

# Saddle Complex Fire Update

August 22, 2011  
Bitterroot and Salmon-Challis National Forests

**Jesse Bender, Public Information Officer**  
Cell 208-940-0642  
Office 208-756-5157

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

**Date Started:** 8/18/2011  
**Cause:** Lightning  
**Size:** 748 acres  
**Percent Contained:** 0%  
**Resources:** 0 Helicopters;  
1 Engine; 2 Crews

**Total Personnel:** 54  
**Residences:** 7 threatened, 0 destroyed  
**Commercial Property:** 2 threatened; 0 destroyed  
**Outbuildings:** 4 threatened; 0 destroyed  
**Injuries to Date:** 0

## Location

The Complex is comprised of two fires – the Saddle and Stud Fires – on the Salmon-Challis and Bitterroot National Forests in Lemhi County, Idaho, and Ravalli County, Montana. The Saddle Fire is located within the Frank Church-River of No Return.

## Overview

On Sunday afternoon, the Saddle Fire moved onto the Bitterroot National Forest. The Complex is now being managed as a joint effort between the Salmon-Challis and Bitterroot National Forests.

The Saddle Fire is burning within the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness, except for where it has crossed the Idaho-Montana state line. The Stud Fire is outside the wilderness. Both fires are burning in an area that has not been impacted by fire in more than 100 years. The Saddle Fire is being managed for resource benefit. Agency officials chose not to staff the Stud Fire due to the high safety risk to firefighters in the steep terrain and dense fuels and the limited values threatened.

Point protection strategies are in place around Horse Creek Hot Springs, Oreana Lookout, and the Gattin Ranch, all on the Salmon-Challis National Forest. On the Bitterroot side, firefighters are beginning to scout and prep areas of the West Fork Ranger District that require protection.

Fire activity did increase this afternoon. Most of the burning came on the spot fires and from within the interior of the fires. The Stud Fire is moving to the northeast, toward Oreana Lookout. Spread on the Saddle Fire is occurring gradually in all directions.

Fire officials were forced to close the Horse Creek Hot Springs today because of the fire's proximity to the campground. At this time, there are no trail closures in effect; however, hikers are cautioned to be aware of the potential for such closures as well as the closure of roads accessing trailheads.

## Closures and Restrictions

**Forest Road 067** is closed from the junction with Forest Road 123.

**Forest Road 038** is closed west of Horse Creek Pass.

**Forest Road 065** is closed.

**Forest Road 044** is closed.

**Horse Creek Hot Springs** is closed.

For additional information on the closures, contact the **North Fork Ranger District at 208-756-2700**.