



# Middle Fork Complex, Bull Trout and Wapiti Fires

Boise National Forest



**Fire Information: 208-992-3045**

Email: 2024.middleforkcomplex@firenet.gov

<https://www.facebook.com/BoiseNationalForest/>

<https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/idbof-middle-fork-complex-fire-bulldog-nellie-anderson>

<https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/idbof-bulltrout-fire>

<https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/idbof-wapiti-fire>

**August 20, 2024, 10:00 a.m.**

**Incident Commander:** Rick Connell, Northern Rockies Team 5

**Middle Fork Complex Location:** 9 miles east of Garden Valley, ID

**Bull Trout Location:** 15 miles WNW of Stanley, ID    **Wapiti Location:** 2 miles southwest of Grandjean, ID

**Start Dates:** 07/24/24 – 08/06/2024

**Cause:** Lightning

**Size:**

**Bull Trout:** 271 acres

**Wapiti:** 9,049 acres

**Middle Fork Complex:**

**Bulldog:** 4,986 acres

**Nellie:** 19,517 acres

**Containment:**

**Middle Fork Complex:** 5%

**Wapiti:** 10%

**Bull Trout:** 92%

**Resources on site:**

**Middle Fork Complex:** 7 type 2 hand crews; 9 engines; 1 water tender

**Wapiti:** 2 hot shot crews; 2 type 2 hand crews; 20 engines; 2 water tenders; 1 skidgen, 1 bulldozer

**Bull Trout:** 1 engine

**Total Personnel:**

**Middle Fork Complex:** 369

**Wapiti:** 178

**Bull Trout:** 22

**KEY MESSAGE:**

**\*\* Effective as of August 20, 2024, 8:34 AM, Highway 21 is closed from MP92 to MP107** from the Grandjean area to the Custer County line due to wildfire activity. This area starts at Forest Road 025RC (MP 92) which accesses Warm Springs Guard Station and air strip to the Custer County line MP107. This closure is to provide safety for firefighters completing strategic firing operations along Highway 21 to reduce hazardous fuels and limit fire intensity.

**The community of Hanging Valley is in Level 3 "GO" evacuation status due to the Highway 21 closure.**

Evacuation information will be posted on the [Boise County Sheriff's Office Facebook page](#). The Bonneville Campground is also closed effective immediately. For closure information, please visit [Boise National Forest's website – Alerts & Closures](#).

During these critical fire weather days, the protection of communities, historic landmarks, and other values at risk are the primary objectives. Firefighters are utilizing all resources available including helicopters, fixed wing aircraft, and water scoopers; aircraft are utilized as tactics, weather, smoke, and terrain conditions allow safe operations.



Firefighter and public safety are always the highest priorities. Smoke will be visible and could impact roadways today, please follow the instructions of emergency responders and drive safely.

### **CURRENT STATUS/PLANNED ACTIONS:**

**Middle Fork Complex:** The Middle Fork Complex is comprised of the Bulldog and Nellie fires.

Yesterday on the Bulldog Fire, crews prepared the FS road 698 for holding the fire on the east side. An assessment of structures and other values at risk was completed in the Silver Creek area to the north, and lines held on the south/southeast edge. Today, firefighters will continue to improve and hold direct and indirect lines.

**The public is reminded that the Middlefork Road (FS Road 698) is closed at the Forest Service boundary just north of Lightning Creek and the Scriver Creek Road (FS Road 693) is also closed at the Forest Service Boundary** for firefighter and public safety as crews continue to work to protect private property and structures in the vicinity of Crouch.

On the Nellie Fire, there was growth to the north and south with group torching, long-range spotting, and terrain driven spread. Active fire behavior occurred throughout the afternoon and evening leading to a 3,000 acre growth. Firefighters continued to provide for protection of the Deadwood and Scott Mountain Lookouts and the communication tower. A wildland fire module will assess the Deadwood Reservoir area to provide for infrastructure and historic structure protection. Firefighters will continue to identify potential control lines surrounding the fire area. **The public is reminded that Forest Service Road #555 is closed at the intersection of Highway 17 all the way to the Forest Service Road #579 intersection.**

**Wapiti Fire:** The Wapiti Fire had active fire behavior with group torching, long range spotting, and terrain driven runs. Crews continued structure protection throughout the day and night for Sawtooth Lodge, Bear Creek, Camp Creek, and Wapiti Creek Summer Home areas. An additional structure was lost due to showering embers in the Wapiti Summer Homes area. Fire is expected to continue to spread downhill and along the ridge lines to the west and north. Firefighters will be operating along Highway 21 may conduct strategic fire operations if needed, to reduce heavy fuels and limit the intensity of fire spread. **Smoke will impact the Highway 21 corridor today.**

**Bull Trout Fire:** The Bull Trout fire is still 92% contained, with little heat observed yesterday. An engine continues to patrol the fire daily to ensure no changes in activity.

### **WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR:**

Critical weather conditions on Monday created hot dry windy conditions that brought active fire behavior. Fire spread due to group torching with spotting up to ½ mile. Today, when the inversion lifts conditions will be elevated to near-critical fire weather throughout the afternoon and evening. Winds will be from the southwest at around 6-12 mph with gusts up to 15-20mph possible. Isolated showers and thunderstorms may be possible east of the Sawtooth Range. These thunderstorms may bring gusty outflow winds that could cause fire to spread. Inversion will settle during the late evening and overnight with light winds across all areas. Due to weather conditions, fire behavior is expected to include group torching, short- and long-range spotting with terrain driven spread through dead and fine fuels again today. As dry weather continues, fuels continue to be very dry and will remain dry. Fire spread will be wind driven and align with slopes and fuel types.

### **CLOSURES, RESTRICTIONS, AND EVACUATIONS:**

**Middle Fork Complex:** The Boise County Sheriff's Office continues to maintain the Level 2 evacuation notice for residents on and near the Middlefork Road between Stump Ranch Road up to Tie Creek Campground. The Boise National Forest issued an area closure for the fire (Closure #0402-06-59) effective August 12, 2024. The purpose of this order is to protect public safety during the fires.

**Wapiti Fire:** The evacuation order for Summer Homes and the Sawtooth Lodge remain in effect for the Wapiti Fire, as does the area closure issued by the Sawtooth and Boise National Forests (Closure #0402-05-94) effective August 12, 2024. This Order is for public and firefighter safety during fire suppression efforts of the Wapiti Fire.



**Bull Trout Fire:** The Bull Trout Fire Area Closure (Closure #0402-05-93) remains in effect for the roads and trails within the perimeter of the fire. The Boise National Forest issued this order on August,12, 2024. It will be rescinded as soon as it is safe to do so.

Closure information and maps are posted on the Forest's website and the fire's Inciweb page as they are in place.  
<https://tinyurl.com/2u8v3pf7>

The Boise National Forest, Idaho Department of Lands, and Bureau of Land Management are in Stage 1 fire restrictions on state, endowment, private and federal lands within the West Central Mountains Fire Restrictions Zone. For more information on the restrictions and a map visit:  
<https://www.idl.idaho.gov/fire-management/fire-restrictions-finder/>

