

Glenda Wiles

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Subject: Fire Update - Bitterroot NF - July 15, 2017
Attachments: Fire Fact Sheet - 7-15-17.docx



July 15, 2017

Contact: Tod McKay **Phone:** 406-531-1130 - cell

What: 8 new wildfires
Discovered: July 14-15th
Location: Bitterroot National Forest

Summary: Firefighters are currently working on 8 new lightning-caused wildfires on the Bitterroot National Forest. Thanks to quick initial attack by fire crews, all of the fires are small (.10 acre or less). Several are burning in remote locations where firefighters had to be flown in by helicopter or hike in several miles. All fires are located on the southern end of the forest on the West Fork and Darby/Sula Ranger Districts. There are no structures threatened and no closures at this time. See below for specific fire information.

Containment: One fire is currently out and three others are contained. Containment is expected on all fires later today or this weekend.

Resources on Fires: There are currently 16 firefighters (including five smokejumpers) and two helicopters assigned to the blazes which are being actively suppressed, under a full suppression strategy. The helicopters are assisting with bucket work to help control and suppress the fires and are also moving crews and supplies to assist in initial attack efforts.

Weather: The National Weather Service is calling for increased fire danger through Sunday due to thunderstorms with plentiful lightning, low humidities and gusty winds. The public is advised to be extremely cautious with fire. If recreating outdoors, make sure you campfires are completely extinguished and cool to the touch before leaving. Remember, if it's too hot to touch, it's too hot to leave. Stay on roads and make sure cigarettes are out!

Smoke/Air Quality: There are several lightning-caused wilderness fires burning to our west in Idaho on the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest that may contribute to widespread hazy skies and smoke impacts in the Bitterroot Valley. The largest fire is the 15 acre Brushy fire located west of Victor. For the latest air quality information visit

<http://svc.mt.gov/deq/todaysair/>. This site displays particulate concentrations and health effects for particulate matter including a daily *Wildfire Smoke Update*. The information is measured by monitoring equipment across the state including a site in downtown Hamilton.

2017 Fire Season: Firefighters have responded to 8 human caused fires and 14 lightning wildfires this summer on the Bitterroot National Forest. Due to the quick response of crews, all fires were kept under 1 acre in size.

Please Note: Drones are dangerous if flown near wildfires. Drones can interfere with wildland fire air traffic that are necessary to suppress fires and could ground firefighting aircraft due to safety concerns. Learn more at <http://www.nifc.gov/drones/>

Fire	Location	Size	Response – Status	Latitude/Longitude
Sula Peak	Darby/Sula Ranger District (RD) near Sula Peak Lookout	.10 acre	5 firefighters assigned and are currently mopping up (<i>extinguishing & removing remaining burning materials & hot spots</i>). Fire is contained.	45, 50.718 x 113, 59.460
Cameron Creek	Darby/Sula RD - Sapphire Mountains east of Sula near French Basin	.10 acre	Fire is out	45, 55.740 x 113, 55.404
Trailhead	West Fork RD – 100 yards up the Baker Lake Trailhead	.10 acre	2 firefighters on scene and mopping up. Fire is contained.	45, 53.634 x 114, 14.592
Hells Half	West Fork RD – Approx. 150 yards below Hells Half Lookout in Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness	.10 acre	2 firefighters on scene and mopping up. Fire is contained.	45, 38.778 x 114, 37.710
Steep Gulch	West Fork RD – East of Magruder Crossing in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness	.10 acre	Smokejumpers have been ordered.	45, 44.646 x 114, 44.250
Indian Ridge	West Fork RD – near Indian Ridge Trail	.10 acre	2 smokejumpers on scene are working to suppress the fire.	45, 48.264 x 114, 42.402
Fire Mountain	West Fork RD – SW of Paradise Campground	.10 acre	2 firefighters on scene, flown in by Bitterroot Helitack. Fire is controlled.	45, 50.550 x 114, 45.828
Haystack Mountain	West Fork RD – Near Haystack Mountain, SW of	.10 acre	3 smokejumpers on scene are working to suppress the fire.	45, 42.012 x 114, 44.550

the Magruder Ranger Station in the Frank Church Wilderness			
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Inciweb: For more information about other fires burning in Montana and across the country visit <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov>.

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