

Overview

Incident Summary: The Bald Sisters fire started on August 1, 2014 in the Malheur National Forest in an inventoried Roadless Area where access by fire crews is extremely difficult. The fire was ignited by lightning and has spread through dead and downed lodgepole pine and mixed conifer through spotting and surface fire spread. The fire has moved to the east approaching the boundary of the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest. Cooperative efforts with the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest will continue for the duration of the fire. Values of concern within the planning area include active timber sales, grazing allotments, recreation and wilderness values, critical bull trout, chinook, and steelhead habitat, and potential pine marten habitat.

Two priorities: Keep the fire outside of the Glacier Mountain Inventoried Roadless Area (IRA) and confine the fire to the west of the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest boundary.

The challenge at hand: Implement a full suppression strategy that uses direct and indirect tactics depending on weather, fuels, and topography.

End State: Minimize acres burned, keeping fire out of the Glacier Mountain IRA, confining fire west of Wallowa-Whitman boundary, suppressing fire before it reaches the National Wild and Scenic River corridor along the North Fork of the Malheur, and using existing forest system roads to contain the fire North and East within the planning area

Incident Objectives

1. Utilize systematic risk management to provide for the well being of incident personnel and the public while implementing reasonable operational objectives commensurate with values at risk and probability of success.
2. Listen to and communicate with those affected by this incident. Local landowners and residents, community leaders, public agencies, and cooperators can provide valuable insight to help you succeed, and we value positive relationships with them.
3. Manage the fire cost-effectively commensurate with the values to be protected.
4. Manage the human resources assigned to the incident in a manner that promotes a positive and harassment free work environment and creates a "no tolerance" atmosphere for harassment, alcohol, or illegal drug use and treats all assigned personnel with dignity and respect.
5. Provide inter-agency training opportunities to strengthen our organizational capabilities.
6. All Federal land suppression damage caused by suppression will be rehabilitated.
7. Maintain a record of suppression damage and coordinate with the Resource Advisor for a Suppression Rehabilitation Plan.

Size Matters

Keep the fire as small as possible to:

1. Limit risk and exposure to firefighters by limiting the need to engage fire in beetle killed areas.
2. Limit damage to critical aquatic habitat for bulltrout, steelhead, and chinook.
3. Limit damage to range allotments, fencing and other improvements.
4. Prevent fire from reaching active timber sales (Sheep and Mile 9) on the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest.
5. Limit the damage to the North Fork of the Malheur Wild and Scenic River.
6. Prevent fire from damaging infrastructure, specifically the Elkhorn Communication site and the power lines, South Fork Campground, Stevens Campground, Elk Creek Campground, Elk Flats Campground, and Table Rock Lookout.
7. Minimize smoke impacts to the area communities of Unity and Prairie City.

Incident Requirements

1. Use only approved water sources and draft sites to protect critical stream habitat from suppression damage. Water used for actions such as dust abatement, which are not directly tied to suppression, must come from Prairie City and not from the water sources in the fire area.
2. Take action to prevent the infestation and spread of noxious weeds, as defined by the Resource Advisor.
3. Minimize damage to fence lines by suppression actions. Ensure heavy equipment use and fence lines damaged by suppression actions on federal lands are documented and provided to the READ.
4. Avoid cultural resources when there are other options available to meet incident objectives. Rock cairns, piles and monuments are part of these cultural resources. Call READ if cultural resources like arrowheads, flakes/chips, or historic artifacts like cans & bottles are found and they will investigate.
5. Retain swags if they do not pose a risk to firefighter safety or fire suppression activities.
6. When working within streams or wetland areas ensure READ requirements listed in the IAP are met. These follow the guidance provided within the detailed "Drafting Guidelines for the Blue Mountain Tri-Forest Area".

Tactics

This is a full suppression fire. Direct tactics will be implemented when hazards to firefighters are reduced by:

- utilizing periods of moderated weather conditions
- providing assistance from aerial resources for retardant, water, or as lookouts
- increasing margin by using more experienced and qualified resources such as Type I crews or limiting the operational period
- other mitigations that limit firefighter exposure

Indirect tactics will be used primarily in the Baldy Mountain IRA, Glacier Mountain IRA, and Monument Wilderness area because of the difficult terrain, heavy fuel loadings, limited access, and to reduce firefighter exposure. Outside of these designated areas utilize existing natural and man-made barriers including burn scars, vegetation treatments, terrain features and roads whenever possible. These barriers may be improved to increase their effectiveness.

