



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/>

Tuesday, August 6, 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.

Limepoint Fire

The Limepoint Fire is west of Cuprum and Bear communities to the Snake River 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 **25,803 acres (increase of 508 acres) with 8 percent containment**. The fire threatens homes in several areas, including Cuprum, Bear, Wildhorse, Paradise Flat and Ditch Creek. Idaho Power transmission lines to the south of the fire are threatened.

Yesterday, lightning from thunderstorms resulted in at least nine new fires across the Payette National Forest, but none of them were in the response area for firefighters on the Limepoint and Cliff Mountain fires. Aircraft, including three helicopters, large air tankers, single engine air tankers and “super scoopers” worked throughout the fire area to support ground crews and equipment. However, airplanes may have limited availability today as they respond to increased fire activity across the region. An agency drone flew a reconnaissance mission yesterday. Do not fly personal drones within the fires’ flight-restricted area. If you fly, we cannot fly! Structure protection remains in place in Bear, Cuprum, Paradise Flat, Ditch Creek, Wildhorse, Mill Creek and OX Ranch. Today, the area of focus for structure protection specialists is Paradise Flat and Wildhorse.

On the **southeastern flank** near Barber Flats, crews completed firelines around the fire near Wildhorse Canyon. A hotshot crew improved lines and continued mop up where the fire burned into Flat Creek Canyon on Saturday. Crews also conducted tactical burning south of Elk Creek.

On the **eastern flank**, hotshot crews completed handline down to Boulder Creek, completing a fireline paralleling Boulder Creek. They also conducted burning along this fireline yesterday evening. A drone was flown along the fire’s edge near Cuprum and no heat was detected by its infrared camera. Mop up continued along Forest Road 071 (Calf Pen Road). Firefighters also improved fireline from Forest Road 071 to the Indian Creek/Huntley Gulch confluence. Crews improved a contingency line west of Bear with feller bunchers (logging equipment), skidgens (firefighting vehicles that are a cross between a skidder and a fire engine) and other heavy equipment. They scouted options to continue this contingency line north of Bear toward Black Lake Road.

On the **northern flank**, the fire continued to back down into Kinney Creek west of the Horse Mountain Lookout. The fire is still about a half mile from the lookout. Crews constructed handline and bulldozer line north of Cuprum with intention of establishing fireline up to the lookout in the coming days. The **southwestern flank** near Oxbow and **western flank** along Forest Road 454 (Hells Canyon Road) south of Big Bar had minimal fire activity yesterday. Several areas along the Snake River on the western flank are contained.

Twelve hand crews, 30 engines, nine bulldozers, seven helicopters and 564 people are working on the Limepoint Fire. Today a hotshot crew will focus on improving and mopping up handlines around a spot fire in Flat Creek Canyon on the **southeastern flank**. Crews will also improve and mop up along bulldozer lines in Barber Flat.

On the **eastern flank**, crews will hold and begin mopping up a fireline north of Boulder Creek that was recently burned out. Crews will continue to improve a contingency fireline between Forest Road 071 and Indian Creek/Huntley Gulch and a contingency fireline west of Bear using bulldozers, a feller buncher and other heavy equipment. Crews will continue to construct this contingency fireline north of Bear toward Blake Lake Road.

On the **northern flank**, firefighters will assess and scout potential indirect firelines along ridges and natural barriers from Horse Mountain Lookout up to Sheep Rock. On the **western flank**, firefighters will continue to mop up and check for hot spots along the Snake River.

Cliff Mountain Fire

The Cliff Mountain Fire started by lightning 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 20 percent 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. Minimal fire activity was observed in the interior of this fire yesterday. One ground personnel is assigned to the fire.

Weather/Fire Behavior: Today's weather will be very similar to yesterday's. Mostly clear skies will allow for a quick warm up. High temperatures will reach into the low 90s. Relative humidity could dip down to 18 percent during the afternoon. Winds will once again be out of the southwest, 6 to 10 mph, with gusts up to 20 mph in the afternoon. While there is still a very small chance for thunderstorms, the chance is lower than yesterday.

Dead and down fuels will continue to dry, making all types of vegetation available to burn. In heavy grass, a new start could burn 137 acres in an hour if undetected. Minimal fire activity is expected today along the Snake River north of Oxbow; however, material could continue to roll down onto Hells Canyon Road. As the fire moves northward along the Snake River corridor flanking fire could run uphill where fuels are available. Fire is expected to continue moving eastward either side of Kinney Creek toward Sheep Rock. Steep and rugged terrain in the Cliff Mountain Fire pose challenges for firefighter access if the fire spots outside of its current footprint.

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

Evacuations: Level 3 (Go Now!) evacuations are still in effect for Cuprum, Bear, Wildhorse and Barber Flats per Adams County Sheriff's Office. A Level 2 (Get Set - Be prepared to leave) evacuation notice is in effect for Ditch Creek and Paradise Flat, and a Level 1 (Get Ready) is in effect for Mill Creek. If you have evacuated areas under Level 3 evacuations, please do not go back. Fire personnel work closely with the sheriff's office with recommendations to reenter evacuated areas when safe to do so.

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: Big Bar, Black Lake, Sheep Rock, Kinney Point and Horse Mountain Lookout. Huckleberry Campgrounds is also closed. For more information, see the [full closure order](#) and [map](https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/payette/fire) at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/payette/fire>.

Kleinschmidt Grade (Forest Road 050), Calf Pen Road and Landore 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.

[A temporary flight restriction](#) is in effect in and around the fire area. This includes use of personal drones. If you fly, we cannot fly.

[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.