



FACT SHEET

Wildfire Update

August 6, 2020

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What: 6 new fires

Location: Bitterroot National Forest

Summary: Firefighters are working this afternoon on 6 new fires caused by lightning from thunderstorms that went through the Bitterroot Valley early this morning. Thanks to the quick response by fire crews and aviation resources, all of the fires are small – less than ½ acre in size. The fires are located in both the Sapphire and Bitterroot Mountains. See fire activity and lightning maps for more details.

Resources on Fires: There are currently 20 firefighters and four helicopters assigned to the blazes which are being actively suppressed under a full suppression strategy. Two medium helicopters assisted with bucket work (water drops) on numerous fires to limit spread until firefighters could reach them. Rappellers from Salmon, ID were delivered to a small fire (Mt. George) burning in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness in Idaho. There are no structures threatened or closures at this time. Crews will work today to contain, control, and extinguish the remaining smoldering hot spots.

Lightning: There were more than 150 confirmed lightning strikes, mostly on the NE end of the Forest this morning. Fire crews will be on the lookout for more fires this week.

Weather: Showers and thunderstorms will develop this afternoon and evening as a cold front approaches from the west. A mix of wet and dry thunderstorms are expected. Thunderstorms will be capable of producing gusty erratic outflow winds.

Fire Danger: Fire Danger is currently "high" on the Bitterroot National Forest. When fire danger is "high," fires will start from most causes. The fires will spread rapidly and short-distance spotting is common. All fine dead fuels ignite readily and unattended brush and campfires are likely to escape. Fires may become serious and their control difficult unless they are hit hard and fast while small.

Prevention Message: Fire managers would like to remind visitors to be extremely careful while visiting the forest. Pay attention to those items that may cause a spark, such as chains on a trailer. Ensure that all campfires are dead out by adding water and stirring dirt into hot coals until cold. If your campfire is still hot then it is too hot leave.

2020 Fire Season: To date, there have been 19 small wildfires on the Forest; 6 human-caused and 13 lightning fires.

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