



Ridge Creek Fire

Idaho Panhandle National Forests, Coeur d'Alene River

Ranger District

Fire Information 208-953-7022

Media Information 989-292-9373

2023.ridgecreek@firenet.gov

<https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident-information/idipf-ridge-creek>



August 16, 2023

Location: Approximately 3.5 miles east of the north tip of Hayden Lake, along the Hayden Creek Road (FSR 437) in the Ridge Creek drainage.

Start Date: 8/3/2023 **Cause:** Human/Under Investigation **Size:** 3,124 acres **Containment:** 15%

Total Personnel: 458 **Engines:** 12 **Heavy Equipment:** 6 **Crews:** 11

Given yesterday's weather, the fire experienced active fire behavior and some fire growth; the acreage of the fire is now estimated at 3,124 acres. Previous efforts to reinforce containment lines served to limit expansion of the fire. Night shift crews will look to use night-time firing operations again to strengthen the east flank of the fire.

To this point on the Ridge Creek Fire, aircraft used to support ground crews have been designated as shared regional resources, meaning that they are allocated to the fire of greatest need at the moment. Yesterday, aircraft were largely directed to respond to the Sarah Loop Fire in support of the Community of Athol, ID. Four Fire Boss fixed-wing scoopers, two Large Airtankers (LAT) and one Very Large Airtanker (VLAT) were readily observable yesterday in the vicinity of Athol and Bayview, ID during the heavy, interagency, initial attack response under the jurisdiction of the Idaho Department of Lands.

Sometime today, the Ridge Creek Fire will receive the services of two 'super scooper' air tankers out of Alaska, an additional Type 1 or 'heavy' helicopter, and an additional reconnaissance aircraft.

The substantial use of aircraft yesterday should serve as notable reminder that residents and recreational boaters are likely to see either helicopters or fixed-wing aircraft using area lakes. If you are a recreational boater and you observe aircraft using either Lake Hayden or Lake Pend Oreille, you should restrict your activities to the shore area of the lakes.

FIRE STATUS

The Ridge Creek Fire is currently estimated at 3,124 acres and 15% containment, which is reflected on the enclosed maps. Fire crews and heavy equipment operators continue to make progress in reinforcing and strengthening containment lines. To strengthen constructed fuel breaks, crews will look to continue firing operations, as conditions allow, to remove remaining ground fuels. Firing operations were conducted yesterday and last night to take advantage of the moderate conditions that occur overnight. Operations for today will continue the effort to bring a strengthened fireline from the Hudlow Saddle area southward along FSR 406 in the southeast area of the fire. The use of a night shift of engines will continue to be used to patrol the perimeter of the fire to monitor fire behavior. The Hudlow Warming Hut base camp will continue to be staffed to address the southeast area of the fire more efficiently.

Structure assessment staff will likely complete their assessment of homes and structures today in the community of Lakeview on Lake Pend Oreille.

WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

We have entered a period of notably hotter and dryer weather that will produce, as it did yesterday, active fire behavior. Wind will predominantly flow from the west and southwest, which will tend to cause fire growth to the northeast. Expect that the fire will produce substantial smoke at times. After cloud cover dissipates and smoke lifts, temperatures will again approach 100 degrees at lower elevations and reach the low-90s at mid-slope elevations. South-facing slopes will feel hotter and dryer. Relative humidity (RH) may fall beneath 20% and may approach the mid-teens throughout the area of the fire this afternoon. Overnight relative humidity recovery will approach 40% at mid-slope elevations. Winds will be light and out of the west to southwest at generally less than 10 mph, with gusts of 15-18 mph at higher elevations. These conditions are conducive to increased fire activity and fire growth. A Fire Weather Watch has been issued by the National Weather Service for the panhandle area of Idaho, which includes the Ridge Creek Fire area (<https://www.weather.gov/wrh/fire?wfo=otx&LAT=47.5938&LON=-116.3562>).

Be aware that weather conditions today will result in visible smoke. Air quality information is available at www.airnow.gov and www.wildlandfiresmoke.net.

