

# Great Basin Complex Incident Management Team #4



## Bench Lake Fire Update

Sunday, July 14, 2024

Contact Fire Information: 208-901-7230

Or [2024.benlake@firenet.gov](mailto:2024.benlake@firenet.gov)

<http://www.facebook.com/sawtoothnationalforest>

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/sawtooth/news-events/> pending Inciweb page development

Start Date	Cause	Size	Percent Containment	Helicopters	Scooper Planes	Engines	Crews	Total Personnel
07/11/24	Unknown	150	0%	--	2	6	4	186

Great Basin Complex Incident Management Team 4, led by Incident Commander Steve Shaw, assumed command of the Bench Lake Fire Saturday evening. The fire started Thursday about eight miles south of Stanley, and by Friday Sawtooth National Forest officials ordered the closure of the popular Redfish Lake and surrounding recreation area because of its close proximity to the fire and potential for fire growth under the current conditions.

Another reason for issuing the Redfish Lake Recreation Complex closure is to provide water scooping aircraft and helicopters unobstructed access to the lake as they have worked continuously to limit the fire's growth, dousing the flames with thousands of gallons of water from the lake.

Yesterday afternoon's gusts increased fire activity and growth. The fire's acreage will be updated when an infrared flight can be conducted; at this time, it's estimated at 150 acres. About 186 firefighting personnel are assigned to the incident and additional resources are being mobilized for the full suppression effort.

Fire engines are in place at the north end of the lake to offer protection for Redfish Lodge and other structures. Hot shot crews are being positioned to assess where they can engage the fire directly by digging hand line and utilizing natural features such as rock scree to begin containing the fire perimeter. Incident managers note that ground crews will be exercising extreme caution because of the significant hazard posed by dead and diseased trees in the area.

The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

**Closures:** Sawtooth National Recreation Area officials issued an emergency closure for the Bench Lake Fire (0414-04-147) July 12 for the Redfish Lake recreation complex, including the lodge and associated buildings, roads, trails, trailheads, and campgrounds in the area. Visit <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/sawtooth/alerts-notices> for a map and more details on the closure order. Highway 75 remains open.