Management Action Points

Management Action Points (MAPs) are clearly specified incident conditions that, when reached, prompt a predefined modification to existing fire management actions, or trigger the implementation of new strategies and/or tactics.

MAP 1 – Contingency Assessment

- **Condition:** The fire crosses the management action line and shows growth potential in the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest or in the Glacier Mountain IRA.
- **Actions:** Assess need to prep contingency line. Inform Wallowa-Whitman that fire has crossed the boundary.
- **Suggested Resources:** 2 DIVS, 10 feller bunchers, 10 masticators, 5 skidders, 5 dozers, 4 type 2 hand crews, 4 falling teams, 1 taskforce of type 6 engines, 2 TFLD.

The number and configuration of resources needed to prep the contingency line is dependent on fire activity, time of year, and where the fire crossed the Malheur/Wallowa-Whitman National Forest boundary or entered into the Glacier Mountain IRA.

MAP 2 – Elkhorn Communication Site and Power Lines

- **Condition:** The fire crosses the management action line and shows potential to grow towards the Elkhorn Communication Site and power lines.
- **Actions:**
 - o Activate sprinklers on Elkhorn Communication Site.
 - o Implement power line mitigation tactics. Consider using hand or aerial ignition to decrease the intensity of the fire as it approaches the power lines. Fire from existing power line corridor.
 - o Idaho Power needs at least a 2 hour advance notification to shut off power. Call Idaho Power 24 hour dispatch at 1-800-461-9020. Follow up with a call to the local rep (Lornie) at 208-739-0339.
- **Suggested Resources:**
 - o 1 type 6 engine to activate sprinklers
 - o 1 DIVS and 2 Hand crews for hand ignition
 - o Suggested resources 1 type 3 helicopter with ping-pong machine, 1 PDDO, and 1 FIRB for aerial ignition

MAP 3 – Reynolds Creek

- **Condition:** The fire establishes itself across Reynolds Creek and has potential to grow.
- **Actions:** Assess whether to complete NW dozer line and safety zone or use the 2002 Easy Fire to limit fire growth to the north.
- **Suggested resources:** complete NW dozer line and safety zone: 1 DIVS, 2 Dozer, 1 type 2 hand crew.