EVACUATION STATUS

The Kootenai County Office of Emergency Management has issued an alert to inform residents of the identification of **READY, SET, GO** areas in the vicinity of the Bunco Road and Hayden Lake. In this status, residents are cautioned to heighten their awareness of fire information, be familiar with evacuation procedures should it become necessary, and consistently adhere to good fire prevention measures.

The Kootenai Office of Emergency Management provides the following direction for residents in these areas designated with a **GET READY** status: "Please continue to monitor official sources and call 208-446-2292 for any questions regarding evacuations. Follow Kootenai County Emergency Management Facebook Page for updates and sign up for automated Kootenai Alert for emergency alerts. <https://www.kcsheriff.com/186/Emergency-Management>."

A map of the revised **GET READY** areas is included with this update below.

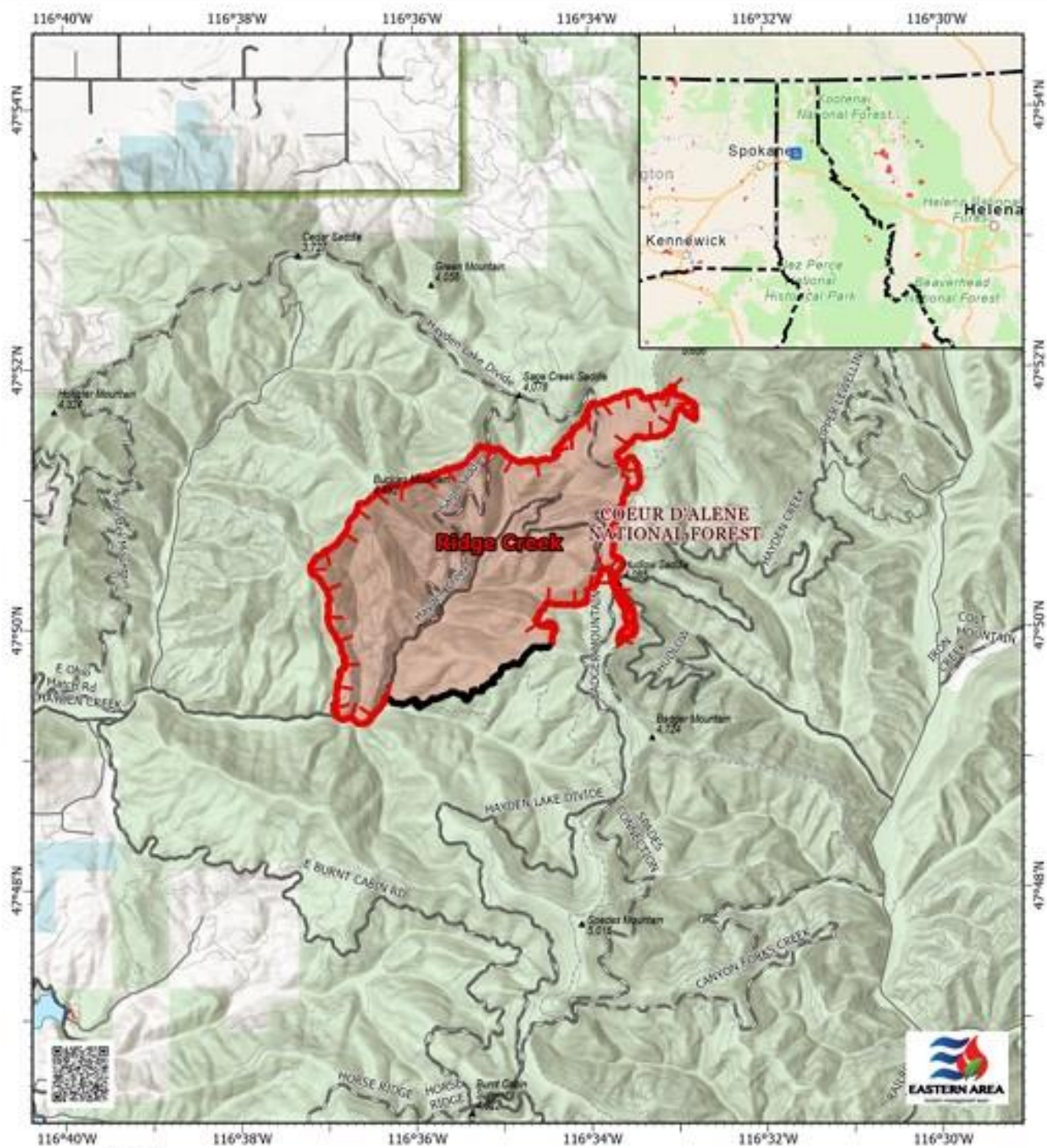
CLOSURES AND SPECIAL MESSAGES

There is a 24-hour per day Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) in place for the Ridge Creek Fire to prevent incursion of civilian aircraft into the area used by fire-fighting aircraft. This restriction also applies to the use of drones in the TFR area.

Firefighting aircraft are shared resources among numerous fires within the region, including the Ridge Creek Fire. These aircraft will continue to use area waterways, including Hayden Lake, for fire suppression efforts. This means