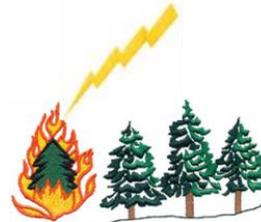


# Thompson-Divide Complex

Northern Rockies Type II Incident Management Team  
Irv Leach Incident Commander

Daily Fact Sheet Aug. 24, 7:00 pm



**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:** 16

**Total amount of fire retardant used on complex to date:** 55,400 gallons

**Total amount of water used on complex fires to date:** 1.1 million gallons

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. 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.

**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 Sunday, Aug. 23. A public meeting was also held at the Izaak Walton Inn in Essex, MT 8:00 pm, at which Daines and Fuller both spoke 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. They should have an evacuation plan in place and ensure everyone knows the plan. Visit <http://www.wildlandfirersg.org/> for more information.

All fires in the complex were less active today than anticipated. The predicted fire weather watch for today, with gusty winds did not materialize. Smoke lingered until late afternoon, keeping the fire cooler and less active. Isolated thunderstorms are expected for Wednesday through Friday. 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 temper 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.

Visit <http://svc.mt.gov/deg/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.

## 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:** 607 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. Increased fire activity was not seen today as expected due to the inversion, with thick smoke keeping the area from heating up. Up to 70 firefighters were transported across the river to the fire area on a BNSF work train. Crews built fuel breaks in the McDonald Creek Drainage to the north. Tomorrow they will create fireline from the railroad west up the Sheep Creek Drainage, supported by helicopters. Logging equipment has been ordered to remove fuels from the area. Logs being removed will be taken out by train to a safe location. Tomorrow crews will be working in the Sheep and McDonald Creek drainages to monitor fire spread. 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:** 289 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. The fire has been backing in all directions today. Crews have implemented structural protection measures on several backcountry cabins, trailhead structures, a wooden road bridge, and a radio repeater. Timber sale logging operations in the vicinity of the Granite Fire were completed today, removing some potential fuels from the area.

## Spruce Fire, Flathead National Forest

Link to [http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incideuppression\\_actionsnt/4468/](http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incideuppression_actionsnt/4468/)

**Approximate Size:** 3 acres      **Containment:** 100%

**Fire Update:** The Spruce Fire is fully contained and controlled has been declared out.

## Thompson Fire, Glacier National Park

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

**Approximate Size:** 16,854 acres      **Containment:** 20%

**Structures At Risk:** 2 historic cabins      **Structures Lost:** None

**Fire Update:** The Thompson Fire is located in remote south-central backcountry of Glacier National Park about 15 miles east of the West Glacier entrance in the Thompson and Nyack drainage west of the Continental Divide. The fire showed little activity today. Crews were not able to be inserted by helicopter back into the Nyack Creek Drainage to mop up and control fireline due to smoke and low visibility. A second try at getting crews in to the fire will take place tomorrow. Crews are shifting into a monitoring status. They will leave their pumps and hose lay in place in case a future need arises.

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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