



FLATHEAD NATIONAL FOREST

NEWS RELEASE

August 4, 2003

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Dale Luhman 406 758-5376

Little Salmon Creek Complex Fire Update

The Little Salmon Creek Complex is located 47 miles southeast of Kalispell, Montana in the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex and is comprised of the Little Salmon and Pagoda fires. The Little Salmon Creek fire is burning south up the South Fork of the Flathead River and is about 12,200 acres to date. The fire has burned as far north as Damnation Creek and one mile south of White River. The Pagoda fire, east of Pagoda Mountain in the upper White River drainage, is about 120 acres. Both fires in the complex are being managed under a wildland fire use strategy for resource benefits.

Due to fire activity on the Little Salmon Creek fire, additional closures are in effect August 4 on the Flathead National Forest.

The northern section of the Bob Marshall Wilderness area, South Fork Flathead River Drainage from Mid Creek (3 miles south of Meadow Creek Trailhead) south 35 miles to Brownstone Creek (just south of Big Prairie Work Center) is closed to public access. All trail and river use is prohibited due to fire activity. (see attached map)

The lower southern portion of the South Fork Flathead River drainage is still accessible from Gordon Creek to the south. Other major trailheads including Owl Creek, Pyramid Pass, Monture, North Fork Blackfoot, and Benchmark can still be used to access open areas. The rest of the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex is open for use.

Trails and areas affected by the fires will be reopened as soon as trail crews can remove debris and ensure that traveling in the area is safe.

The historic cabin at Holbrook burned yesterday when the Little Salmon Creek fire increased in activity. However, other outfitter equipment that was in place in the Holbrook area survived the fire. Structure protection plans are in place for Big Prairie.

The fires have recently received moisture and fire spread has slowed. The forecast for the week is continued partly cloudy weather and cooler temperatures with a slight chance of thunderstorms. Fire danger remains high.

For more information about closures associated with the fires, please call the Spotted Bear Ranger District at 406-758-5376 or visit the following website:

http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/flathead/fire/new/fire_index.htm

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