for the safety of our firefighters.

We are moving forward toward having a well-trained and equipped team to respond to any medical or fire emergency that may occur in our district. Thanks to all for allowing me the honor of being chief of RCVFD.

**Gratefully submitted,**  
**Mark Neuroth, Chief**  
**Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department**  
**P.O. Box 2, Bellvue, CO 80512**

[chief@rcvfd.org](mailto:chief@rcvfd.org)

## Letter from the Vice President

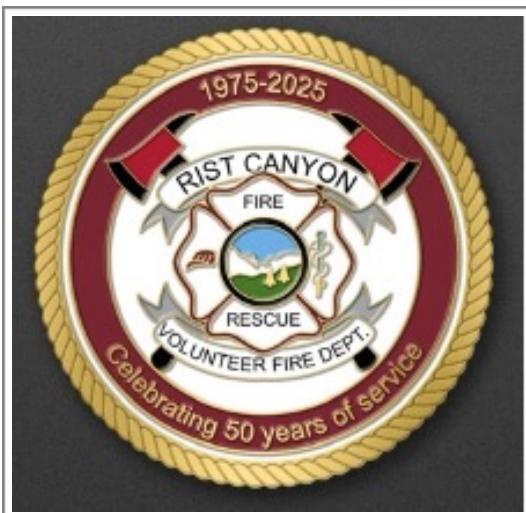


Annual Community Meeting and 50<sup>th</sup> Celebration 11/1/2025: The Annual RCVFD Community Meeting and **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the RCVFD Celebration** will be a professionally catered lunch at 1pm on Saturday 11/1/2025 at the Stove Prairie Ranch. Please join your neighbors for this special event and honor 50 years of support from your RCVFD!!!

RCVFD 2025 Mountain Festival 9/6/2025: RCVFD fundraiser Festival will be Saturday 9/6/2025 from 10am to 4pm. Music, silent auction, book sale, plant sale, bake sale, kids' activities, crafts, vendors, car show, dunk tank, food, and more! In the field across from RCVFD Fire Station at 11835 Rist Canyon Road. A full, fun day for family and friends!

50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Coin for Sale 9/6/2025: This year at the Festival we will have a fantastic way to honor the RCVFD and their dedication to the community: our first ever commemorative coin for the department! The colorful imagery

of the RCVFD shield is on the face and the history of some of the fires RCVFD fought is on the reverse side. The 1.75" coin will be sold for \$10 for residents to show their support while getting something special to mark the RCVFD's 50th anniversary. All proceeds go to RCVFD.



*Continued on page 4.*

## Letter from the Vice President

*Continued from page 3.*

Craft/Vendors for Festival Application Deadline 6/15/2025: Interested in a Craft/Vendor booth space at the 2025 Festival? Booth space cost and details along with the vendor application form are available at: <https://festival.rcvfd.org/festival-vendor-information/>. The application process is available through June 15, 2025. For questions, please contact Debbie Benson, Vendor Chairperson at [debandlyle007@gmail.com](mailto:debandlyle007@gmail.com) or 720-999-3003.

Please Respond to Donation Request Letter Today: Three times a year you should receive a donation request letter with a return envelope to support your RCVFD, who show up 24/7 when you call 911 in the Rist Canyn area. In the March 2025 letter you should have already received, your neighbors Carolyn and Randy share their story of the RCVFD response when they called 911 the morning of January 8, 2025. Please be sure to read this.



**H. J. Siegel**

**RCVFD Board Vice President and Mountain Festival Coordinator**

[HJ@computer.org](mailto:HJ@computer.org)

## RCVFD Monthly Meeting Schedule

Operations—1st Wednesdays (6-7 PM)

Fire Training—2nd Wednesdays (7-9:30 PM)

Board Meeting—3rd Wednesdays (6-8 PM)

Medical Training—4th Wednesdays (7-9 PM)

Ops, Fire, and Medical Trainings are at Firehouse #1 at 11835 Rist Canyon Road. Board meetings are held at Firehouse #1, or on Zoom if necessary. All Rist Canyon area residents are welcome to attend. Around the first of each month, RCVFD sends out a Community Alert with the deadline to request a copy of the agenda. If you would like to receive the agenda, please email your name, email address, and phone number to the RCVFD Board Secretary at [secretary@rcvfd.org](mailto:secretary@rcvfd.org). Please note that the agenda will arrive one to two days before the scheduled meeting. To sign up for Community Alerts, visit [RCVFD.org](http://RCVFD.org).

