



Limepoint and Cliff Mountain Fires

Fire Information 208-992-3032

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Limepoint: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/idpaf-limepoint-fire>

Cliff Mountain: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/idpaf-cliff-mountain>
<https://www.facebook.com/payettenationalforest/>

Tuesday, July 30, 2024

Today the Payette National Forest issued a Forest Closure Order to protect public safety during the Limepoint and Cliff Mountain wildfires (see below). This morning the Southern Area Red Complex Incident Management Team joined with the Payette National Forest, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, Bureau of Land Management and Idaho Department of Lands in command of the Limepoint and Cliff Mountain Fires in the Hells Canyon area, located on the Payette National Forest in west-central Idaho, east of the Snake River bordering Oregon.

Note: A community meeting about the Limepoint/Oxbow and Cliff Mountain Fires will be held 7:00 p.m. tomorrow evening, Wednesday, July 31st at the Adams County Recreation Center at 104 S. Galena Street, Council, Idaho 83612. An operational briefing about the fires at the meeting will be presented via Facebook Live on the Payette National Forest's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/payettenationalforest/>).

Limepoint Fire

The Limepoint Fire is north of Oxbow Dam in Adams County Idaho and was started by lightning on July 24th, burning in tall grass and brush. The southern part of the fire was once a smaller, separate fire named the Oxbow Fire, but both fires burned together and are now collectively known as the Limepoint fire. It is now 17,908 acres with no containment. The area of the fire in the Indian Creek drainage threatens the communities of Cuprum and Bear, both of which remain evacuated per Adams County Sheriff's Office.

Yesterday, the fire was active on all sides. Firefighters concentrated their efforts on the north flank of the fire, where the fire hooked around and pushed south toward Cuprum. They successfully kept the fire west and north of Cuprum with the help of helicopter drops. The fire continued to flank northward in this area. On the south side of Indian Creek fire crossed the ridge and spotted in the Bull Gulch area west of Bear across Forest Service road 071 (Flat Creek Road/Barbour Flat Road). The fire grew to three acres with one to six-inch flame lengths before firefighters arrived to contain it. Last night firefighters protected homes from fire backing down to the Snake River with small, defensible tactical firing operations.

Two hand crews, 12 engines, three bulldozers and two large helicopters are working on the Limepoint Fire. Full suppression of it is challenged by lack of firefighting personnel and equipment, including aircraft, due to an active western fire season and steep, rugged terrain and dry, burnable vegetation. More people and equipment have been ordered, but due to competition for resources with other fires, it is unknown when they will arrive. In the meantime, firefighters are focusing efforts on protecting and preparing threatened structures in Oxbow, Cuprum, Bear and Hells Canyon Recreation Area until resources arrive. A primary objective is to keep the fire west of Indian Creek. Light rain over the fire last night and lower temperatures today will help slow growth of the fire in grassy areas and other light fuels. "Take advantage of the moisture to anchor, flank and pinch this fire," said Red Team Operations Chief Josh Graham. Firefighters will continue to scout areas to identify areas

from which they can hold the fire directly at its edge or from a defensible anchor point once more people and equipment arrive. Firefighters will work throughout the night to ensure point protection of structures at risk.

Cliff Mountain Fire

The Cliff Mountain Fire started on July 25th in Hells Canyon National Recreation Area in wilderness just below Hells Canyon Dam 25 miles east of Joseph, Oregon in Adams and Idaho Counties, Idaho. It is 1,101 acres with no containment, burning mostly in wilderness, with growth slowed in some areas due to steep rocks. Firefighters are monitoring the fire, but no ground personnel or equipment have been assigned to it.

WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

Showers will continue this morning from a cold front that moved through last night. Air operations are likely to be limited due to an inversion during morning hours and fire-wide smoke produced in the afternoon. Instability aloft poses a slight chance of thunderstorms this afternoon. High pressure will bring hotter and drier weather starting Wednesday. The chance of rain is 60 percent today, with minimum relative humidity 39 to 44 percent. High temperatures are forecasted as 74 to 79 with north to northeast winds around 8 mph.

Increased humidity and lower temperatures from the cold front may moderate fire activity in lighter fuels such as grassy areas. A weather station on the Limepoint Fire registered 0.27 inches of rain. Where stringers of brush and timber align with wind, upslope fire spread and some spotting could occur. Backing fire may ignite light, flashy fuels laterally and allow for rapid uphill runs with spotting above and to the side when winds are across slope. Rolling material can cause new spots low on slopes that remain hidden by smoke long after they are established. If thunderstorms form in the afternoon, rapid spread may occur with direction of spread changing quickly as cells pass over with outflow winds.

Air quality information is available at www.airnow.gov and www.wildlandfiresmoke.net.

Evacuations:

The communities of Cuprum and Bear have been evacuated per Adams County Sheriff's Department and remain under a "GO" evacuation.

Closures and Restrictions

The Payette National Forest issued a Forest Closure to protect public safety during the Oxbow, Limepoint and Cliff Mountain wildfires. The closure includes, but not limited to the following recreation areas: Black Lake, Sheep Rock, Kinney Point and Horse Mountain Lookout. Big Bar is open, but all access roads to it on the Payette National Forest are closed. Huckleberry Campground is also closed. For more information and a map, see <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-publication/idpaf-limepoint-fire/limepoint-fire-area-closure-order-07-29-2024>.

The following roads are closed: Kleinschmidt Grade (Forest Road 050), Forest Road 454, which runs along the river, is closed except for permittee use, and all county-managed roads into Cuprum.

[A temporary flight restriction](#) remains in place.

[Stage 1 Fire Restrictions](#) are in effect for the Payette National Forest. The following are prohibited:

- Building, maintaining, attending or using a fire, campfire or stove fire except within a designated recreation site, or on your own land, and only within a permanent landowner-provided structure.
- Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle, building, or designated recreation site, or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials.