

# Thompson-Divide Complex

Northern Rockies Type II Incident Management Team  
Irv Leach Incident Commander

Daily Fact Sheet Aug. 20, 7:00 p.m.



**Fire Information: (406) 387-4854, 8 a.m.-8 p.m.**

**Resources - Total Personnel:** 253

**Injuries:** one

**Structures Lost:** None

**Hand Crews:** 4 20-person, 1 Wildland Fire Management Module (10), 1 Helitack Crew (10), Smokejumpers (3)

**Air Support:** Helicopters (1 Type-1 & 2 Type-3), **Engines:** 8

The Thompson-Divide Complex is comprised of the Sheep, Granite, and Spruce Fires on Flathead National Forest and the Thompson Fire on Glacier National Park.

**A Red Flag Warning is in effect for active fire behavior.** Today, the Red Flag weather conditions started early and lasted most of the day. Winds increased fire activity, causing significant fire spread on the Sheep Fire to the Northeast with potential spotting up to a quarter-mile. A mobile fire retardant base is being used for helicopter bucket drops. Stage II Fire Restrictions are in effect for Northwest Montana including Flathead County. Smoke conditions are elevated due to other wildfires west of our location. Visit <http://svc.mt.gov/deq/todaysair/> for air quality info. New closures are in effect for some trails in the vicinity of the fires for Glacier National Park and Flathead National Forest. For more info, please see Glacier NP page <http://www.nps.gov/glac/index.htm> or for Flathead NF call Hungry Horse Ranger District (406) 387-3800.

## Sheep Fire, Flathead National Forest

Link to <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/4468/>

**Structures At Risk:** 200+ structures, BNSF has several wooden snowsheds and 1 wooden trestle

**Approximate Size:** 232 acres

**Containment:** 0%

**Structures Lost:** None

**Fire Update:** The Sheep Fire is about 2.5 miles south of Essex in the Great Bear Wilderness of Flathead National Forest. It was detected on Aug. 15, burning in very steep, difficult terrain with no access. The fire was very active today with the westerly influence of the predicted Red Flag weather conditions. This condition kept ground forces from engaging with direct handline operations. A heavy helicopter was effective in applying 29,000 gallons of retardant today on portions of the perimeter to slow spread.

By 2 p.m., westerly fire movement downslope, bad smoke conditions, and light ash fall on U.S. Highway 2 near Goat Lick became a safety issue. Fire managers felt it necessary to close U.S. 2 at West Glacier (Mile Post 154) and East Glacier (MP209) with residents only allowed past these points to retrieve valuables. Access between MP180 (Walton) and MP185 (Bear Creek) will likely have restrictions.

Portions of the Highway 2 corridor around Essex remain in the 'Set' Stage of the Ready, Set, Go evacuation strategy. Residents of Essex and surrounding area are advised to prepare their property and themselves due to the fire's proximity. Flathead County Sheriff is informing residents of the potential for evacuation. It is recommended affected people load critical property and needs into their vehicle. They should have an evacuation plan in place and make sure everyone knows the plan. Visit <http://www.wildlandfirersg.org/> for more information.

A night shift will start tonight in the Essex area to patrol with today's fire advancement toward U.S. 2.

## Granite Fire, Flathead National Forest

Link to <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/4468/>

**Approximate Size:** 65 acres

**Containment:** 0%

**Fire Update:** The Granite Fire is west of Marias Pass and south of Hwy. 2 in the Great Bear Wilderness. It was detected Aug. 16 burning in very steep terrain in a mixed conifer forest below a ridge. The fire was totally smoked in yesterday preventing firefighters from safely engaging and using aircraft water bucket drops. Today, crews reentered the area to determine the best plan of attack based on conditions. Crews have been encountering numerous snags that need to be dealt with for safety before line construction. The Granite Creek Trail (#156) is closed.

## **Spruce Fire, Flathead National Forest**

Link to <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incideuppression/actionsnt/4468/>

**Approximate Size:** 2 acres

**Containment:** 0%

**Fire Update:** The Spruce Fire was added to the complex Aug. 19, with 3 smokejumpers continuing suppression actions. The Spruce Fire is about 5 miles south of U.S. 2 at Bear Creek in the Great Bear Wilderness. The Spruce Park cabin is a special concern on this fire.

## **Thompson Fire, Glacier National Park**

Link to <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/4468/>

**Approximate Size:** 14,095 acres

**Containment:** 0%

**Structures At Risk:** 2 historic cabins

**Structures Lost:** None

**Fire Update:** The Thompson Fire, reported Aug. 9, is located in a remote south-central backcountry area of Glacier National Park about 15 miles east of the West Glacier entrance in the Thompson and Nyack drainage and west of the Continental Divide.

Crews are camped out and working in the Nyack Creek drainage. Crews are mopping up some edges from burnout operations to contain the fire by reducing fuels along avalanche chutes on the west side of the fire's perimeter. Today, crews will focused on mopping up hot spots within the burnout operation. The fire remains west of the Divide and poses no threat to communities around East Glacier and St. Mary.

Most of Glacier National Park is unaffected by this wildfire and is available for recreational use. Limited backcountry closures are in place. For more specific visitor information, please see the website <http://www.nps.gov/glac/index.htm>.

**The Thompson Fire has not impacted any park roads. The Going-to-the-Sun Road is open.**

For information on the Reynolds Creek fire, please visit <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/4405/#>.

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