



## Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security News Release

For immediate release, August 13, 2015

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### **STATE DISASTER DECLARATION ISSUED IN WAKE OF NUMEROUS WILDFIRES**

(BOISE) – A state disaster declaration was issued today for Idaho and Lewis Counties allowing local governments dealing with wildfire the ability to access state and federal resources to assist them as their communities face a threat to lives and property. The lightning-caused Lawyer Complex fire, which started late Monday afternoon, involves more than three-thousand acres in north central Idaho and has led to evacuations and road closures near Kamiah.

“We are seeing some pretty extreme fire behavior which is why I want to ensure that local officials have whatever they need as they work to put the fire out and then transition to putting their communities back together,” said Governor Otter.

Deteriorating weather conditions, with triple digit temperatures, high winds, and dry lightning conspired to produce well over one hundred fire starts around the state this week. The state’s largest fire, the Soda Fire, grew over night to 200,000 acres and continues to burn along the Idaho/Oregon border threatening homes and destroying sage grouse habitat.

A disaster declaration allows local jurisdictions the ability to access federal and state resources for fighting the fire as well as funds to mitigate its effects.

The declaration was signed today by Senator Brent Hill, in his capacity as acting Governor, while Governor Otter and Lt. Governor Brad Little are both out of the state. The declaration is effective immediately.

“The First Lady and I want to thank all of our first responders and encourage Idahoans to heed their advice, if asked to evacuate.”

Statewide up-to-date information, including fires, fire restrictions and prevention measures can be found at [idahofireinfo.blogspot.com](http://idahofireinfo.blogspot.com) – a link to which is available on the IBHS website. [www.bhs.idaho.gov](http://www.bhs.idaho.gov)

***Note to reporters:*** *The Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security is the State of Idaho's emergency management agency. Please note that IBHS is an Idaho-specific agency, and it is not the same thing as the federal Department of Homeland Security. Within the State of Idaho organizational chart, IBHS is aligned under the State of Idaho Military Division.*