



Salmon – Challis National Forest



Bitterroot National Forest

Mustang Complex Update September 11, 2012 8:00 a.m.



Lemhi County Sheriff



North Fork Fire
Protection District



Inciweb

Fire Information: 208-865-2207
E-mail: scnf.fire.info@gmail.com

Start Date: July 30, 2012
Cause: Lightning
Current Size: 289,974 acres
Containment: 16%

Location: North of the Main Salmon River, currently 1.5 miles west of the community of North Fork, Idaho.

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

Resources: 1,057 personnel, including 15 hand crews, 99 engines, 5 dozers, 14 water tenders, and 4 helicopters.

Forecast: Expect a mostly sunny day and a noticeable drop in wind speed and air temperature. It will be at least 5 to 10 degrees cooler today than on Monday. As a high pressure builds into the region over the next couple days, winds will remain light and the air mass will become very stable. Relative humidity readings will be in the teens during daylight hours and nighttime humidity recoveries will be poor in both the valley bottoms and on ridge tops. Today's winds will be diurnally driven with upslope winds resulting from the sun warming the landscape and downslope winds occurring at night as the land cools. With valley bottom temperatures hovering around the freezing mark tonight, we may see stronger atmospheric inversions leading to dense ground level smoke during the overnight hours.

Remarks: The fire grew 8,419 acres yesterday to an estimated total acreage of 289,974 acres. This growth primarily occurred on the northwestern and eastern perimeters of the fire. Last night, the fire crested the ridgelines above the Incident Command Post and Base Camp, thus the fire is now visible from the Highway 93 corridor. The fire slowly backed down the hillside through the early morning hours to within a couple hundred yards of Highway 93. Firefighters will use engine support as they monitor and suppress the fire's continued movement down and along the highway corridor near North Fork. The fire also continued to back down Donnelly Gulch towards the Salmon River Road less than a mile from the intersection with Highway 93. In the absence of any appreciable winds, the fire will continue a relatively low intensity understory burn with periodic single tree torching and some fast upslope runs through flashy grass fuels. Farther north in the corridor, a slow backing fire continued down the Hull Creek and Hughes Creek drainages through the early morning hours until about 4:00 a.m. when increasing relative humidities caused the fire to bed down for the evening. The northern perimeter of the fire saw cooling temperatures and relative humidities increase to nearly 100 percent, which greatly reduced fire activity for the evening. The public can greatly assist firefighters today by minimizing travel along Highway 93 as engines will be staged roadside and in adjacent neighborhoods due to the fire's continued trek towards the highway. Law enforcement may adjust travel speeds along the highway corridor to ensure the safety of firefighters and the public. Cooperating agencies would greatly appreciate local residents and visitors minimizing windshield tours of the flames visible from Highway 93 front to avoid traffic congestion.

Evacuations: The Highway 93 corridor remains under an Evacuation Level 3 from North Fork Fire Station to Quartz creek just north of Gibbonsville. The evacuation map, which includes six safety zones along the highway, and shelter information, can be found on Inciweb (<http://inciweb.org/>). The Idaho National Guard continues to assist the National Forests by staffing traffic control points around the fire. Travel along Highway 93 may be slowed at times where firefighters are conducting roadside burnout operations to minimize the fire's potential to jump the highway.

Contingency Work: Contingency work improvements continue along the Highway 93 corridor from North Fork to Lost Trail Pass and Hughes Creek, Montana. Contingency work crews remain available to assist with fire suppression if needed.

For information on the latest Salmon-Challis National Forest Area Closures #6 and #7, and for other trail, and road closures, visit <http://www.inciweb.org/incident/closures/3100/>.

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