

Glenda Wiles

From: McKay, Tod G -FS [tgmckay@fs.fed.us]
Sent: Tuesday, September 03, 2013 1:30 PM
Subject: News Release - Wildfire Update
Attachments: Gold Pan Fire - 9-3-13.docx



FACT SHEET

Wildfire Update

September 3, 2013 – 1:00 PM

Contact: Public Affairs Officer: Tod McKay
Phone: 406-363-7122 / **Cell:** 406-531-1130

What: Gold Pan Complex (Gold Pan, Nez Peak, Thirteen, Goat Fires)
Cause: Lightning
Location: 35 miles SW of Darby, MT. in the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness
Jurisdiction: Bitterroot National Forest – West Fork Ranger District

Summary: The Gold Pan fire grew by 144 acres on Monday to 42,463 acres. The most active parts of the fire remain on the north and east edges in the Blue Joint drainage near Jack the Ripper Creek. Fire activity was limited yesterday thanks to cooler temperatures and an inversion that didn't lift over the fire area. Some single/group tree torching was reported later in the afternoon. The fire has moved east of the Blue Joint Trail #614 but remains three miles SW of Bare Cone Lookout. Last week the fire crossed from Idaho into Montana, south of Nez Perce Pass. Approximately 3,210 acres has burned in Ravalli County, Montana. Low fire activity and little movement was reported Monday on the Nez Peak fire which remains at 1,276 acres. Goat and Thirteen fires remain in monitor status.

Planned Actions: Today crews will continue brush clearing and chipping operations on the east side along with snag removal along Magruder Road. Helicopters with buckets are available if needed to slow the fire spread on the leading edge in the Blue Joint drainage as well as other active areas of the fire. Engines will be on the east side assisting with the work.

Weather: Cooler temperatures with an increasing chance of daily showers and thunderstorms are forecast all week. Valley inversions can be expected to linger in the Magruder Corridor west of Nez Perce Pass each day until the early afternoon. This should help decrease fire activity and movement throughout the week.

Resources: Resources on the fire include 7 engines, 3 helicopters, water tender, and heavy equipment (chippers, brush cutter, feller buncher). Approximately 80 personnel.

Magruder Road Corridor: Magruder Road #468 between Fales Flat Campground and Elk City, Idaho is currently open to the public between the hours of 10am-2pm daily. This may

change depending on fire activity and conditions. For the latest road information contact the West Fork Ranger Station at (406) 821-3269.

Selway Road: Selway Road #6223 to Paradise Campground will be closed at the intersection with Magruder Road between September 5-13th for road repairs. Crews will be working to stabilize several sections of the roadway that have deteriorated due to erosion and are in danger of washing out during high runoff or thunderstorms. Just last week a large mudslide blocked travel along the road near the Indian Creek Campground. Crews worked over the weekend and yesterday to remove trees, rocks, and mud from the road and the section is currently passable.

Area Closure: To provide for public safety an area closure remains in place for parts of the fire area located in the Frank Church and Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. To see a map of the closures visit <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/3538/>. All forest service roads and trails within this area are closed.

Cooperating Agencies: Ravalli County Fire Warden, Painted Rocks RFD, West Fork RFD, Ravalli County Sheriff, Ravalli County Office of Emergency Management, American Red Cross.

For the latest fire information, maps, and photos visit <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/3538/>

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Glenda Wiles

From: McKay, Tod G -FS [tgmckay@fs.fed.us]
Sent: Thursday, September 05, 2013 12:22 PM
Subject: News Release: Wildfire Update
Attachments: Wildfire Update - 9-5-13.docx; Travel Advisory for lifting of road closure - Magruder corridor (2).docx

See attached and below regarding 5 new wildfires that crews are responding to along with the latest on the Gold Pan Complex fires. Our dispatch center recorded 2,500 lightning strikes last night. Thanks!



September 5, 2013 - NOON

Contact: Public Affairs Officer: Tod McKay
Phone: 406-363-7122
Cell: 406-531-1130

What: 5 New Wildfires
Cause: Lightning
Location: Bitterroot National Forest

Summary: Firefighters are responding to five new wildfires burning on the Bitterroot National Forest today. Crews have arrived on scene at 3 of the fires and are working to extinguish them under a full suppression strategy. 2 fires are located in steep and rugged terrain and crews are currently hiking in to the fire locations.

Two fires are located on the Darby Ranger District in the Tip Cup and Burnt Ridge areas. Both fires are estimated at .10 of an acre. There are currently 10 firefighters assigned.

Three new fires are burning on the West Fork Ranger District near Boulder Point and the Trapper Peak trailhead. Nine firefighters are assigned there and were assisted by a helicopter using buckets to drop water on the fires. All of them are estimated at .10 of an acre and there are no structures threatened by any of the fires and no closures are in place for these fires.

All of the new starts are likely lightning-caused. The Bitterroot Dispatch center reported 2,500 lightning strikes occurred Wednesday night across Western Montana and Central Idaho.

Gold Pan Complex: Cooler temperatures and higher humidity has led to decreased fire activity on the Gold Pan Complex burning along the Idaho-Montana border in the Frank Church Wilderness. The fire is currently estimated at 42,560 acres. Approximately 3,310 acres has burned in Montana, south of Nez Perce Pass.

There are currently 80 personnel assigned including 7 engines and 2 helicopters. ½ rain fell overnight at fire camp. But just 15 miles west at the Hells Half Lookout station, only .03 inches of rain was recorded over the fire area.

Weather: Strong thunderstorms with heavy rain, hail, and high winds are forecast for the next several days. Humidity levels are expected above 40% in many areas which should greatly decrease fire activity and movement.

Magruder Road Corridor: Magruder Road between Fales Flat Campground and Observation Point remains open between 10am-2pm daily. However, travelers should be advised to use caution and be alert to the many hazards associated with travel in this area. All motorists are being stopped and handed a "Travel Advisory" flyer at Fales Flat Campground. See attached.

Selway Road: Selway Road to Paradise Campground is closed through next Friday, September 13th for road repairs. Crews are working to stabilize several sections of the road that have deteriorated due to erosion. Just last week, a large mudslide blocked travel along the road near Indian Creek Campground.

Area Closure: To provide for public safety an area closure remains in place for parts of the fire area located in the Frank Church and Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. To see a map of the closures visit <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/3538/>. All forest service roads and trails within this area are closed.

Cooperating Agencies: Ravalli County Fire Warden, Painted Rocks RFD, West Fork RFD, Ravalli County Sheriff, Ravalli County Office of Emergency Management, American Red Cross.

For the latest fire information, maps, and photos visit <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/3538/>

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