



Forest Service News Release

Public Affairs Officer: Mary Cernicek

(307) 739-5564

mary.cernicek@usda.gov

<https://www.usda.gov/btnf>

Forest Responds to Two New Fires and Gains Containment on Leeds Creek & Merna Butte Fires

Jackson, Wyo., August 17, 2024 – Fire crews and resources are responding to two new lightning-caused fires on the Jackson Ranger District of the Bridger-Teton National Forest. The Forest also gained containment on the Leeds Creek and Merna Butte fires.

Fish Creek Fire

Resources have responded and are suppressing the Fish Creek Fire using a confine and point protection strategy. The fire was discovered on Friday, August 16, burning in heavy timber in a remote area of the North Fork Fish Creek drainage, approximately 7 miles southwest of Togwotee Pass. Today, increasing afternoon winds caused the fire to grow to an estimated 900 acres, and smoke from the fire was visible from Grand Teton National Park as well as Moran, Dubois, Jackson and Pinedale, WY. Additional resources have been ordered.

Smoke from the Fish Creek Fire is impacting US HWY 26/287. Please drive slowly and cautiously in the area with your headlights on.

Cottonwood Creek Fire

The 7-acre Cottonwood Creek Fire was discovered today, August 17, 2024, and is located in dead and down timber and younger mixed-conifer in the Sohare Creek area, northeast of Gunsight Pass and west of Cottonwood Creek drainage. Aerial resources responded to suppress the fire. Personnel will remain on scene overnight.

Leeds Creek Fire

The 780-acre Leeds Creek Fire is currently 70% contained and has received a significant amount of moisture over the last few days. Fire crews continue efforts to suppress the fire on the Pinedale Ranger District of the Bridger-Teton National Forest.

The [Leeds Creek Area, Roads, and Trails Closure Order \(map\)](#) has been established for public and firefighter safety. See full details at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/btnf/alerts-notice>. Union Pass Road and South Fork Fish Creek Trail remain open under this closure. A reroute for the Continental Divide Trail (CDT) has also been established. Visit the CDT Coalition's Closures and Alerts webpage to learn more at <https://cdtcoalition.org/closures-and-alerts/>.

Merna Butte Fire

The 153-acre Merna Butte Fire is currently 50% contained and has received a significant amount of moisture over the last few days. Firefighters continue to work along the perimeter of the fire “mopping up,” which means they are finding hot spots in the burn and extinguishing them so that the fire remains contained in the existing footprint.

The Bridger-Teton has rescinded the temporary area, road and trail closure that was placed around the Merna Butte Fire. While the fire is not out, visitors can now enter the Forest near the fire area. Anyone accessing the Merna Butte area is asked to use caution as firefighters and equipment are still working in the area. Additionally, Sublette County downgraded all their pre-evacuation notices and there are no alerts at this time.

The Forest Service uses all available strategies and tools to suppress wildfires, and public and firefighter safety are the top priorities for fire managers.

Fire danger rating for the Bridger-Teton National Forest remains at High. That means that all fine dead fuels ignite readily, and fires start easily from most causes. It also means unattended brush and campfires are likely to escape. Fires spread rapidly and short-distance spotting is common in High fire danger.

For other news, events and information about the Bridger-Teton National Forest, call 307-739-5500, visit the Forest website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/btnf> and follow the Bridger-Teton on [Facebook](#) and [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#) @BridgerTetonNF.

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