# RIST CANYON MOUNTAIN FESTIVAL



## CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF RCVFD COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The annual Rist Canyon Mountain Festival is a great opportunity to connect with our community. The Bake Tent and Book Tent Committee News and Notes below highlight just a few ways you can join or support the fun or volunteer in meaningful way.

### **Bake Sale Tent: Please Donate Baked Goods for the Festival**

Do you have a favorite cookie recipe? Are you known far and wide for your mouth-watering berry pies? Pull out those recipes and start planning to make all those baked goods to donate to the 2025 Rist Canyon Mountain Festival Bake Sale! A huge THANK YOU to all those in the community who donated baked goods in 2024. Last year, the Bake Tent sold out of all goodies, and we aim to do that again this year! Pies remain the most popular big-ticket sale items. However, lower-cost, small items such as cookies, brownies, bars, specialty desserts, breakfast treats, and breads helped profits soar. Many an individual was seen walking around the festival, happily munching away on some tasty treat!

For those new to the festival, proceeds of the bake sale are directly donated to the Rist Canyon Fire Department. Baking, donating, and purchasing baked goods are the perfect and tasty way to include the whole family in supporting our volunteer firefighters and EMS. Additionally, volunteers are more than welcome to come and help in the bake tent at the festival. Closer to the festival date, an email will be sent out to those wanting to volunteer. If you have any questions or would like to be placed on the volunteer list, please feel free to contact me. Let's make the 2025 Rist Canyon Mountain Festival the best year yet!

**Darcy Budge | Bake Sale Chair | [Darcy\\_arlene@hotmail.com](mailto:Darcy_arlene@hotmail.com)**

# Rist Canyon Mountain Festival

*Continued from page 5.*

## BOOK TENT NEWS

We've received some great book donations from the wider community and Old Firehouse Book Store, but we still need many more for the 2025 Mountain Festival. We can pick up books at your location and bring packing boxes, too, if needed. Also, you can drop off books anytime at the drop box in front of Fire House Station #1, located at 11835 Rist Canyon Road or the Pleasant Valley Church of Christ near the Bellvue Post Office. Starting in June we will also have drop boxes for books at the Laporte Hardware Store and Laporte Pizza.

The Book Bees will start sorting donated books in early April. We'd be happy to have more volunteers. If you'd like to join us, please call or text me and I'll add your name to the email list for meeting notifications.

Our one and only Queen Bee of the Book Tent, Carolyn Stanley, is stepping down as Chair after seven (7) incredible years. Thank you Carolyn! She will continue to be involved as Co-chair and help me figure this all out. I've been a Book Bee for four (4) years, and I love it! Kathy Cox will still be a Co-chair too. She's a busy Bee picking up most of the drop box and bookstore donations all year long. All the Bees work hard and have a lot of fun together!

If you need books picked up or have any questions, please contact Patti Clutter, Chair [clutterp28@gmail.com](mailto:clutterp28@gmail.com), 858-248-6328), Carolyn Stanley, Co-Chair [cloud9sewing@gmail.com](mailto:cloud9sewing@gmail.com), 970-221-2024), or Kathy Cox, Co-Chair [kathyc228@yahoo.com](mailto:kathyc228@yahoo.com), 970-472-1972). Thank you!

**Patti Clutter**



## Fire Danger Guidelines

(Excerpts from Retired RCVFD Chief Bob Gann's July 2006 Ristwatch report)

Driving into the Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department's service area signs and colored flags indicate the current fire danger. The question is, do you really know what each of the flag colors signifies?

In 1974, the US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and state forestry organizations established a standard adjective description for five levels of fire danger for use in fire prevention signage.[i]



Although the levels have been tweaked, the five levels have remained largely consistent since the program's inception. Fire danger is calculated based on temperature, fuel moistures, potential for fires, energy stored in the fuel, etc. This tends to change relatively slowly and is highly dependent on the fuel moisture. So, usually you will see a trend that changes over a number of days.

