

NEWS RELEASE

National Incident Management Team



U.S. Forest Service
Incident Command Team
Rock Springs, Wyoming



Contact: Rita Vollmer, Incident Information Officer
Phone: 801-791-2390

Rainbow Family Gathering near Dutch Joe Creek/Big Sandy River

Rock Springs, Wyoming (June 25, 2008) -- U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) officials announced today that the Rainbow Family Gathering will be located in the Dutch Joe Creek/Big Sandy River area north of Rock Springs, Wyoming and southeast of Pinedale, Wyoming.

The Gathering will be held on the Bridger-Teton National Forest with parking and some activities on public lands administered by BLM. Forest Service and BLM resource officers, law enforcement officers and safety and health officers make up a National Incident Management Team dedicated to minimize resource impacts on National Forest lands and ensure the health and safety of all forest visitors.

"It is important to the Forest Service to work cooperatively with the local, county and state agencies during this Gathering and we thank them for their help and support," Incident Management Team Commander, Gene Smithson, said. "Approximately 10, 000 to 15, 000 people may attend these gatherings and it is critical to coordinate with the communities nearby the gatherings."

Thousands of people are expected to participate in the Gathering, which will be held throughout the first week of July into the 4th of July weekend. Nearly 1,300 participants have already arrived in the area with more to come.

"Having the Gathering on both Forest Service and BLM lands requires a great amount of support from each agency," Fred Hurlock, Deputy Incident Commander said. "Consistency across boundaries is the most efficient tactic and that is essential with large, group activities on public lands."

Forest Service resource specialists are working on the ground with gathering participants to develop an operating plan that will mitigate resource damage and provide for the safety of gathering participants and the public. Many of the Rainbow Family participants will stay a few weeks after the Gathering to clean up the area, following specific criteria the Forest Service has identified in the operating plan.

For additional information, please contact the U.S. Forest Service National Incident Management Team Information Officer at (801)791-2390, or BLM spokesman Bruce Collins at 307-320-5241.

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News Release

USDA Forest Service
Bridger-Teton National Forest
P.O. Box 1888
Jackson, WY 83001



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: June 23, 2008

CONTACTS: Mary Cernicck (307) 739-5564

Wildfire Extinguished at Dutch Joe Guard Station

Pinedale, Wyo. –The Bridger-Teton National Forest dispatched a wildland fire engine on the Pinedale Ranger District around the noon hour today for a wildfire burning near the Dutch Joe Guard Station. Dutch Joe Guard Station is located 47-miles southeast of Pinedale, Wyoming and 3-miles from the Bridger-Wilderness boundary. The fire burned approximately ¼ of an acre of grasses and a tree stump. Federal officials on site were able to successfully scratch a perimeter line around the fire with shovels and hand tools to keep the fire from spreading until the engine could come and extinguish the blaze. The cause of the fire is under investigation. The fire danger for the Forest is currently rated as low.

“Just because there is a low fire danger doesn’t mean there is no fire danger,” said Fire Management Officer Rod Dykehouse. “While some of the upper elevations of the Forest are still under snow with swollen creeks, the vegetation is rapidly drying due to the recent spell of warm weather,” he said. The Forest is looking at elevating the fire danger to moderate in the next several weeks due to the projected weather and hotter temperatures forecasted for the next several weeks.

Visitors to the Forest can help prevent unwanted wildfires by thoroughly extinguishing their camp fires, and being responsible with ashes and cooking stoves.

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**News Release
USDA Forest Service
Bridger-Teton National Forest
P.O. Box 1888
Jackson, WY 83001**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: July 10, 2008

CONTACT: Traci Weaver 307-739-3692

Three New Fires Sparked in Big Sandy

Boulder, WYO: — At about 10 p.m. Wednesday, two fires were reported in the Big Sandy, Dutch Joe area in the vicinity of the Rainbow Family Gathering camp on the Bridger-Teton National Forest. The Gathering 3 fire is one acre in size and is located one mile north of the Gathering 2 fire, which was ignited Monday afternoon and contained on Tuesday. The Gathering 4 fire, at a quarter acre, is one-half mile north of Gathering 2. Thursday morning a third fire, the Gathering 5, was reported near the area. The new fires are under investigation.

The Snake River Hotshot crew was in the area mopping up the Gathering 2 fire and was able to quickly respond to the fires along with Forest Service personnel and keep them from spreading. The Teton Interagency Helicopter and crew were also dispatched to the fires Thursday morning. The fires are estimated to be contained Thursday evening.

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News Release

USDA Forest Service
Bridger-Teton National Forest
P.O. Box 1888
Jackson, WY 83001



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: July 7, 2008

CONTACTS: Mary Cernicek (307) 739-5564

Fire Ignites Near Dutch Joe Guard Station

Pinedale, Wyo. – A fire was reported near the Bear Trap Meadows on the border between the Bureau of Land Management Land and the Bridger-Teton National Forest. The fire has been named the Gathering 2 Fire and has burned approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre of dead trees that have fallen on the Forest. The fire is located approximately 31-miles southeast of Boulder, Wyoming near the Dutch Joe Guard Station. The cause of the fire is under investigation.

Several Interagency firefighters are responding to the area. A Type I helicopter, which is a specialized helicopter for combating forest fires, has been ordered for this incident. Currently, the fire appears to be moving in an easterly direction. As a precautionary measure, the Bridger-Teton is ordering the evacuation of two peripheral camps associated with the Rainbow Family Gathering. The annual Rainbow Gathering was held in the Dutch Joe area of the Bridger-Teton National Forest last week. Some of the camps associated with the Rainbow Gathering have not been vacated that was held in that vicinity of the Forest

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Rock Springs, Wyoming



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Forest Service Incident Management Team Encounters Interference During Investigation

Rock Springs, Wyoming (July 4, 2008) — Forest Service officers were patrolling the main meadow area of the National Rainbow Family Gathering yesterday evening. The officers made contact with a subject that would not cooperate and fled. The subject was apprehended; once detained other Rainbow participants began to interfere with the situation.

Officers began to leave the Gathering site with the subject and were circled by more Rainbow participants that began to physically interfere. Another participant was detained for physical interference.

Ten officers were escorting the detained subjects when about 400 Rainbows surrounded the squad trying to leave. More officers were requested to assist in the main meadow area. The mob began to advance, throwing sticks and rocks at the officers. Crowd control tactics were used to keep moving through the group of Rainbows.

"This lawless behavior is unacceptable and we will not tolerate it," Forest Service Director of Law Enforcement, John Twiss, said. "The safety of our employees, public and Rainbow participants is our number one priority and we will continue to protect everyone on the National Forest."

A total of five arrests were made in relation to this incident. One officer suffered minor injuries and was cleared by the local hospital. A government vehicle also incurred damage during the incident.

Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming Highway Patrol and Sublette County, Fremont County, and Sweetwater County Sheriff Offices all responded to the Forest Service officers during the incident.

"The Forest Service Incident Management Team appreciates all of the help and assistance from the agencies coordinating with us during this incident," Incident Commander, Gene Smithson said. "It is important that we continue to work together."

Approximately 7,000 Rainbow participants have congregated in the Big Sandy area.

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