



**NEWS
RELEASE**

United States
Department of Agriculture

Forest Service
Salmon - Challis National Forest
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August 18, 2012

DESPITE LARGE FIRES MANY FOREST AREAS STILL OPEN TO RECREATIONISTS

Two large fires – Mustang Complex on the North Fork Ranger District and the Halstead Fire on the Middle Fork and Challis-Yankee Fork Ranger Districts – have impacted use of the Salmon-Challis National Forest and the Sawtooth National Recreation Area. However, many important areas and aspects of recreation remain open.

Relative to the Mustang Complex, Middle Fork of the Salmon River floating continues as does Main Salmon River traffic, though some impacts are still being felt relative to fire activity. Boaters from the Middle Fork are still being escorted through the Mustang Fire area to ensure safety, though not with the types of long delays and closures seen earlier in the week. Main Salmon launches are still occurring from Cove Creek rather than Corn Creek reducing vehicle traffic through the Fire area for firefighter and public safety. Boaters are being asked to plan for an extra day of river travel by bringing additional food and water as well as to stop at the North Fork Ranger Station for up to date information and any additional permits prior to heading downriver to launch.

Near Stanley, related to the Halstead and Bench Fires, a number of Emergency Area Closures have resulted in closure of the Salmon River from Stanley to Thompson Creek to river floating at the current time. Closures have also impacted 11 of the 36 campgrounds on the Sawtooth National Recreation Area. However the “crown jewels” including Stanley Lake, Redfish Lake, and Alturas Lake and all other large campgrounds remain open. Of those 11 small campgrounds closed, three are near Highway 21 and are related to the Bench Fire. Forest managers want to remind the public that all Forest roads and trails which form the boundaries of the closure orders are included in the closures. Highway 21 and Highway 75 are both open, though pilot cars are escorting cars over Banner Summit between 7:00 am and 9:00 pm to ensure firefighter and public safety as efforts continue to contain the Bench Fire.

For more information on the fires on the Salmon-Challis National Forest, including the latest closures, maps, and fire photos visit www.inciweb.org/unit/46.

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