



Salmon – Challis National Forest



Bitterroot National Forest

# Mustang Complex Update September 5, 2012 8:00 am



Lemhi County Sheriff



North Fork Fire  
Protection District



Mustang Complex  
Inciweb

**Fire Information: 208-865-2207**  
**E-mail: [scnf.fire.info@gmail.com](mailto:scnf.fire.info@gmail.com)**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -**

**Start Date:** July 30, 2012  
**Cause:** Lightning  
**Current Size:** 246,160 acres  
**Containment:** 16%

**Location:** North of the Main Salmon River, currently 4 miles west of the community of North Fork, Idaho.

**Jurisdiction:** USDA Forest Service, Intermountain Region, Salmon-Challis National Forest

**Resources:** 944 personnel, including 13 hand crews, 78 engines, 5 dozers, 10 water tenders, and 3 helicopters.

**Forecast:** Today's weather is the reverse of yesterday's cooler, moist, and stable air mass that served to quiet the fire through last evening. For today we can expect drier air on westerly winds gusting up to 25 mph, relative humidities in the low teens to single digits, and a Haines Index of 5. These forecasted fire weather conditions and unstable air mass could approach the threshold levels of a Red Flag Warning and such a warning could be issued later today. Today's inversion should break up around the noon hour, leading to an extended peak burning period this afternoon and early evening. Channeling of winds in the west to east aligned valleys found on the eastern fire perimeter may lead to periodic crown runs and spotting upwards of a ½ mile. If the fire moves into heavier fuels, smoke columns may build later this afternoon, leading to the movement of smoke and ash farther east on transport winds. The intense ground level smoke seen yesterday was reinforced by smoke from the McGuire Complex that further compromised air quality on the Mustang Complex. Positively, this additional smoke served to sustain yesterday's inversion and shorten the peak burning period of our fire.

**Remarks:** Fire activity and spread on the perimeter and interior of the Mustang Complex was relatively light yesterday; the fire footprint only grew about 4,450 acres. Based on last evening's infrared flight, the predominant fire growth was on the eastern side of the fire perimeter. The eastern fire perimeter is now about three air miles from the Highway 93 corridor. Yesterday's fire growth in the Sage Creek, Hull Creek, and Hughes Creek drainages was mainly a slow-moving ground fire with periodic tree torching. The fire continued to back down these drainages through most of Tuesday leading to an evening of the lowest activity seen since rain fell on the fire last week. With today's forecast, these drainages should see more active fire behavior and growth. Firefighters are prepared to conduct defensive burnout operations around structures in these communities should the fire rapidly increase in intensity and movement. Along the northern fire perimeter, the fire was relatively quiet; defensive plans are in place for the Gattin Ranch and the Hughes Creek, Montana community. To the west, the fire continues to slowly grow into the wilderness area; however, this portion of the fire remains unstaffed due to its remoteness and inaccessibility for personnel and equipment. On the southern side of the fire, the Salmon River continues to serve as an excellent natural barrier to hold the fire from further movement south. Motorists traveling to Corn Creek should still be on the lookout for rocks and other fire debris that has rolled out onto the roadway, where fire continues to back down the mountain towards the river.

**Evacuations:** Evacuation Levels remain elevated for portions of the Highway 93 corridor from North Fork to Gibbonsville. For a complete description of the present evacuation changes that occurred, go to Inciweb (<http://inciweb.org/>), Mustang Complex. The Idaho National Guard is staffing checkpoints and providing 24/7 security in evacuated communities.

**Contingency Work:** The contingency work along the Highway 93 corridor and Hughes Creek, Montana is completed; the Lost Trail Pass work is nearing completion. Work crews continue to review existing mitigation work for further possible improvements.

For information on the National Forest road, trail and area closures visit <http://www.inciweb.org/incident/closures/3100/>.

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