



Colt Fire Fact Sheet

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation Fire Protection
Lolo National Forest and Flathead National Forest Land Management

NORTHERN ROCKIES TEAM 1

INCIDENT COMMANDER: BRENT OLSON

Fire Information: 406-247-0922 2023.Colt@firenet.gov
<https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/mtmts-colt-fire>

Sunday, July 23, 2023 at 12:00 noon

Location: 15 miles northwest of Seeley Lake, Montana

Start Date: 7/17/2023

Cause: Lightning

Size: 1,575 acres

Containment: 0%

Total Personnel: 260

Engines: 13

Helicopters: 5

Hand Crews: 7

On 7/22/23 the Missoula County Sheriff's Office issued an Evacuation Warning for the residences on the west side of Lake Inez, specifically those residences on Beargrass Lane and West Lake Way. The National Weather Service has issued a Fire Weather Watch for Monday, July 24. Hot, dry, and windy conditions may lead to critical fire weather conditions on existing or new fires.

CURRENT STATUS: The Colt Fire is approximately 1,575 acres in size and 0% contained. Brent Olson's Northern Rockies Complex Incident Management Team 1 assumed command of the fire at 6:00am today. Additional fire personnel and equipment have been arriving and are being integrated into the fire operations.

Yesterday, fire crews conducted structure protection assessments and preparations for structure protection in the areas along Highway 83 and around the lakes south and east of the fire. Helicopters and CL415 water scooper fixed wing aircraft were used to drop water on areas on the fire to slow growth or cool areas of heat. The fire continues to actively burn on all sides and remains active during the night. The fire is expected to continue to increase in size with the forecasted weather conditions.

PLANNED ACTIONS: Crews will work on clearing vegetation along the Colt and Beaver Creek Roads to improve fuel break areas. On the south and east areas of the fire, personnel and crews will be looking for direct and indirect opportunities to prepare containment lines and fuel breaks. Direct and indirect fire suppression tactics will be assessed and prepared to be implemented as fire conditions allow. Structure protection assessments and preparations will continue. As new crews arrive, they will be safely orientated to the fire area and begin working where safe to do so. Firefighter and public safety are the number one priority as this fire response transitions into longer duration suppression work. Air resources will be used as needed to slow fire spread and cool down areas of heat.



WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

The weather will continue to be hot and dry and wind speeds are predicted to be lighter from the southeast. No precipitation is forecasted. Overnight humidity recovery has been poor which allows the fire to remain active at night. A dry cold front is predicted to move through the area tomorrow, which could result in critical fire weather conditions with gusty and increased wind speeds.

EVACUATIONS AND CLOSURES

The Missoula County Sheriff's Office has issued an Evacuation Order for residents along Highway 83, between mile marker 27 and 31 (Rainy Lake to Summit Lake). An Evacuation Warning has been issued for residents along Highway 83, between mile marker 25.5 and 27 and an Evacuation Warning has also been issued for the residences on the west side of Lake Inez, specifically those residences on Beargrass Lane and West Lake Way. An Evacuation Shelter in Ovando is on standby if needed.

Please be aware that due to the possibility of rapidly changing conditions, an Evacuation Order may be issued with no prior notice or warning. Home and property owners in the surrounding area should remain vigilant and prepared. Have an evacuation plan for family, pets, and livestock; sign up for emergency alerts at Smart911.com; and be familiar with the Missoula County evacuation process and what an order and warning means <https://www.missoulacounty.us/government/public-safety/office-of-emergency-management/evacuation-information>.

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Lolo National Forest, and Flathead National Forest have or will be closing several areas, roads, and campgrounds around the fire area. Additional details will be released as they are finalized.