that residents and recreational boaters are likely to see either helicopters or fixed-wing aircraft using the lake. For planes in particular, this requires a long, linear approach and exit from the lake. This restricts their ability to maneuver abruptly should watercraft be within their flight path, creating a serious safety hazard for both boaters and pilots. Pilots that have to deviate to avoid watercraft will also be delayed in acquiring water, inhibiting their fire suppression efforts. **All lake users should be on the lookout for approaching aircraft.** If firefighting aircraft are in the area, boaters should clear the center of the lake and move toward the shoreline.

The Coeur d' Alene Dispatch Zone has issued Stage II Fire Restrictions across the Idaho panhandle. The entirety of Kootenai County is within the Stage II Fire Restrictions area. An infographic is included with this update that details the activities that are prohibited under the restriction.

The Idaho Panhandle National Forests issued an emergency closure (Closure Order #01-04-03-23-002) effective August 4, 2023. This Order is for public and firefighter safety due to heavy fire traffic on the area impacted on the Coeur d'Alene River Ranger District, and prohibits all methods of travel (foot, mechanized, motorized and stock) on Forest Service Roads 392, 428A, 437, 1511, 1530, 1552, 1587 and Forest Service Roads 206 and 406 north of their junction, Forest Service Trails 69, 78, 234, and 802 as well as within the described area.