However, there is one other type of "Fire Danger" rating that tends to come and go quickly. That is the "Red Flag" warning. Red Flag warnings are issued by the National Weather Service based upon specific weather events combined with certain weather and increase the fire danger/potential dramatically for the duration of that weather event. Typically, Red Flags are shorter lived because the weather that causes them changes. Red Flag warnings are due to low humidity, high temperature and, primarily,

*Continued on page 22.*

## Notes from Your Area Representatives

Happy Spring! I hope you've been having an amazing time outdoors! I've been doing a lot of hiking in this mild winter. Young Gulch is such a beautiful spot, and how fun that I got to see my first Pasque flower of the season! My dog loved the creek crossings—it's always nice to share those moments with a hiking buddy.

It's also been great to see that our lending library was busy all winter. That community vibe with book trading and ornament sharing is such a lovely way to stay connected. With a lot of great plans for the summer, one is hosting the Buckhorn Ranger Station. It is an amazing opportunity to meet and help even more of our neighbors. The Memorial Day weekend opening sounds like a perfect start to the season! The rentals should be available on [recreation.gov](https://www.recreation.gov) too! Hope to see you all this summer in the Buckhorn!

**Erica Michel**

**Upper Buckhorn Area Representative**



**Photo credit: Erica Michel**

Happy Spring All! While Spring is about the advent of life and light and often associated with new beginnings and fresh starts, I associate Spring most with the excitement to the start of the gardening season. Yet, amidst my pile of seed catalogs, seed packets, and coconut coir bricks, I am hoping for one last snow to finish up burning my slash piles. Speaking of new beginnings, a new butcher shop has opened in Fort Collins right outside LaPorte off 287B on N Taft Hill Rd. If you're someone who likes to support local small businesses and enjoys perfectly flavored seasoned meat, please stop by and check out Stan's Specialty Meats. Owner, Stan is anxious to meet his Rist Canyon Community neighbors! Wishing everyone renewed energy, sunshine and warmth, and good health.

**Debbie Benson**  
**Rist Canyon Area Representative**



**Photo credit: Debbie Benson**

# Spring is Here!



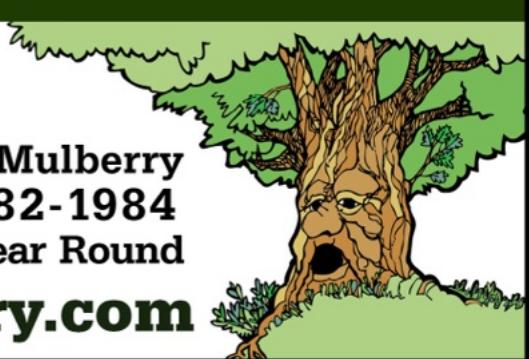
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## Notes from Your Area Representatives, cont'd from pg 8

As to the latest news in the Lower Buckhorn from 44H to Masonville, there has been little to report since the last Ristwatch was published. The last few days have been pretty windy. This is of course a regular occurrence here in the foothills of Colorado during the winter months. This necessitates the observance of the usual use of outdoor fires. Permits for fires to burn can be obtained from Larimer County and reported to the Sheriff's Department on the day of your burn. The major requirement is that there be no remarkable wind and four inches of snow on the ground.

It's still been pretty dry since we've received so little precipitation this winter. The good thing about this is that county road 27 has had little snow that has affected traffic. By the time this report hits the press we may have had a big wet snow. We really need the water. But spring is just around the corner, and we are much more likely to experience wildlife sightings. So slow down when approaching blind curves. I'd hate for anyone to hit a deer or bobcat or turkey.

Finally, May 10<sup>th</sup> I will be hosting a gathering of all who are interested in building a Buckhorn fire station. We'll be discussing the location, the need for volunteers to man rigs and the potentials costs associating to the project and what the County expects from RCVFD. All of those interested will be welcome.

**Dean Yoder**  
**Lower Buckhorn Area Representative**

I am getting spring fever with the nice weather we have had in between the cold. We have had several neighbors in the Davis Ranch area burning slash. Please be sure to have a burn permit and plenty of snow on the ground.

