



**NORTHERN ROCKIES
INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM 2**

Information Phone Line: 406-426-9644

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Inciweb: Bull Gin Complex,
<https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8381>

Facebook: @kootenainf,
<https://www.facebook.com/kootenainf>

INCIDENT STATISTICS

Size: 3,882 acres
Completion: 6 %
Start Date: September 2, 2022
Cause: Lightning
Location: 2 miles NE of Heron, MT
Total Personnel: 496
Resources: Crews: 14;
Engines: 20;
Water Tenders: 12; Heavy Equipment: 23

EVACUATIONS: On September 8th the Sanders County Sheriff's Office placed the residents along Government Mountain Road and Timber Ridge Road into pre-evacuation status. For status of emergency conditions, please sign up for Sanders County Emergency Alerts at 406-203-0082.

CLOSURES: Government Mountain Road and Rock Creek Road are closed to the public. The Noxon Refuse Site remains open during regular hours. Area, road, and trail closures are in place for the Government, Billiard, and Isabella Lake Fires to provide for public safety and firefighting operations. See Inciweb for maps and closure descriptions:
<https://bit.ly/KootenaiNFClosures>.

Bull Gin Complex Daily Update

Tuesday, September 20, 2022



Bull Gin Complex Fires	Size	Completion
Government Fire	2,470 acres	0%
Billiard Fire	1,125 acres	6%
Isabella Lake Fire	287 acres	0%

HIGHLIGHTS: Today, a combination of firefighting efforts and the weather will build upon recent progress. Fire activity is expected to be low to moderate, primarily due to increased cloud coverage and increased relative humidity. Firefighters and heavy equipment will continue to focus on structure protection, indirect line construction, chipping, and mastication.

Government Fire: On the western edge of the fire, it remains above Government Creek, and it is still above the Rock Creek drainage on the east side. Fire activity is expected to slightly increase as it reaches new fuels, possibly reaching the creek by tomorrow. Flames continue to back *slowly* down slopes. For example, fire behavior analysts observed the fire's highest rate of movement yesterday at about 20 feet per hour. Despite burning slowly, the heavy fuels within the active portions of this fire continue to hold a fair amount of heat, resulting in smoke events like experienced yesterday. Firefighters continue to prioritize structure protection near private property near the southern portion of the fire. Mastication along Spur Road is now complete, while it continues along the southwest portion of the fire.

Billiard Fire: The fire continues to burn in heavy, dense forest. Chipping and mastication is now concluded for this fire. Crews continue to monitor and test pumps near structures and private property. Firefighters are actively patrolling and monitoring structures along Blue Creek, Blue Creek Bay, Hillside Lane, and Fatman Road.

Isabella Lake Fire: Aerial flights continue to monitor this fire.

WEATHER: Last night's cold front produced a breezy northeast wind along the ridgetops, which will continue throughout the day. The forecast calls for mostly sunny skies and minimum humidity around 40 percent. A wetting rain is still expected Wednesday night into Thursday, possibly producing over a quarter inch of precipitation.

WHEN WILL IT BE OUT?

Even though wet conditions have occurred and are predicted tomorrow, smoke will persist, and the fires still have the potential to spread. The fires will stay active in the interior, and in isolated spots around the uncontrolled fire edge, especially in areas where dry pockets of fuel under canopy cover shelters from moisture. It will take a season-ending event to extinguish these fires fully. This event will include sustained lower temperatures, shorter burning periods, increased relative humidity, shorter sunlight duration, and significant moisture. While this complex continues to emit smoke, note that the large smoke plume seen yesterday was from the Kootenai River Complex located to the northwest.