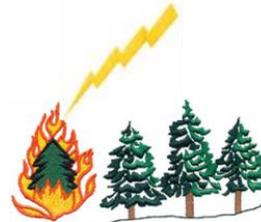


Thompson-Divide Complex

Northern Rockies Type II Incident Management Team
Irv Leach Incident Commander

Daily Fact Sheet Aug. 24, 8:00 am



Fire Information: (406) 387-4854/ (406) 314-1669, 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

Resources - Total Personnel: 265

Injuries: 1

Structures Lost: None

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

Air Support: Helicopters (2 Type-1 & 1 Type-3), **Engines:** 15

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

Highway 2 is reopened, with pilot cars escorting traffic in both directions to ensure safe traffic flow through the fire area. Pilot cars will run 24 hours a day, but the highway could be closed due to changing fire conditions. Expect delays of 10-15 minutes. Call 511 or visit <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/alerts.shtml> for current road status.

U.S. Senators Tester and Daines and Congressman Zinke's representative John Fuller attended the 6:00 pm briefing at the Incident Command Post in Coram. A public meeting was held at the Izaak Walton Inn in Essex, MT on Sunday, Aug. 23 at 8:00 pm. Daines and Fuller both spoke in Essex as well.

The BNSF and Amtrak trains have been running. For more information on Amtrak call 1-(800) 872-7245.

Stage II Fire Restrictions are in effect for Northwest Montana.

Residents in the Highway 2 corridor around Essex remain in the 'Set' Stage of the Ready, Set, Go evacuation strategy. Residents of Essex and the surrounding area have been advised that they may be evacuated if the Sheep Fire becomes an imminent threat. People should have critical property and needs loaded into their vehicles in preparation for evacuation. They should have an evacuation plan in place and make sure everyone knows the plan. Visit <http://www.wildlandfirersg.org/> for more information.

Fire activity was moderate yesterday. There is a fire weather watch today, for gusty winds and low humidity, with near critical fire weather for the afternoon. The forecast calls for gusty W-SW winds up to 30 mph on ridgetops and low relative humidity, potentially increasing fire activity. If the forecast inversion lasts into the afternoon, this may moderate fire activity. Temperatures are on the increase through this coming week under an unusual high pressure, with highs predicted in the high 80's in the valleys. Isolated dry thunderstorms are predicted to begin in the middle of the week.

The Sheep fire is the incident priority as it is approaching US Hwy. 2 and the BNSF railway and is threatening the community of Essex.

Air operations continue today with two Type 1 helicopters, a Sky Crane and Chinook working on hot spots. A mobile fire retardant base is being used for helicopter bucket drops.

Visit <http://svc.mt.gov/deq/todaysair/> for air quality info. 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.

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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, utilities infrastructure

Approximate Size: 581 acres

Containment: 0%

Structures Lost: None

Fire Update: The Sheep Fire is about 1 mile south of Essex on the Flathead National Forest. It is burning in very steep, difficult terrain with limited access. Yesterday we saw moderate fire activity with group torching. Increased fire activity is expected today with warmer, drier conditions. Crews are being transported across the river to the fire area on a BNSF work train. Crews will continue fuel break construction in the McDonald Creek Drainage to the north and create fireline from the railroad west up the Sheep Creek Drainage, supported by helicopters. Goals are to keep this fire from going north towards Essex and moving into the transportation corridor along the Middle Fork of the Flathead River. The night shift continues to monitor fire movement

Granite Fire, Flathead National Forest

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

Approximate Size: 247 acres

Containment: 0%

Fire Update: The Granite Fire is west of Marias Pass and south of Hwy. 2 in the Great Bear Wilderness. It is burning in very steep terrain in a mixed conifer forest below a ridge. Crews have implemented structural protection measures on several backcountry cabins, trailhead structures, a wooden road bridge, and a radio repeater. Today crews will look for opportunities to create fireline using access on roads #1651 and #569 and check fire spread into the drainage to the north. The Granite Creek Trail (#156) is closed.

Spruce Fire, Flathead National Forest

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

Approximate Size: 3 acres

Containment: 100%

Fire Update: The Spruce Fire was added to the complex Aug. 19. The Spruce Fire is about 5 miles south of U.S. 2 at Bear Creek in the Great Bear Wilderness. Crews worked on establishing control lines yesterday and this small fire is now at 100% containment. The fire was declared out yesterday at noon. The fire will go into monitoring status.

Thompson Fire, Glacier National Park

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

Approximate Size: 16,515 acres

Containment: 20%

Structures At Risk: 2 historic cabins

Structures Lost: None

Fire Update: The Thompson Fire 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 achieved more containment yesterday and are close to finishing mop-up of all edges of the fire. Today a crew will be flown into the Nyack Creek Drainage and continue to mop up and control fireline as needed. The fire remains west of the Divide and poses no threat to communities around East Glacier and St. Mary. Crews are shifting into a monitoring status. They will leave their pumps and hose lay in place in case a future need arises. The fire will go into monitoring status.

Most of Glacier National Park is unaffected by this wildfire complex 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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