

Great Basin Complex Incident Management Team #4



Bench Lake Fire Update

Saturday, July 20, 2024

Contact Fire Information: 208-901-7230

Or 2024.benchlake@firenet.gov

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

InciWeb: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/idstf-bench-lake-fire>

Start Date	Cause	Size	Percent Containment	Helicopters	Scooper Planes	Engines	Crews	Total Personnel
07/11/24	Under Investigation	2,427	8%	3	2	14	11	395

Aviation resources, including water scoopers, have been successful in slowing down the Bench Lake Fire to allow on-the-ground firefighters an opportunity to make progress securing the fireline. While progress is steady, it will take time to bring the fire to full containment.

The weather pattern in the area remains unchanged. Hot and dry conditions, coupled with current fire behavior may cause smoke from the fire throughout the weekend. This will largely occur after the inversion breaks in the afternoon. Today, similar to yesterday, Stanley, Idaho may get a break from most of the smoke impacts as it rises and travels east toward Challis.

Community members and weekend visitors should expect increased traffic with additional firefighting resources, including heavy equipment, in the area. Please be mindful of activity on roadways.

Structure protection efforts at Redfish Lake Lodge and adjacent facilities will continue. Pumps, hose, and sprinklers remain active. Crews working north of the fire continue proactive monitoring for anything that could cross the fireline. Crews along the southern edge of the fire are taking advantage of natural features to secure the fireline.

There is now a dedicated air resource advisor assigned to the incident to give daily smoke-related information. Visit InciWeb for the Saturday, July 20, 2024 outlook.

Restrictions: The Sawtooth National Forest has initiated Stage 1 fire restrictions within the National Forest System lands boundaries on the Sawtooth and Cassia zones. Under these restrictions, campfires are allowed only in recreation sites within metal or concrete fire pits. Fires of any kind are not allowed in any dispersed camping areas.

Closures: Sawtooth National Recreation Area officials issued an expanded emergency closure for the Bench Lake Fire (0414-04-148) July 18 for the Redfish Lake recreation complex, including the lodge and associated buildings, roads, trails, trailheads, and campgrounds in the area. Highways 75 and 21 remain open.

Visit <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-closures/idstf-bench-lake-fire> for a map and more details on the closure order.