



BITTERROOT WILDLAND FIRE USE COMPLEX

September 1st Fire Update

Fire Complex Location: Bitterroot National Forest in the Selway Bitterroot and Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness, west of Darby, Montana

Fire Complex Acreage: 19,464 acres

Fire Complex Status: Most of the fires started on July 18. The Ingomar and Bell Lake fires started on August 10 and the BH fire started on August 16. Many of these fires may continue burning throughout the fire season while resource and fire management objectives continue to be met.

The numerous lightning fires in the wilderness have been grouped into four geographic areas within the Bitterroot Wildland Fire Use Complex:

Sawtooth area- fires in the Sawtooth Creek drainage: Ingomar Fire (76 acres).

White Cap area- fires north of Cooper Point and Watchtower Peak includes: El Cap (4,406 acres), Capitain Creek (<1 acre), Watchtower (40 acres), Snake (201 acres) and Bell Lake Fire (340 acres).

Magruder area- fires south of the White Cap area and north of Salmon Mountain, and Storm Creek Flat includes: Indian (38 acres), South Saddle (446 acres), Magruder (4,034 acres), Magruder #2 (inactive), BH (708 acres), Halfway Pete (4 acres), Haystack Creek (<1 acre), and Salamander fires (<1 acre).

Harrington Ridge area- fires south of the Magruder area, includes: Elkhorn (3,087 acres) and Harrington fires (6,084 acres).



CLOSURES!

Expect intermittent closures along the Magruder Corridor road between the Magruder crossing and Salmon Base Camp (to Elk Creek) during daylight operational periods or while active fire is burning. Closures may last 24 to 48 hours or until fire and debris are clear of the road. There is a trail (Trail #580) and area closure in place for the Rock Creek Drainage above Lake Como due to the Bell Lake Fire.

Contacts:

Fire Information: www.inciweb.org or (406) 821-2055- *Last day this number will be in use!*

Bitterroot National Forest Fire Information: (406) 363-7100. www.fs.fed.us/r1/bitterroot/

Saturday's Activities

Today, the California Fire Use Management Team is transferring management of the Bitterroot WFU Complex back to the Bitterroot National Forest. After today, please use the Forest's Fire Information phone number for updates on the wilderness fires (see below).

Yesterday, the Bell Lake, Magruder, South Saddle, Elkhorn, Harrington, and BH fires had some fire activity but not much perimeter growth.

Fire activity and falling trees continue to pose a safety concern along the Magruder Corridor Road, travelers should continue to expect intermittent closures along this route (see CLOSURES).

More wilderness visitors may be expected over the holiday weekend so please use caution while traveling in areas with fire activity and emergency vehicles.

Saturday's Weather



Chance of thunderstorms and dry lightning

Temperature: 72-78° F

Winds: West-southwest 5-13 mph with gusts from 16 to 20 mph.

Relative Humidity: 22-26%

Smoke: Morning inversion breaking up by noon and some haziness expected throughout the afternoon from numerous fires in the area.

Wildland Fire Use



Wildland fire use events are naturally-ignited fires managed over a long period of time to restore the role of fire as a critical natural process.

Firefighting personnel and equipment that are available to the Fire Use Management Team are also available to quickly extinguish new fires or put out portions of current fires in areas where fire is undesirable.