PIO

RIDGE CREEK

IDIPF000447

08/16/2023 Day

3,124 acres at 8/15/2023 @ 2212 hrs

Acres from IR

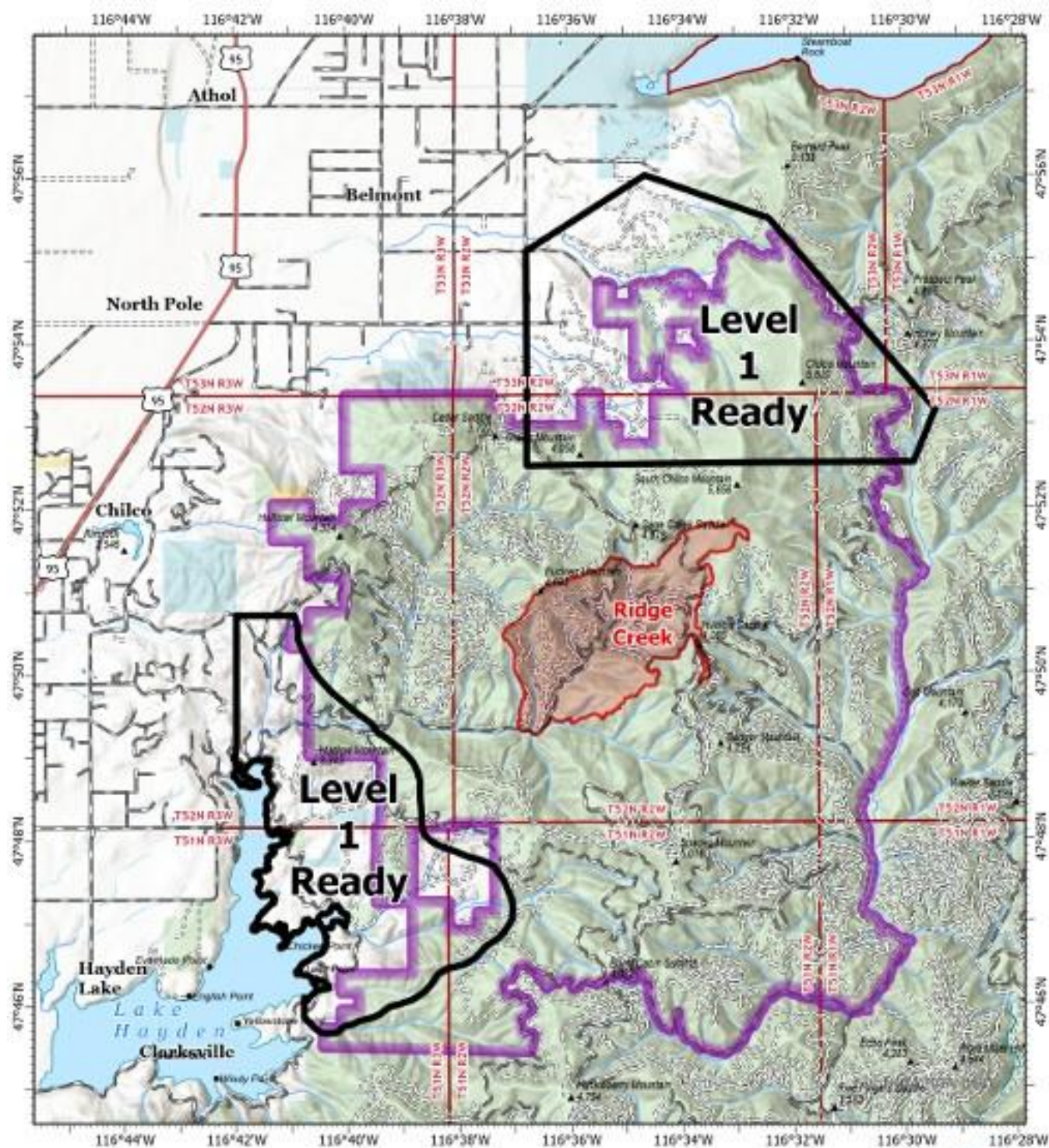
North American 1983 Datum

Lat/Long Grid

0 0.5 1 Miles

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| Wildfire Daily Fire Perimeter | State | Unimproved Road |
| State | County | Improved Road |
| US Forest Service (USFS) | National Forest | |





PIO
Ready, Set, Go and Closures
RIDGE CREEK
IDIPF000447
08/16/2023 Day
 3,124 acres at 8/15/2023 @ 22:12 hrs
 Acres from RT
 North American 1983 Datum, Lat/Long Grid



- | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Wildfire Daily Fire Perimeter | Land Management | Evacuation Level |
| Closure Areas | BLM | Level 1 |
| | State | |
| | USFS | |

