



Kootenai River Complex

Wildfire Fact Sheet

Wednesday, Sept. 21, 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 Eastern Area Incident Management Team Gold, Brian Pisarek, IC

Estimated Size: 21,189 acres

Completion: 79%

Personnel: 241

Key Message: When a fire burns against the wind direction or downhill, it is known as a “backing fire”. This type of fire spread is slower and burns with a lower intensity than fire that’s moving with the wind or burning uphill. For the Russell Mountain Fire, hand and dozer lines have been made at the bottom of the slopes along Westside Rd so the fire can back down the hill and burn into the lines where firefighters have planned them.

Current Status: Fire activity increased yesterday and overnight with winds from the northeast gusting up the mountain slopes. The fire is still mainly creeping and smoldering through the understory, with some scattered flare ups reaching treetops. Helicopters made several water drops over the Long Canyon fire and the section of fire near Farnham Creek. Chipping operations along the Westside Road are nearly complete. Crews continued to reinforce dozer and handlines. Air resources monitored the increased activity on the Katka fire. Night operations were on patrol and reported a slight increase in fire behavior due to the gusty winds. An infrared detection flight occurred last night, so reported size has increased by 281 acres since the last detection on Sept. 17.

Planned Actions: Weather for the day will continue to be dry and windy, allowing for more active fire conditions and smoke production. Crews will continue to patrol the dozer and handlines and monitor fire behavior as it backs downhill. Firefighters will continue chipping operations along Westside Rd, mopping up, removing hazard trees, and testing structure protection equipment. Nighttime crews will maintain patrol routes along Westside Road. The Katka Fire and Long Canyon will be monitored by air. Fire officials and the Forest District are discussing long-term strategic planning processes for suppression repair and restoring public access.

Weather: The weather today will be mostly sunny and dry. Temperatures in the valley will be 72-77 degrees with minimum relative humidity of 23-29%. Winds expected variable out of the northeast at 4-8 mph with gusts up to 12mph. Higher humidity and the possibility for a light rain shower are expected overnight.

Closures: Due to active fires and fire suppression activities, Westside Road is restricted to residents only. Additionally, the following National Forest Trails and Roads 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. Those living on the Westside Road closest to Ball Creek, Burton Creek, and Clark Creek are in **READY** fire pre-evacuation status. 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. To learn more about **READY SET GO**, visit <https://bit.ly/3wi0jMu>.

Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFR): There are TFRs in place for air space over the Katka Fire (2-7802) and the Russell Mountain Fire (2-1621) for aviation safety. Remember that temporary flight restrictions also apply to unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) or drones. **If you fly, we can’t!**