

Glenda Wiles

From: McKay, Tod G -FS <tgmkay@fs.fed.us>
Sent: Tuesday, August 29, 2017 1:03 PM
Subject: Bitterroot NF - Wildfire Update - August 29, 2017
Attachments: Fire Fact Sheet - 8-29-17.docx



August 29, 2017

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What: Nelson Creek Fire
Discovered: August, 28, 2017
Location: Bitterroot National Forest – West Fork Ranger District

Summary: The Nelson Creek fire was discovered yesterday around 3pm by the Bare Cone Lookout. The fire is located approximately 3 miles west of the West Fork Ranger Station near Nelson Creek Trailhead. It's currently estimated at 80 acres. It quickly grew yesterday due to record setting dry conditions and very low relative humidity. Firefighters worked all night and were able to extinguish numerous spot fires that started outside the main fire area and also established an anchor point that they will build line from today around the fire.

Current Resources: There are currently 85 firefighters, including 3 hotshot crews and 8 engines working to contain the fire. Additional resources include several dozers, water tenders and three helicopters available to assist with bucket work (weather permitting) to help control and suppress the fire. Helicopters, including a Type 1 Chinook dropped water on the fire for several hours yesterday (until dark) to keep it from growing larger.

Terrain & Fuels: The fire is burning in extremely steep, rugged, and remote terrain and in heavy timber.

Fire Activity: Includes spotting, single and group tree torching, and the potential for active crown runs.

Cause: Unknown at this time. The fire started in very close proximity to the Nelson Creek Trailhead.

Today's Plan: Working off the established anchor point on the south side, use hand crews and heavy equipment (dozers) to construct line around the fire today. Utilize air resources including helicopters to assist with bucket work to control fire spread and growth.

Containment: 0%

Weather: Continued record setting dry conditions and low relative humidity along with the potential of isolated thunderstorms late in the afternoon with gusty and erratic winds up to 35 mph.

Evacuations: Due to the Nelson Creek Fire, the Ravalli County Sheriff's Office has placed approx. 65 homes in the Nez Perce Road area from West Fork Road under an Evacuation Order including Lapwai and Fox Lanes and Bear Hollow Court. Residents are asked to evacuate immediately. Residents are encouraged to sign-up to receive AlertSense Emergency Notifications by following the link on the free Ravalli County Sheriff's app for mobile devices or the Ravalli County website at <http://ravalli.us/>

Inciweb: For the latest on the Nelson Creek Fire visit <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/5549>

Meyers Fire Closures & Evacuation Warnings: The Meyers Fire which has been burning on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest southwest of Philipsburg for more than a month grew by over 4,800 acres yesterday. Approximately 1,700 acres are now on the Darby/Sula Ranger District on the Bitterroot National Forest in the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness and Reynolds and Lick Creek Saddle areas. Due to the fire, there is now a closure order in place for East Fork Road east of Sula at the East Fork Guard Station. The closure includes Martin Creek Campground, East Fork Trail, Lick Creek Trail, Reynolds Creek Trail, and Chain of Lakes Trail.

The Ravalli County Sheriff's Office has also placed approx. 225 property owners in the East Fork area between FS Road #5778 (Teepee Creek) to FS Road #724 (Little East Fork) in an Evacuation Warning status. Deputies are making door-to-door notifications at this time. Sheriff Holton asks all residents in Evacuation Warning areas to have a plan and be prepared to evacuate at a moment's notice.

For the latest on the Meyers Fire visit <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/5397>

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