

# Saddle Complex Fire Update

August 24, 2011  
Bitterroot and Salmon-Challis National Forests

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[www.inciweb.org/incident/2496](http://www.inciweb.org/incident/2496)

**Date Started:** 8/18/2011  
**Cause:** Lightning  
**Size:** 18,275 acres  
**Percent Contained:** 0%  
**Resources:** 1 Helicopter;  
13 Engines; 5 Crews

**Total Personnel:** 103  
**Residences:** 4 threatened, 0 destroyed  
**Commercial Property:** 1 threatened; 0 destroyed  
**Outbuildings:** 7 threatened; 0 destroyed  
**Injuries to Date:** 0

## Location:

The Complex was comprised of two fires – the Saddle and Stud Fires – which merged on August 22<sup>nd</sup> into one fire which is burning on the Salmon-Challis and Bitterroot National Forests in Lemhi County, Idaho, and Ravalli County, Montana. Portions of the fire are within the Frank-Church River of No Return Wilderness.

## Overview:

Following a 17,000 acre run on Monday, fire conditions moderated on Tuesday. Though winds did reach gusts upwards of 20 miles per hour again, relative humidities were slightly higher and temperatures slightly cooler than the previous day. Little fire growth occurred, and the primary fire activity observed was in interior areas of the fires and among spot fires outside of the main fire which grew together. It was confirmed during a helicopter recon flight yesterday morning that no structures were lost on Monday.

Firefighter and public safety remains the first priority on the Saddle Fire. With this in mind, both the Salmon-Challis and Bitterroot National Forests have put area closures into effect. Recreationalists are urged to be aware of changing conditions and closures and check intended travel routes before heading out.

On the Idaho side of the fire, movement is anticipated towards the east and south into the Owl Creek drainage. Firefighters are continuing to provide point protection at locations of value – residences and other structures – which may be affected by continued fire growth.

On the Montana side of the fire, structure protection is also being put into place on private land. The objectives include keeping the fire south of Alta and Hughes Creek.

The Salmon-Challis National Forest has ordered a NIMO team to assist with the current fire activity. Their role will be to assist with all on-going fires on the Forest, not just the Saddle Complex, and to share their expertise related to long-term fire planning.

## Closures and Restrictions:

**SCNF:** Beginning at the junction of Squaw Creek Road #039 and the River Road#030 heading north to the Stateline along Squaw Creek Road and then Squaw Creek. Then following the Stateline West to the #158 trail. Follow #158 trail to Square Top(T3S, R14E, NE1/4 NE1/4 S36). From Square Top Southeast on the #203 trail to #164 trail. Continuing on the #164 trail to Colson Creek Road#123. South along Colson Creek Road #123 to the River Road#030. Closure is ¼ mile North of River Road between the Colson Creek Road and Squaw Creek Road.

**BNF:** The area immediately south of the Hughes Creek Road #9630 until it meets the eastern edge of section T26N, R22W, Section 2, then running south along the eastern edge of sections 11 and 14 until reaching the Thunder Mountain Trail (#95). The closure remains west of trail #95 until it reaches the Idaho border near T26N, R21W, Section 30. The closure follows the private land boundary south of the Hughes Creek road in T27N, R22W, Section 34 until reaching Chicken Creek Trail (#138). The closure remains just south of the Chicken Creek Trail. The closure continues along the Chicken Creek Trail and junction with the Razorback Mountain Trail (#106) and continues along this trail until intersecting with Trail #139, then south along #139 until intersecting with Trail #614. Then south along trail #614 until reaching the Idaho border near Reynolds Lake in T26N, R15E, section 25.

For additional information on the closures, contact the **North Fork Ranger District at 208-756-2700 or the West Fork Ranger District at 406-821-3269.**