



Kootenai River Complex Wildfire Fact Sheet

Wednesday, Sept. 14, 2022 at 9:00 AM



Inciweb: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8378/>

Email: 2022.kootenai@firenet.gov

Facebook: <https://facebook.com/USFSIPNF>

Fire Information Phone: 208-202-5021

Boundary County Emergency Line: (208) 696-2626

Incident Command: Type 2 Northern Rockies Incident Management Team 4, Rick Connell, I.C.

Estimated Size: 20,742 acres

Completion: 79%

Personnel: 369

Key Message: Air quality for the last several days has been poor in the Bonners Ferry area, and while the Kootenai River Complex fires are producing smoke, the smoke from large fires in the western United States is impacting much of Idaho, Washington, and Montana. Air quality is represented by the air quality index (AQI) and includes several major air pollutants including particle pollution (also known as particulate matter and the principal public health threat from wildfire smoke). AQI of “unhealthy” to “hazardous” indicates increased risk for health effects after breathing polluted air. While respirator masks can be effective in reducing exposure to smoke particles, surgical masks, dust masks, and bandanas do not offer protection from particle pollution. Air quality monitors can be viewed at <https://fire.airnow.gov>.

Current Status: Smoke filled skies and light winds kept fire activity minimal throughout the day on Tuesday. The Katka and Russell Mountain Fires continue to burn as low intensity ground fire. Crews thinned vegetation along Westside Road north of Trout Creek Road. On the east end of the Trout Creek Road firefighters held the fire at the road so fire could back slowly downhill on the north side. South of Trout Creek Road to Ball Creek Road, crews continued to hold and suppress the fire as it reached fireline and Westside Road. The overnight infrared detection flight was able to fly over the fire area last night showing an increase in size of 1,034 acres.

Planned Actions: The preparation work to thin vegetation along parts of Westside Road will continue today preparing to make the roadside more defensible for when the fire reaches the area. Crews continue to strengthen the fireline and run the pumps and sprinklers to make sure that the private structures are prepared for when the fire arrives. The fire is expected to continue backing downhill towards the Westside Road and fireline. The Katka Fire will be monitored. Helicopters are available to be used for water delivery as needed however, smoke conditions might prevent flying like the past two days.

Weather: The weather today will be partly cloudy with areas of smoke and haze. Thunderstorms are likely in the morning which may bring a small amount of rain. Temperatures in the valley will be 70-75 degrees with minimum Relative Humidity levels of 50%. Winds will be light from the southwest at 3-6 mph.

Closures: Due to active fires and fire suppression activities, the Westside Road is restricted to residents-only. Additionally, the following National Forest Trails are now closed: Ball Creek Road (FR 432), Trout Creek Road (FR 634), Russell Mountain (No. 12), Russell Ridge (No. 92), Ball and Pyramid Lakes (No. 43), Pyramid Pass (No. 13), Pyramid Peak (No. 7), Fisher Peak (No. 27), Trout Lake (No. 41), McGinty Ridge (No. 143), Clifty Mountain and Clifty/Burrow (No. 182), Myrtle Peak Trail (No. 286), and Burton Peak Trail (No. 9).

Evacuations: There are **NO Evacuations** currently in place. **However, those living on the Westside Road closest to Ball Creek, Burton Creek, and Clark Creek have been placed in the SET fire evacuation status.** SET is the stage of readiness before an actual evacuation takes place. Residents of Boundary County, Idaho can visit <https://www.nixle.com> or text their home zip code to 888777 to sign up for emergency alerts.