



# Diamond Watch Fire

## Update

10/13/2022



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**Inciweb:** <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8264/>

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

**Idaho Panhandle National Forests, Priest Lake Ranger District**

**Phone:** (208) 557-8813

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**Location:** 5.5 miles west of Nordman, ID, in Pend Oreille County, WA

**Size:** 1,336 acres **Personnel:** 16 **Containment:** 67% **Incident Commander:** ICT4 Hirst

**Overview:** The lightning-caused Diamond Watch Fire was detected on the evening of July 14<sup>th</sup>. The fire is visible from ID Highway 57 near Priest Lake and is burning on a ridge east of Diamond Peak, located 5.5 miles west of Nordman, ID, in Pend Oreille County, WA. The fire was mapped at 1,336 acres via an infrared flight last night, 10/6. Most of the heat continues to be concentrated on the ridge's western slope, with portions of the perimeter having slightly grown over the last week. Firefighters and public safety remain the top priority.

**Planned Actions:** Firefighters utilize heavy equipment, including masticators and dozers, to help reinforce containment lines along the forest roads surrounding the fire. Clearing away the vegetation that parallels the roads creates a large fuel break where firefighters can work to fight the fire safely. FSR 308 is being used as the southern and western containment lines, and FSR 657 has been reinforced on the east connecting FSR 308 to Diamond Creek.

Diamond Creek acts as a natural barrier keeping the fire contained on the northern edge in addition to FSR 311 and 657. Crews reinforce lines by digging additional handlines, laying hoses, and setting up sprinkler systems with pumps to help stop any spread beyond containment lines. Direct action within the fire area would be very dangerous to firefighters due to the steep, rugged terrain covered by dead and down trees in jackstraw piles.

**Smoke:** Smoke from numerous fires in WA and ID have had some impacts on the air quality around Priest Lake. The Air Quality Index has remained "Good" most days, but it has moved into "Moderate" several times over the last month. For an interactive air quality map and predicted smoke conditions, visit <https://fire.airnow.gov/>.

**Weather:** A return to abnormal seasonal temps in the 60s to 70s with moderated RHs in the upper 30s to 40s this coming week will allow for slow to minimal fire growth.

**Closures & Evacuations:** Area and road closures have been issued for Forest Service Roads 311, 308, 1362H, and the area near the Diamond Watch Fire. Petit Lake and it's associated dispersed campsites are within the area closure. FSR 1362 remains open. This closure is for public safety due to heavy equipment operations and wildfire suppression effects on the Diamond Watch Fire. All methods of travel prohibited (foot, mechanized, motorized, and stock) on the closed roads and area. Closed roads serve as containment lines while heavy equipment and fire personnel continue with suppression repair work. Changes in closure status will be promptly shared. The Priest Lake area can be accessed from the Colville National Forest through Newport, WA, via US Highway 2 north and Priest River, ID, via ID Highway 57 north. There are NO evacuations. However, when living in fire-prone areas, it is recommended that all area residents have an evacuation plan in place, including having all important documents, pictures, prescriptions, and pets gathered up and quickly transportable. Residents of Bonner County, ID, or Pend Oreille, WA, can visit <https://www.nixle.com> or text their home zip code to 888777 to sign up for emergency alerts.

**Hunting in the IPNF:** The Idaho Panhandle National Forests encourages visitors to enjoy their public land by following travel management guidelines to minimize erosion impacts, aid in wildlife protection, provide non-motorized recreation and hunting opportunities, and protect natural resource values. Specific closure area information for the Idaho Panhandle National Forests, including maps, are posted on the IPNF Alerts & Notices web page (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/ipnf/alertsnotices>) statewide information on fires and closures is provided on the Idaho Department of Fish and Game's Fire Map web page (<https://idfg.idaho.gov/ifwis/maps/realtime/fire/>) Prescribed fire plans can be found at <http://bit.ly/NorthIdahoRxFire>. In the opened areas, the public should be prepared to meet heavy equipment and other traffic on roads; be aware that weather conditions such as precipitation and wind can rapidly change conditions on the ground, especially in fire areas. Wind can blow trees across roadways and trails, and precipitation can wash debris across roads and trails, blocking access and raising stream and river levels. Forest visitors must be prepared to stay longer than expected due to changing circumstances. Preparing for the unexpected is the best plan.