



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/>

Wednesday, July 31, 2024

The Limepoint and Cliff Mountain Fires are burning 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. tonight, 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, brush and timber. 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. Idaho power transmission lines are threatened on the southwest side of the fire near Oxbow dam and throughout the fire area.

Yesterday lower temperatures and higher relative humidities helped slow growth of the fire in grassy areas and other light fuels. "It was looking really good yesterday for moisture, a lot more moderated fire behavior," said Operations Section Chief trainee Lance Robinson. The fire on the west flank continued to back down towards the Snake River, along which Idaho Power Company helped maintain road access by clearing fallen debris caused by the fire. Hand crews checked for hot spots at the southern flank of the fire.

Helicopter drops on the eastern flank helped ground resources keep fire in the Indian Creek drainage from moving east. A small spot fire was detected and contained east of Forest Road 071 on the east side of the fire. In Cuprum, firefighters mopped up around structures and bulldozers cleared firelines to the north to protect the community. Bulldozers also cleared roads to the east of the fire for contingency firelines. Firefighters continued to look for potential areas to build firelines on the eastern and northern flanks of the fire. A new fire start, the Mad Dog Ridge Fire was detected about five miles northeast of the northern flank of the fire. Price Valley Helitack responded and rappelled down to the fire, successfully containing it at 0.2 acres.

Five hand crews, 14 engines, six bulldozers and two large helicopters are working on the Limepoint Fire. Despite minimal firefighting personnel and equipment at the beginning of the incident, firefighters have not lost structures. More people and equipment have arrived and more have been ordered. Firefighters continue to protect and prepare threatened structures, including bulldozer work west of Bear today, and mop up around areas where defensible firing operations were conducted. Bulldozers and a handcrew will continue building fireline to protect Cuprum north of the community from the Council Cuprum Road west to an old mine. Fire personnel in Cuprum will coordinate with power company crews to remove tree branches that are an immediate threat to powerlines. They also will scout areas to identify where the fire can be held directly at its edge or from a defensible anchor point on the north and east flanks. Firefighters plan to engage the fire directly along Forest

Roads 071 and 072. Masticators will be used to grind up burnable vegetation along the Council 105 Road. Handcrews along the southeast flank will help connect lines cleared with bulldozers. A night shift 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 also was once two fires, the Muddy Fire and the Cliff Mountain Fire, which burned into each other. 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 from the ground and air, but no ground personnel or equipment have been assigned to it. Hells Canyon Dam and associated powerlines are threatened by the fire and today firefighters will take reconnaissance flights to identify more values at risk for which to provide point protection and scout out potential control lines.

Weather/Fire Behavior: The weather will trend warmer and drier through the week with high temperatures today 85-89 degrees, minimum relative humidity 25-28 percent and winds north, then northwest 5-8 mph.

Dead fuels will gradually dry allowing for ignition as the effects from yesterday's rain of about 0.1 inch dwindle. Unshaded fuels combined with low relative humidity and rising temperatures have already begun drying out. Areas of concern for potential upslope spread and spotting are where heat was shielded from precipitation, primarily in stringers of brush and timber. Light flashy fuels will become available for fire spread mid to late morning. Material rolling downhill may cause new spots low on slopes that remain hidden by smoke long after they are established. Hotter and drier weather in the next few days will support increasing fire behavior.

An air quality specialist has been assigned to the fires and will install air quality monitors in the town of Cuprum and along the Route 95 corridor. 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 Limepoint and Cliff Mountain wildfires. The closure includes, but is not limited to the following recreation areas: Black Lake, Sheep Rock, Kinney Point and Horse Mountain Lookout. Big Bar is open. Huckleberry Campground is also closed. For more information, see the [full closure order](#) and [map](#) at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/payette/fire>.

Kleinschmidt Grade (Forest Road 050) and all county-managed roads into Cuprum are closed. **Forest Road 454, which runs along the river, is open, but please drive with caution. You may see active fire, rolling debris, firefighting equipment and firefighters on and along the road. For your safety and the safety of firefighters, do not stop on the road.**

[The temporary flight restriction](#) was expanded to give air operations more space to support suppression efforts.

[Stage 1 Fire Restrictions](#) are in effect for the Payette National Forest. 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; and 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.