

# Saddle Complex Fire Update

August 23, 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:** 0 Helicopters;  
1 Engine; 2 Crews

**Total Personnel:** 56  
**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:**

Forecasted winds arrived earlier than anticipated on Monday afternoon, causing significant fire growth on both the Saddle and Stud Fires, which have now combined and pushed further into Montana. Low relative humidities also contributed to the extreme fire behavior. Late in the evening, fire activity was largely affected by the fire's own smoke plume, called a pyro-cumulous cloud formation. During this time the fire made a 5 mile run to the east, along the Continental Divide, and a 3 mile run to the south, for a total growth of about 17,000 acres. All firefighters and members of the public were well out of the fire's path. The Stud Fire made a strong push in the direction of Oreana Lookout but did not harm the historic fire lookout.

Officials from the Salmon-Challis and Bitterroot National Forests, managers from the Complex, and representatives from local fire protection districts met in Connor, Montana, yesterday afternoon to coordinate the operations of the fire. All parties are working together to meet their collective objectives. The Complex is still being managed in a joint-effort between the two Forests.

Road closures do remain in effect and more are anticipated to come today in light of the increased fire size. Area recreationalists are urged to be aware of changing conditions and closures in the area and check intended travel routes before heading out.

## **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 and Campground** is closed.

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