



# FACT SHEET

## Wildfire Update

**August 9, 2022**

**Contact:** Public Affairs Officer – Tod McKay  
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**What:** Indian Ridge Fire  
**Discovered:** July 7<sup>th</sup>  
**Cause:** Lightning  
**Location:** Selway Bitterroot Wilderness in Idaho, Bitterroot National Forest – West Fork Ranger District

**Summary:** The Indian Ridge Fire started by lightning in July in the Indian Creek drainage in Idaho's Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness has grown to approximately 2,400 acres. The fire was active yesterday pushed by strong northwest winds and spotted across Indian Creek making a run up the slope towards Beaver Jack Mountain. Smoke from the fire was visible Monday afternoon and evening south of Hamilton, primarily around Darby. Currently, there are no values at risk or impacts to the Magruder Road Corridor or Paradise Road. The fire is still approximately 2 miles east of Indian Creek Campground and Paradise Road. It is burning five miles from the Idaho/Montana border and is approximately 30 miles southwest of Darby, MT.

**Fire Activity:** Much of the fire growth yesterday was to the east and south. There was active group torching, short uphill runs, and short-range spotting up the ¼ mile. Much of the fire growth was driven by slope and wind alignment combined with extremely dry fuels. Active fire behavior is expected again this afternoon with south winds, low relative humidity, and temperatures nearing 100 degrees.

**Terrain:** The fire is burning in very steep, rugged, and remote terrain with heavy surface fuels and dead standing timber. The fire is burning towards several old fire scars from 2012 including the Burnt Strip, Green Mountain, and Beaver Jack fires.

**Planned Actions:** Due to the combination of no immediate values at risk near this fire and very steep, rugged terrain making access for firefighters difficult, fire managers are utilizing a point protection strategy to prevent any critical wilderness infrastructure from being negatively impacted by the fire. Fire information and maps have been posted at all wilderness campgrounds and trailheads along Paradise Road, the Magruder Road Corridor, and Nez Perce Pass.

**Smoke Impacts:** With increased fire activity, there is potential for smoke to become visible in the valley and impact air quality like it did on Monday, primarily around Darby. Heavy smoke is also expected overnight and in the mornings along the Selway River between Magruder and Paradise, especially at Indian Creek Campground.

**Safety Concerns/Closures:** There are currently no road or trail closures, but with the current fire behavior and movement, an area closure for public safety is anticipated this week. The closure is not expected to impact the Magruder Road Corridor, Paradise Road, or any of the campgrounds located along these roads. Some wilderness trails will likely be impacted by the closure.

**Weather:** Daytime high temperatures will peak today and remain above average this week. Dry weather will continue with low relative humidity this afternoon. Cloud cover is expected on Wednesday with a chance of widespread thunderstorms.

**Inciweb:** For the latest on the Indian Ridge Fire and to see a map of the fire area visit Inciweb: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8319>

**Fire Danger:** Fire Danger is currently "Extreme" on the Bitterroot National Forest, the highest fire danger level possible. When fire danger is Extreme, fires start quickly, spread furiously, and burn intensely. All fires are potentially serious and development into high intensity burning will be faster and occur even on smaller fires. Direct attack is rarely possible and may be dangerous except immediately after ignition.

**2022 Fire Season:** This summer, there have been 27 wildfires on the Bitterroot National Forest; 9 human-caused and 18 lightning fires.

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