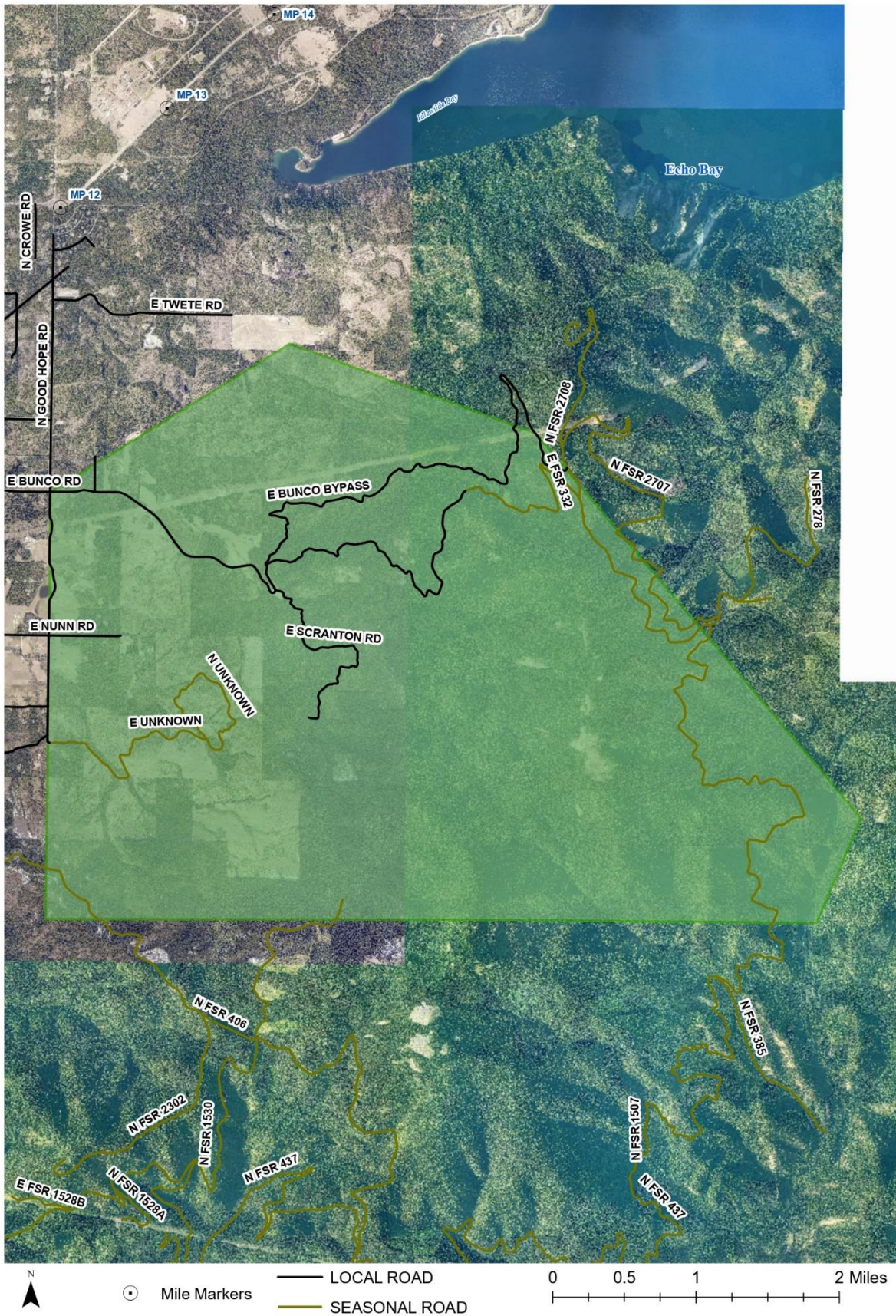




Ridge Creek Fire - Bunco

Kootenai County
August 8th, 2023

Level 1: Get Ready

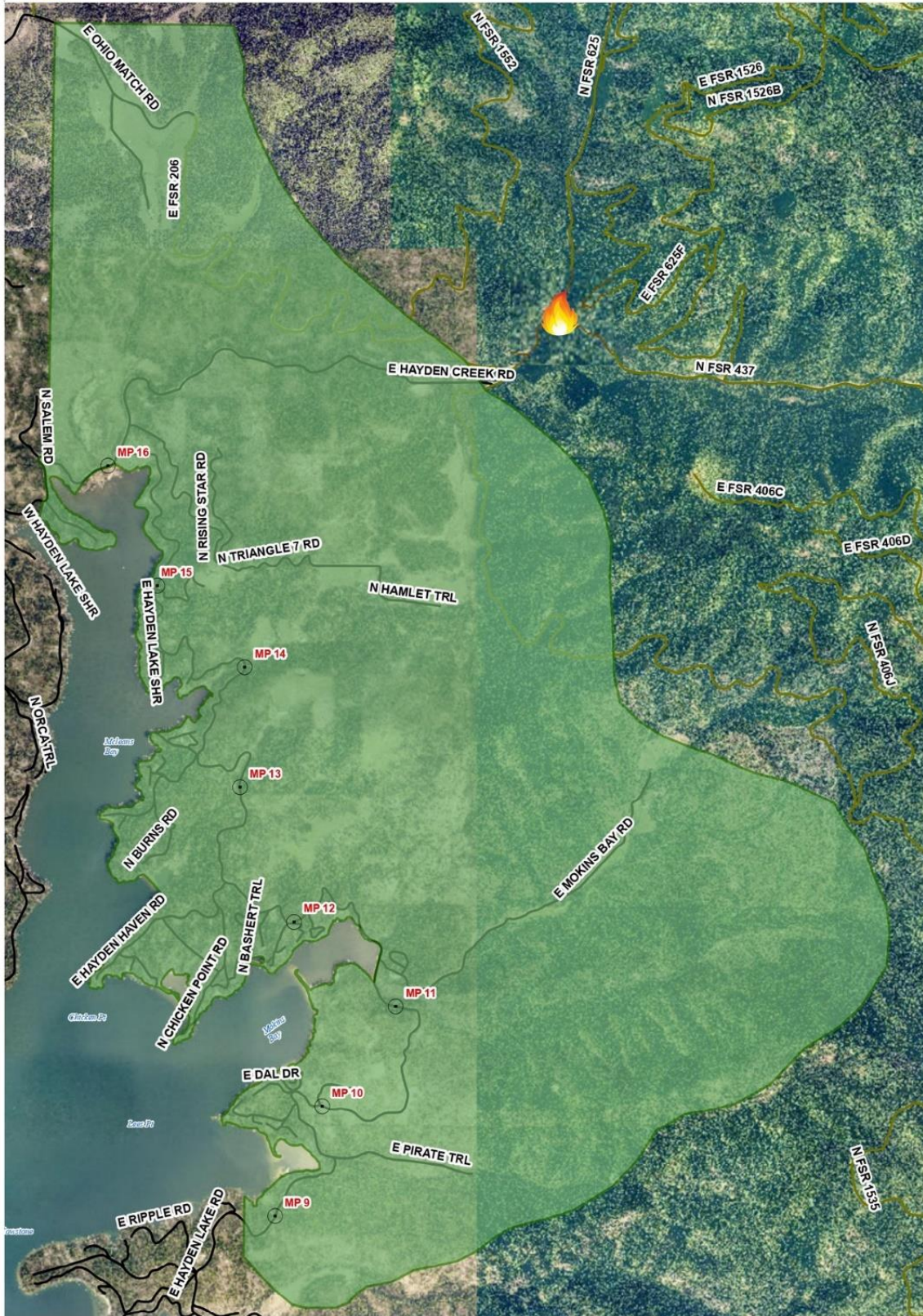




Ridge Creek Fire

Level 1: Get Ready

Kootenai County
August 4th, 2023



○ Mile Markers