My husband took a ride on the flight for life in January. Be sure you have the Helicopter insurance before you need it. Trip was \$60,000.

We are still seeing plenty of deer and the turkeys are still coursing through. I will remind you that it is against the law to feed either one.

Have a safe spring!

**Carolyn Stanley**  
**Davis Ranch Area Representative**

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### **Notes from Your Area Representatives, *continued from pg 10***

Spring is getting ready to spring forth as I write. The flora and fauna are doing their spring things! They say it's going to be unseasonably warm this season. With this comes an earlier fire threat. Please keep this in mind. Now is the time to mitigate any fire threats around your home and property. Keep in mind slash burning requires a minimum of three inches of snow. Get your 'go' bags ready and look over any evacuation plans you have. We have already had one fire pop up recently. It was a structure fire up 44H. The RCVFD responded to the call and immediately quashed the fire which was about an acre. It's always spooky to hear and see the emergency vehicles headed to the unknown as they head towards a call. Let us all do our part to help these volunteers and be prepared for any scenario Mother Nature may throw at us. We live in an amazing community. We can help protect and enjoy it.

**Tim Stratman**  
**Stove Prairie Area Representative**

**Are you interested in seeing  
a fire station in the  
Buckhorn area?**

---



**Community Meeting  
May 10th  
2:00 – 4:00 pm**

**Area residents are  
encouraged to attend.**

**For more information  
visit [rcvfd.org/Buckhorn](http://rcvfd.org/Buckhorn)**

**or**

**Contact your RCVFD  
Area Representative**

The Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department has been wrestling with the idea of building a fire station to improve response to the area of the Buckhorn. We are assessing the practicality of such a move. Obviously, purchasing land, putting up a building and equipping a new station is an expensive process. We want to make sure we are good stewards with the money that has been donated to us, so it is important to get this right.

Strong local support would inform us that this is important to the residents of this area. It is imperative that we have local volunteer responders to make a station in this area successful.

We are holding a community meeting at the residence of Lower Buckhorn Area Representative Dean Yoder on May 10 from 2:00 to 4:00 PM. Dean's address is 19995 Buckhorn Road. While the purpose of this meeting is to assess the level of support from the residents in the Buckhorn area, we welcome comments from all residents of the RCVFD area. Please plan to attend and share your opinions.

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# STOVE PRAIRIE ELEMENTARY



## WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO



The students of Stove Prairie have been busy this year! We just wrapped up Read Across America week complete with guest readers, a PJ day, and green eggs and ham for breakfast. This event promotes reading and literacy, and coincides with Dr. Seuss' birthday.

Our annual spelling bee is just around the corner, as is the Mountain School's Spring Concert at PSD. Since the mountain schools are comprised of 3 schools, Livermore, Red Feather and Stove Prairie, these opportunities for our Mountain Schools to come together are a real source of celebration!

### 2025 Stove Prairie Fall Festival

Would you or your business like to be a sponsor?

We are seeking sponsorships for our Fall Festival as well as donations for our silent auction! Are you a local who cares about our school? We'd love to hear from you! 100% of proceeds benefit the school. Please reach out to: [contact@stoveprairiepto.org](mailto:contact@stoveprairiepto.org) for more information.



Stove Prairie Elementary would like to give a big thanks to Sky Corral Ranch for their generous donation of a book to each of the students of Stove- this ensured that every child received a book from our Book Fair. THANK YOU!!!



### 2025-2026 KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

If your child is 5 years of age by October 1, 2025, they are eligible for FREE FULL DAY Kindergarten! Stove Prairie Elementary is a PSD school. Come see what this amazing community has to offer.



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## Submissions to the Ristwatch

Submissions of written work or photographs are welcome and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Please send submissions to the Ristwatch Editor at [ristwatch@rcvfd.org](mailto:ristwatch@rcvfd.org).

