



**NEWS  
RELEASE**



United States  
Department of Agriculture

Forest Service  
Salmon - Challis National Forest  
1206 South Challis St.  
Salmon, Idaho 83467

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**Comet Fire Update**

**North Fork, Idaho** – The Comet Fire, approximated to be 320 acres in size and located within the same drainage as last year’s Bobcat fire, was ignited yesterday afternoon following lightning storms that moved through the area. The fire started burning in grass and lighter fuels and is currently moving up fingers of trees on steep slopes leading to timbered upper slopes and ridgelines.

Firefighters are currently on the ground, 17 personnel including four smokejumpers and four heli-rappellers, and have effectively secured the southern edge of the fire, where it is was burning on more open grassy slopes, having constructed a line to act as a fire break halting any further fire growth in that direction. They also have conducted burn out operations where the eastern fire edge abuts the Salmon River to prevent fire spreading to the eastern side of the river corridor. No one is on the steep inaccessible terrain at the northern edge of the fire where aircraft is being used. On the northern edge two Type 1 helicopters are dropping water on the fire from buckets, and retardant will continue to be delivered. At this time five structures on private land north of the fire and west of the fire are threatened. Further suppression efforts this evening could include burning out fuels along a knife ridge, towards which the fire is actively burning, to secure the western edge of the fire. Additional firefighting crews and resources in route to the fire at this time include two twenty person firefighting hand crews.

Continued hot and dry weather is predicted for the remainder of the week, with a slight chance of isolated showers and thunderstorms in the fire area tonight.

An emergency area closure is in effect for the area surrounding and north of the fire, yet all the main roads in the area remain open. The complete area closure can be viewed on InciWeb, <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/> under the Comet Fire. Travelers are asked to proceed through the fire activity area on the Highway 93 corridor without stopping to ensure public safety as well as aid in the flow and efficiency of ongoing fire operations.

##End##

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