



Limepoint and Cliff Mountain Fires

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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/>

Friday, August 2, 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. **A Red Flag Warning is in effect today for the hot, dry and unstable conditions. Residents of Bear who have not yet evacuated are encouraged to do so. Please use extra caution with any fires; even a small spark could burn hundreds of acres in an hour.**

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 **19,359 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 south side of the fire near Oxbow dam and throughout the fire area.

The fire was much more active yesterday due to hotter and drier conditions. Short uphill runs were observed in the northwestern edge of the fire along Allison Creek. Firefighters mopped up along the perimeter of the tactical burn north of Cuprum and fortified structure protection. Bulldozer line was completed from the Forest Road 071 (Flat Creek/Barbour Road) north to Indian Creek. A hotshot crew constructed handline from a bulldozer line north to Indian Creek near the confluence with Huntley Gulch. Crews also worked on constructing bulldozer lines along a ridge line near Boulder Creek between Forest Road 071 and Indian Creek. The fire spotted across Forest Service 071 in several locations west of Summit Gulch and crews successfully contained the spots. Overnight, crews conducted tactical burning along Forest Road 071. Structure protection continued yesterday in Bear. Crews improved contingency fire line north of Barber Flats and west of Bear using excavators. The west flank of the fire adjacent to the Snake River is not burning actively and mop up has nearly been completed; however, potential hazards are rocks and debris rolling down onto Forest Road 454 (Hells Canyon Road). Helicopter bucket drops and air tankers retardant drops helped firefighter reduce fire spread near Allison Creek and along Forest Road 071 near Boulder Creek. Heavy air tankers dropped a retardant line along open grassy ridges from the fire's edge to Horse Mountain Lookout Tower and near the southeastern edge of the fire north of Salt Creek.

Six hand crews, 13 engines, seven bulldozers, three large helicopters and 337 people are working on the Limepoint Fire. "It's going to be active today" said Safety Officer, Ed Bratcher. Therefore, firefighters will vigilantly work to hold firelines and seek to quickly control any new fire starts. Large airtankers will continue to support efforts. Any retardant application will be at least 300 feet from the Snake River and its tributaries to protect water quality. Crews plan to improve the recently completed fireline between Forest Road 071 and Indian Creek with anticipation of conducting a burning operation in the next few days when conditions are right. With hotter and drier conditions today, firefighters will work to hold and improve firelines. They will continue mop up north of Cuprum and continue to protect, prepare and test sprinklers and other equipment around threatened structures in Cuprum and Bear. Firefighters will also mop up along Forest Road 071 where crews conducted tactical burning last night. Near Salt Creek, crews will look for opportunities to construct bulldozer and hand lines closer to the southeastern flank. Crews will continue to scout areas along the northern flank from Allison Creek to Horse

Mountain to identify where the fire can be held directly at its edge or indirectly with firelines along defensible ridges and natural barriers. A night shift will work throughout the night to ensure point protection of structures at risk and may conduct tactical burning operations, if needed.

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 **1,108 acres with no containment**, burning mostly in wilderness, with growth slowed in some areas due to steep rocks. Hells Canyon Dam and associated powerlines are threatened by the fire. A reconnaissance flight was flown yesterday, and firefighters will fly one again today. Minimal fire activity was observed on the fire yesterday with only a few areas showing smoke. One ground personnel is assigned to the fire, and two field observers have been ordered. Firefighters are identifying values near the fire and planning future protection.

Weather/Fire Behavior: A Red Flag Warning is in effect today due to the hot, dry and unstable conditions. Maximum temperatures will exceed 100 and minimal relative humidity will be near 10 percent. Winds will be southwest 1-5 mph. Relatively humidities will stay relatively low overnight, maxing out at 30 percent.

Dead and down will continue to dry, making all types of vegetation available for burning. In heavy grass, a new start could burn over 500 acres in an hour if undetected. Roll out of burning debris down slope along the west and northern flanks of the fire could cause fire spread into unburned fuels and result in rapid uphill runs. Structure protection and mop up around homes in Cuprum have been successful. Areas retaining heat in outlying areas near Cuprum could become extremely active later in the day. Spotting across eastern and southeastern firelines is possible as conditions warm throughout the day. For Cliff Mountain Fire, any fire spots into unburned vegetation will remain unchecked until resources are able to reach the fire.

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), Calf Pen Road and Lundore Roads are closed. The Council-Cuprum Road is closed at the Forest boundary at the snowmobile parking lot. 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 the north to include the Cliff Mountain Fire and narrowed on the west to exclude some area in Oregon west of the Snake River.

[Stage 1 Fire Restrictions](#) are in effect for the Payette National Forest and all [state, private and BLM lands in the fire area](#). 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.