*The Ristwatch reserves the right to edit, refuse, reject, or cancel any article or ad at any time. We base this decision on our responsibility to our readers. We will not knowingly print any article or ad that is misleading or untruthful. Articles submitted to the Ristwatch are a representation of the author and not necessarily an endorsement by the RCVFD.*

## In Honor of Dark Skies



We are writing this article in honor of Dark Sky week – which occurs in April. When we moved to the canyon decades ago, there was not a light in our view and getting a glimpse of the Milky Way and other beautiful celestial features was a regular occurrence. As more folk have moved into the canyon and the skyglow in the east from Fort Collins has grown, the opportunities to see good views of the night sky have diminished.

There is not much we can do about the lights in Fort Collins, but we can make sure that our outside lights are not diminishing the night sky for us or our neighbors. Lighting is only necessary when there are eyes to use it, so put your outside lights on motion sensors. That way they only turn on when you need them. I know that occasionally deer and other critters will trip them on, but it is way better than them being on all night. It also saves electricity & money!

Also, did you know that there is little to no correlation between more outside lights and decreased crime – there are actually some studies that show the opposite is true. If you would like more information about outdoor lighting and preserving the night sky, check out the website [darksky.org](https://darksky.org)

**Respectfully Submitted,  
Carol Dollard & Harry Bates**

# What's Happening in Your Neighborhood?



6108 Blue Spruce Dr, Bellvue

- ~ 2.68 Acres
- Custom log home with view of Horsetooth Reservoir



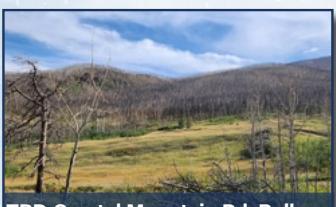
629 Davis Ranch Rd, Bellvue

- ~ 6.5 Acres
- Quiet Retreat in the Mountains



106 Beartrap Rd, Red Feather Lakes

- ~ 4.93 Acres
- Crystal Lakes Mtn Get-Away



TBD Crystal Mountain Rd, Bellvue

- ~ 3.91 Acres
- Build or Camp, Lots of Wildlife, Near Plenty of Recreation



151 Stone Cutter Rd, Bellvue

- ~ 37.8 Acres
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3805 Davis Ranch Rd, Bellvue

- ~ 20 Acres
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TBD Stratton Park Rd, Bellvue

- ~ 35-39 Acres
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963 Crystal Mountain Rd, Bellvue

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### Installation

FyrePro is a fantastic resource for anyone looking to enhance their space with a fireplace!

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FyrePro sales staff can guide you through the process, from selecting the perfect design to ensuring proper installation.

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### Outdoor Oasis

FyrePro specializes in transforming outdoor spaces into stunning, functional retreats by adding key features like outdoor kitchens, fire pits, and fireplaces.

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Whether you're cooking under the stars in your custom outdoor kitchen, cozying up around the fire pit with loved ones, or simply basking in the warmth of your outdoor fireplace, FyrePro helps you create lasting memories in the comfort of your own backyard.

# Thank You, Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department!



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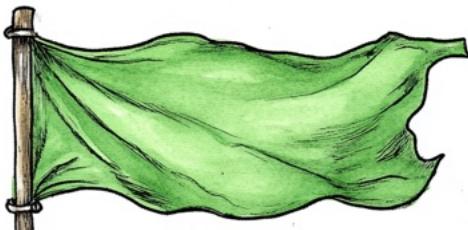
## Fire Danger Guidelines (continued)

*Continued from page 7.*

...wind. A fire that, on a calm day, is a slow creeping fire can turn into a large running fire if the wind blows. That means that "High" can go to "Red Flag" in a moment if the wind comes up and back down when the wind goes away.

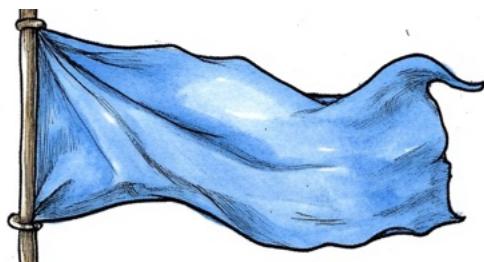
When there is a Red Flag alert:

Be especially careful with ignition sources. Any kind of fire, smoking, welding, sparks, hot vehicle mufflers. Report any fire or smoke immediately. Do not wait or assume it has been reported. The critical element is time – responders need to get to these fires when they are small.