— LOCAL ROAD
— SEASONAL ROAD

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



Idaho Panhandle National Forests



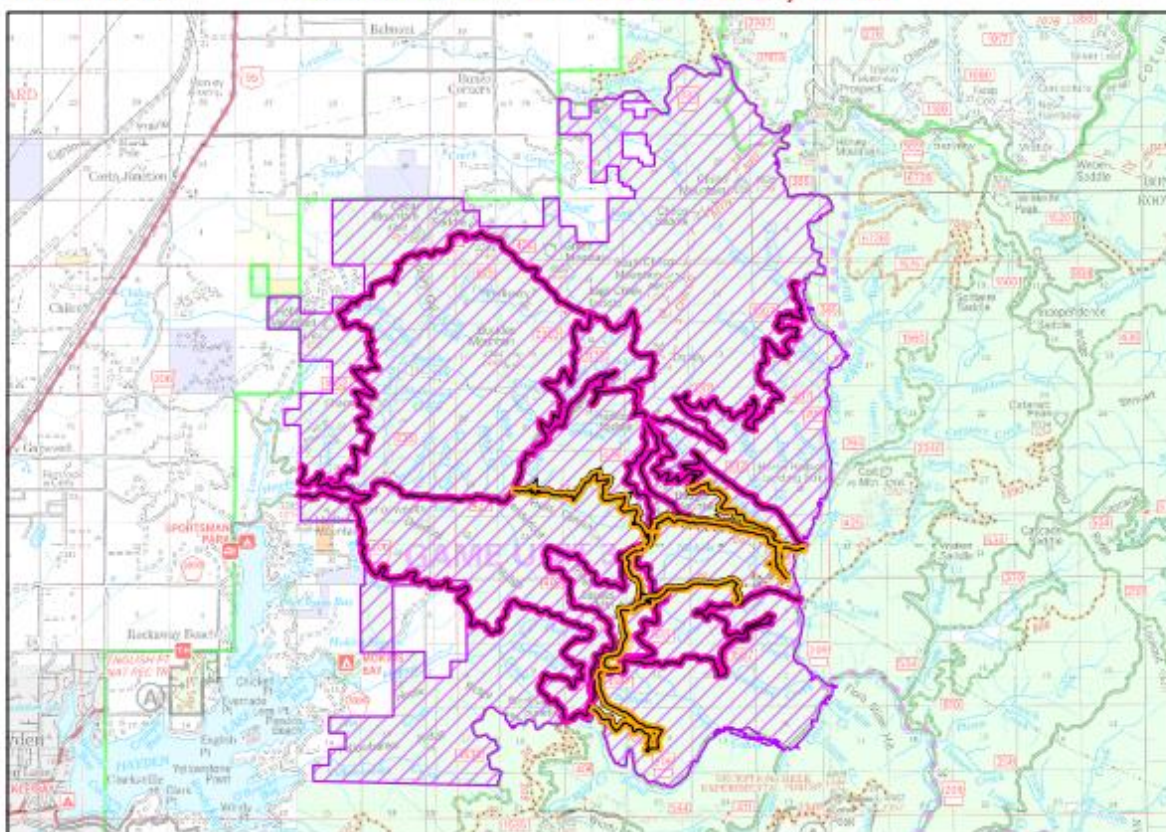
Forest Closure: Ridge Creek Fire Closure

Order Number: 01-04-03-23-002

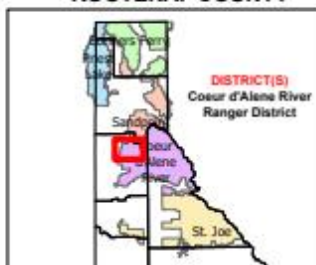
Effective Date : AUGUST 4th, 2023

Rescind Date : SEPTEMBER 30th, 2023

Exhibit A



IDAHO KOOTENAI COUNTY



Closed Road Numbers:

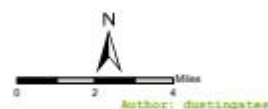
-206
-392
-406
-428A
-437
-1511
-1530
-1552
-1587

Closed Trail Numbers:

-69
-78
-234
-802

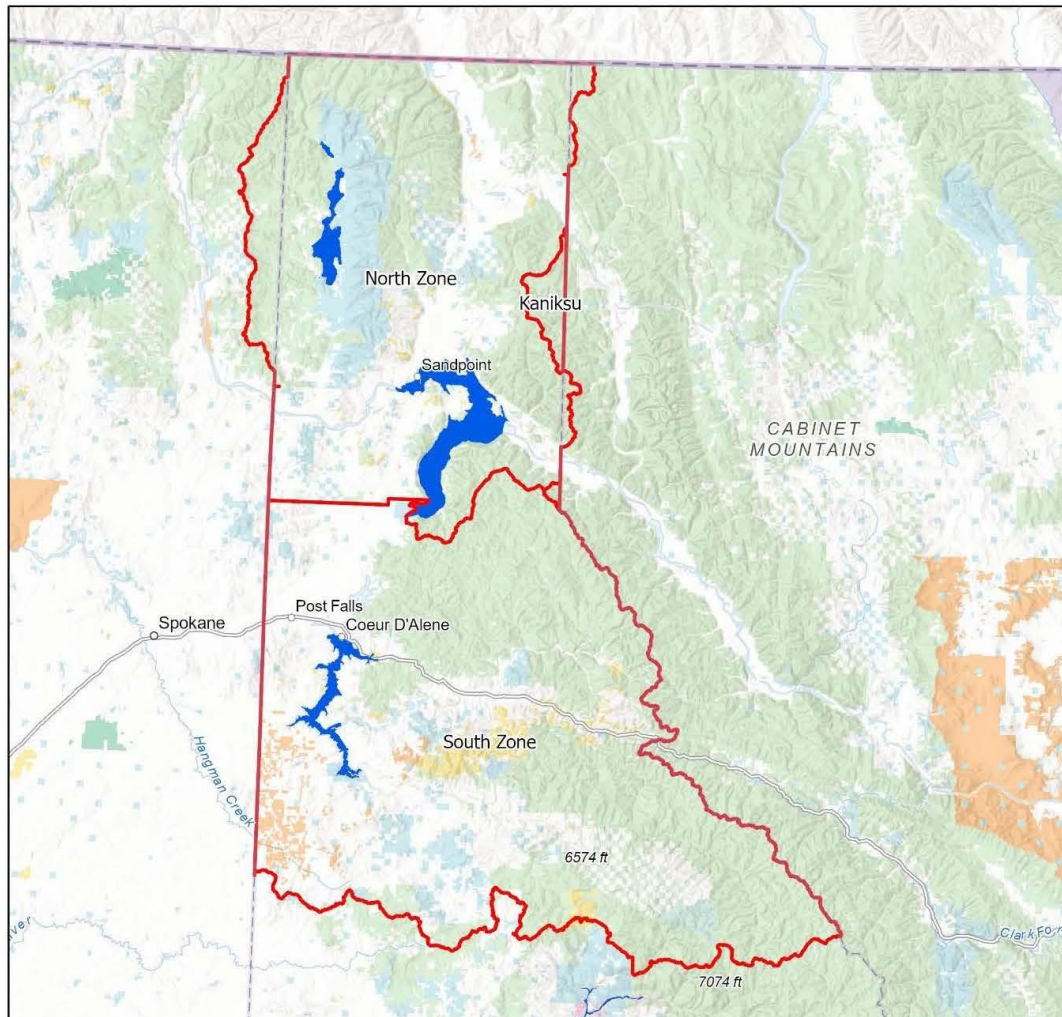
Closures

- Road
- Trail
- Area



Coeur d'Alene

Fire Restriction Areas



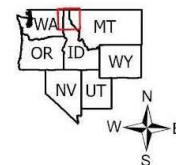
Date Created:
05/18/2022

The surface management status should be used as a general guide only. Official lands records at the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and other State and County offices should be checked for up-to-date information regarding any specific tract of lands.

No warranty is made by the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these datasets for individual use or aggregation with other datasets.

Spatial Reference
Name: WGS 1984 Web Mercator Auxiliary Sphere

0 5 10 20 30 40 Miles



FIRE RESTRICTIONS



STAGE II RESTRICTIONS are in effect and **prohibit** the following:



FIRES OR CHARCOAL

Prohibited: Building, maintaining, attending or using a fire, campfire, or stove fire.

Exceptions: Persons using a fire or stove fire fueled solely by liquid petroleum or LPG fuels. Such devices, including propane campfires, may be used only in an area **clear of flammable material**.



SMOKING

Prohibited: Smoking outside an enclosed vehicle or building. **Exceptions:** You can smoke while stopped in an area at least 3 feet in diameter

that is barren or **cleared of all flammable materials**.



Cross Country Travel

Prohibited: Operating motorized vehicles off designated roads and trails.



Chainsaws/Other Equipment

Prohibited: The following acts are prohibited from 1:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. - Operating a chainsaw or other equipment powered by an internal combustion engine; blasting, welding, or other activities that generate flame or flammable material; or using an explosive.

Remember – Fireworks are illegal on federal public lands.



For more information contact your local fire agency