MAP 4 – North Reynolds Creek

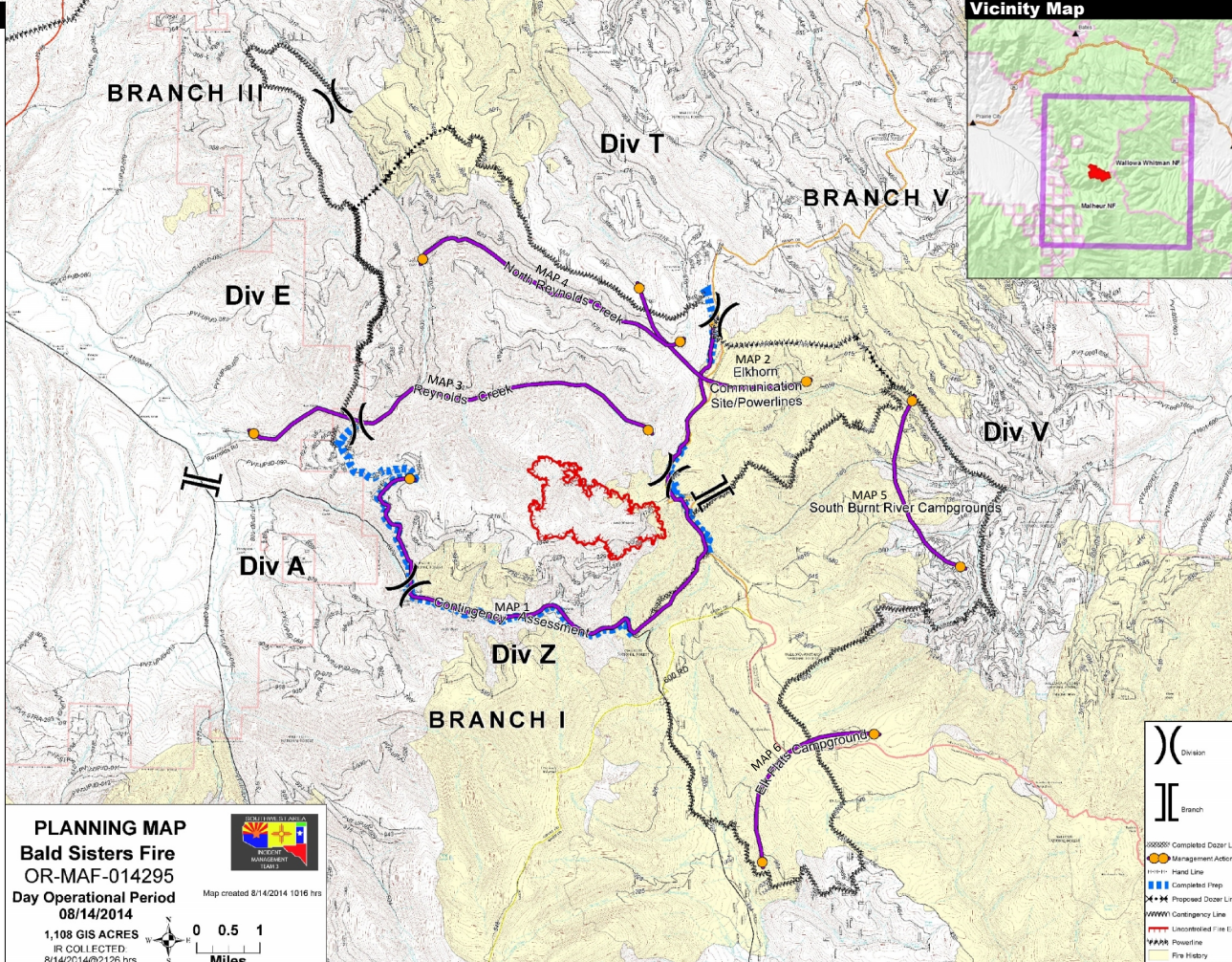
- **Condition:** The fire crosses North Reynolds Creek.
- **Actions:** Consider firing operations on the north primary line.
- **Suggested Resources:** DIVS, 2 Type 2 hand crews, 1 PDDO, 1 FIRB, 1 Type 3 Helicopter with ping-pong machine and operator.

MAP 5 – South Burnt River Campgrounds

- **Condition:** The fire crosses the management action line and has potential to grow towards South Fork Campground, Stevens Campground, and the Elk Creek Campground.
- **Actions:** Close the campgrounds and mitigate the fire's impact to the campgrounds. The three campgrounds need minimal clearing and prep around outhouses, signs, campfires, wood fences, and large trees; there is not much fuel in or adjacent to the campground. The South Fork Campground has 18 sites, Stevens Campground has 8 sites, and Elk Creek Campground has 10 sites.
- **Suggested Resources:** 1 squad will be able to prep the three campgrounds in 1 day.

MAP 6 – Elk Flats Campgrounds

- **Condition:** The fire crosses the management action line with potential to grow towards Elk Flats Campground.
- **Actions:** Close the campground and mitigate the fire's impact to Elk Flats campground. The camp ground has 5 sites with picnic tables and an outhouse. The south sites have heavy dead fuels and about a small stream.
- **Suggested Resources:** 1 squad will be able to prep the campground in 2 day.



PLANNING MAP
Bald Sisters Fire
OR-MAF-014295
Day Operational Period
08/14/2014
1,108 GIS ACRES
IR COLLECTED
8/14/2014@2126 hrs

Map created 8/14/2014 10:16 hrs

MAPS 5 & 6: Campground Assessments

SOUTHWEST AREA

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM 3

NIMO
NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

Created 8/15/2014 - NCB



Bald Sisters Long-Term Operational Strategy Malheur NF & Wallowa-Whitman NF