



**NEWS  
RELEASE**

United States  
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Forest Service  
Salmon - Challis National Forest  
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**Forest to Begin Work on Camp Hazards on the Middle Fork**

Starting June 9<sup>th</sup> a Salmon-Challis National Forest team will assess the hazards at river camps burned over in last year's fires along the Middle Fork of the Salmon River, according to River Manager John Haugh of the Middle Fork Ranger District. Work to mitigate the safety hazards will begin immediately the following week.

A total of 15 camps were badly burned in 2007, leaving behind standing burned trees that are now at a high risk of falling into campsites during high winds or wet conditions.

Five camps already were deemed not to be reasonably safe and will not be assigned to boaters this year. These include, Lake Creek, Johns Camp, Greyhound, and Dome Hole; all located upstream from Indian Creek Guard Station. The Horsetail Camp, at mile 52.7, will not be used for three to five years because of the threat of debris flow from the drainage which burned directly above the camp.

The assessment team will determine what will be needed to make the other ten camps reasonably safe following the effects of last year's fires. These include Elkhorn, Saddle, Scout, Sheepeater, Fire Island, Rapid River, Dolly Lake (river right camp); all located up river from Indian Creek Guard Station. They will also assess conditions at Culver Creek (mile 45.6), White Creek (mile 47.3), and Cub Creek (mile 53.5).

Work to remove the hazardous trees requires special skills and knowledge, according to Haugh. "Our personnel will focus on clearing as many camps as possible to keep the maximum number of camps available. We are bringing in smokejumpers from the base in McCall who have special expertise for this technically difficult work and will pair them with folks from the Salmon-Challis." Haugh continued, "We are mobilizing as many folks as we have available to make the camps safe as soon as possible. Work was planned to begin much earlier but the high water and late spring have delayed it"

Boaters and other wilderness users are advised to carefully evaluate any campsite for hazardous situations before setting up camp. Launch site personnel may need to restrict, or even eliminate, layover days in the upper stretch of the river, and trip leaders will be asked to take the smallest camp possible for their group. Boaters may need to do a very long or very short first day on the river. Some large river camps may be shared by smaller groups if enough campsites are not available.