

PIONEER FIRE RECOVERY AND RESTORATION UPDATE



December 7, 2016

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Fire suppression repair for the Pioneer Fire is complete.

Most of the **Burned Area Emergency Response** (BAER) treatments have been implemented including two 300 acre aerial wood units and four agricultural straw mulching units totaling 552 acres. The remainder of BAER aerial mulching will be completed in the spring when weather permits.

Closure order number: 0402-05-60, temporary road restriction on portions of National Forest System (NFS) Roads 582, 545 and all of NFS Roads 502A, 575 and 546 has been rescinded.

Ongoing efforts - Pioneer Fire Teams 1 & 2

Project and area assignments for Teams 1 and 2 identified in the prior Pioneer Fire update were adjusted to better address project complexity and initial input received from stakeholders earlier this fall. While the two teams will be analyzing similar projects, designed to achieve similar objectives, with outcomes on parallel timeframes they are located in two unique geographic areas.

Team 1 is analyzing proposed public health and safety, resource protection and restoration activities on the Lowman Ranger District area which drains into the South Fork of the Payette River (northern portion of the Pioneer Fire).

Team 2 is analyzing proposed activities on the Idaho City Ranger District area which drains into the North Fork Boise River (southern portion of the Pioneer Fire).

Addressing Public Health and Safety, Resource Protection and Restoration Needs

Public health and safety concerns remain the priority to be addressed in Pioneer Fire area. Hazard trees are being addressed using two tools: (1) salvage sales where it is economically viable, and (2) fall and leave on-site where there are not sufficient numbers of hazard trees to support an economically viable sale and/or where use of salvage would not be compatible with resource protection and restoration needs.

To date, immediate threat hazard trees along several miles of stakeholder and agency identified priority roads and snowmobile routes have been addressed through salvage or felled and left on-site. Priority roads and snowmobile routes where hazard trees have been addressed include: NFS Roads 025M, 312 (Pikes Fork), 316, 351, 380 (Edna Creek), 380C, 384, 385 (Banner Ridge), 394, 394B, 551, 563, 582, 588, 594 (Rock Creek) Banner Yurt ski area, Stargaze Yurt Area and Crooked River Trail.

Please note: While immediate threat hazard trees have been removed along priority roads and snowmobile routes, public health and safety threats still exist and anyone accessing or recreating in these areas should always plan ahead and proceed with caution. Currently, NFS Road 380 is temporarily closed until hazard tree removal is complete and NFS Road 594 (Rock Creek) remains closed.

For all Boise National Forest closure notices visit:
<http://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/boise/alerts-notices>

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Economic benefits to local communities

Removal of hazard trees through salvage sales to reduce risk to public health and safety along priority roads and trails provides economic benefit to local communities. Salvage sales to address public health and safety concerns are underway or planned in the following areas:

The Coulter Roadside Hazard Tree salvage sale (approximately 1 MBF) began log hauling Nov. 29, removing hazard trees along NFS Road 380. The area is closed temporarily for public safety and visitors in the area should be aware of the logging truck activity near Pioneerville.

Pine Flats Campground Hazard Tree salvage sale that will remove hazard trees within this high use developed recreation site is expected to be advertised as early as this week. Operations are anticipated to begin in January and conclude in March, depending on weather and site conditions. Removal of hazard trees this winter will allow this campground to be opened at the beginning of the 2017 recreation season. However, the area and the trail going to the hot springs will remain closed under Version 10 of the Pioneer closure area until additional public health and safety risks and restoration needs can be addressed during the summer of 2017.

Beaver Creek South Roadside Hazard Tree salvage sale has been advertised. Contract award is pending. When hazard tree removal operations begin, the south portion of NFS Road 362 will be closed.

Beaver Creek North Roadside Hazard Tree salvage sale planning and preparations are ongoing. Anticipated implementation date is early January. When hazard tree removal operations begin, the north portion of NFS Road 362 will be closed.

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