



Wapiti Fire Update

Sunday September 15, 2024 8:00 a.m.

Great Basin Complex Incident Management Team 7

Mike Johnston, Incident Commander



Wapiti Fire Statistics	For More Information
Size: 125,459 acres Completion: 29% Total Personnel: 849 Location: Grandjean, ID Reported: July 24, 2024 Cause: Lightning	Information Phone: 208-593-7132 Email: 2024.wapiti@firenet.gov InciWeb: https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/idbof-wapiti-fire Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/wapitifireinfo2024 Linktree: https://linktr.ee/WapitiFireInfo2024 Interactive Map: https://tinyurl.com/WapitiFireInfoMap

Special Notes: The rain events of the last week contributed to slowing of fire activity, a drastic decrease in smoke, and improvement of air quality for all communities in and around the Wapiti Fire. Hazards associated with the fire's suppression still requires the closure of Highway 21 throughout the weekend.

With over 313 miles of fire perimeter, it is not feasible for firefighters to manually check every piece of the perimeter for hot spots. As such, the fire suppression strategy for the Wapiti Fire transitioned to a mix of confinement and containment tactics. Containment utilizes a combination of direct and indirect fire lines that resources build. Confinement uses a combination of natural geographic features that are expected to hold any growth of the fire. These features can include rock bands, ridges, burn scars, or other fuel type changes. Both of these strategies are represented through a percentage and combined, will be reflected through percent "completed." Containment tactics have been used to secure the eastern edge of the fire and have allowed the communities in and around Stanley to return to their homes, as well as protecting values around the Cape Horn area. Firefighters have simultaneously engaged in direct and indirect containment tactics with the goal of protecting values at risk in the Lowman area, including various residences and recreational infrastructure. The weather events of the past week and the anticipated weather arriving again on Monday will allow fire managers to more fully assess portions of the western and southern areas of the fire that are using a confinement strategy.

The last full night operational period was completed Saturday night. A partial operational period will occur Sunday evening. Aggressive efforts in division MM and PP, in conjunction with the forecasted precipitation this week, has eliminated the need for night operations.

Current Situation: The Grandjean area is secure, and all the structure protection equipment was removed. Today (09/15) homeowners will be escorted into Grandjean to winterize their homes.

Communities of Ten Ax, Two Ravens, Seven Peaks, and others South of Highway 21 have full structure protection mitigations in place with hoses, sprinklers, and fold-a-tank systems at the ready. Pump systems have been winterized and are staged in the area, ready for quick deployment if necessary. Careful planning and attention have been taken to ensure heavy equipment does not damage those communities.

The north side of Highway 21, Sourdough and all parts of Lowman have similar structure protection measures in place; hoses, sprinklers, fold-a-tanks, and winterized pump systems to facilitate the containment strategies that are needed in those areas.

Incoming rain is expected Monday into Tuesday, which will further assist with minimizing fire behavior and enhancing confinement strategies.

Division KK (Structure Group East), HH, and DD: Suppression repair efforts are underway with the end goal of repairing disturbance caused by the initial suppression and structure protection efforts. Miles of hoses, pumps, and other equipment have been removed (backhauled) from the area.

Divisions MM and PP: No further firing operations are planned in the Cape Horn area as conditions are not favorable for burnout operations. Based on visible growth and infrared data fire managers are comfortable with the containment achieved in this area. Some suppression repair activities are underway with the assistance of heavy equipment.

Division WW and Structure Group West: Fire activity in the 8-mile area picked up as clouds cleared and the vegetation was exposed to direct sunlight and wind. Heavy helicopters continued to keep the line checked on the ridge with strategically placed bucket drops. No additional growth was observed. Structure protection remains in place if the fire does move down the 8-mile drainage. Firefighters had to disconnect and winterize some of the pumps to ensure they don't freeze with the cold nighttime temperatures.

Division VV: Infrared flights show isolated and scattered heat along the southern perimeter of the fire located in the wilderness area. Natural barriers, such as rocky scree and cliffs continue to hold the perimeter in place.

Weather, Fuels, and Fire Behavior: Fall weather trends are continuing with cool mornings and temperatures increasing to low 70s throughout the day. Dry conditions are expected Sunday as the high-pressure front continues across the region. Incident Meteorologists anticipate colder weather and precipitation starting late Monday evening and continuing over the next several days. Fire managers expect a stronger storm than the previous week, which will bring more moisture.

Evacuations:

For evacuation information on the Wapiti Fire, please see the Custer County Sheriff's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/p/Custer-County-Sheriff-Idaho-61558947312289/> and the Boise County Sheriff's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/boisecountysheriff/>.

To sign up for Custer County CodeRED emergency notifications, text CUSTER to 99411 or enroll online at <https://public.coderedweb.com/CNE/BF28E45537FF>

To sign up for Boise County Alert Sense emergency notification enroll online at <https://public.alertsense.com/SignUp/publicUser.aspx?regionid=1163>

Closures and Fire Restrictions:

The Middle Fork Complex Fire Closure Order is amended to provide consistency with the Wapiti Fire closure. This amended order, **Forest Order #0402-06-64**, **closes** the **582** and **563** roads, as well as the 579 road from its junction with 563 eastward to the junction with Highway 21. More information can be found at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/boise/alerts-notice>

State Highway 21 remains closed from MP84 (Sourdough Lodge) to MP126 (Stanley Lake turn off) for public and firefighter safety.

A **Wapiti Fire Area Closure / Forest Order**: 0414-04-151 for portions of the Boise, Sawtooth, and Salmon-Challis National Forests can be found at this site: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/sawtooth/alerts-notice>

Boise National Forest Stage 1 Fire Restrictions / Forest Order: 0402-00-63 can be found at this site: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/boise/alerts-notice>

Sawtooth National Forest Stage 1 Fire Restrictions / Forest Order 0414-00-044 can be found at this site: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/sawtooth/alerts-notice>

Fire restrictions on **federal, state, and private lands** may be found at this site: <https://www.idl.idaho.gov/fire-management/fire-restrictions-finder/>

A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) is in place over the Wapiti Fire. Wildfires are a no-fly zone for unauthorized aircraft, including drones. **If you fly, we can't.** For more information, visit <http://knowbeforeyoufly.org>.