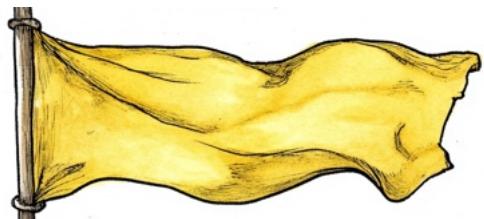
**Green Flag:** Fuels do not ignite readily from small firebrands (defined as a piece of burning wood) although a more intense heat source, such as lightning, may start fires in duff or punky (rotted) wood. Fire in open cured grasslands may burn freely for a few hours after rain, but woods fires spread slowly by creeping or

smoldering, and burn in irregular fingers. There is little danger of spotting.



**Blue Flags (Moderate):** Fires can start from most accidental causes but, with the exception of lightning fires in some areas, the number of starts is generally low. Fires in open cured grasslands will burn briskly and spread rapidly on windy days. Timber fires spread slowly to moderately fast. The average fire is of

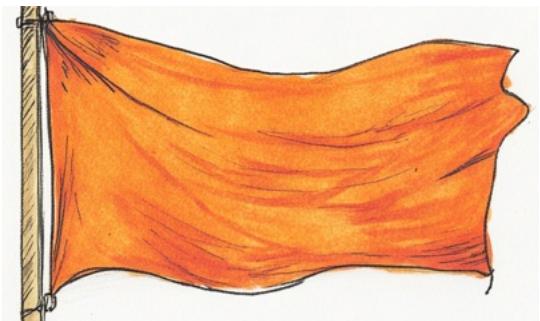
moderate intensity, although heavy concentrations of fuel, especially draped fuel, may burn hot. Short-distance spotting may occur, but is not persistent. Fires are not likely to become serious and control is relatively easy.



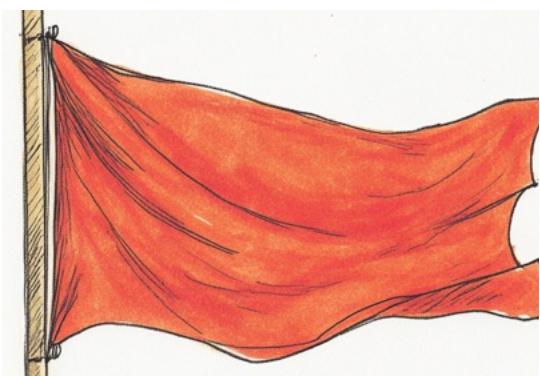
**Yellow Flags (High):** All dead fuels ignite readily and fires start easily from most causes. Unattended brush and campfires are likely to escape. Fires spread rapidly and short-distance spotting is common. High-intensity burning may develop on slopes or in concentrations of fire fuels. Fires may become serious and their control difficult unless they are attacked successfully while small.

## Fire Danger Guidelines (continued)

*Continued from page 22.*



Orange Flags (Very High): Fires start easily from all causes and, immediately after ignition, spread rapidly and increase quickly in intensity. Spot fires are a constant danger. Fires burning in light fuels may quickly develop high intensity characteristics such as long-distance spotting and fire whirlwinds when they burn into heavier fuels.



Red Flags (Extreme): Fires start quickly, spread furiously, and burn intensely. All fires are potentially serious. Development into high intensity burning will usually be faster and occur from smaller fires than in the very high fire danger class. Direct attack is rarely possible and may be dangerous except immediately after ignition. Fires that develop headway in heavy slash or in conifer stands may be unmanageable while the extreme burning condition lasts. Under these conditions the only effective and safe control action is on the flanks until the weather changes or the fuel supply lessens.

Ultimately, regardless of a flag's color of the day, exercising caution is the best route.

**Submitted by Karen Salaz**



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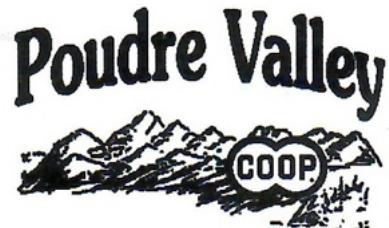
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