



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>

Monday, July 24, 2023 at 10:00 am

Location: 15 miles northwest of Seeley Lake, Montana

Start Date: 7/17/2023

Cause: Lightning

Size: 2,927 acres

Containment: 0%

Total Personnel: 412

Engines: 9

Helicopters: 5

Hand Crews: 13

ATTENTION

For the safety of the pilots and public boaters on Seeley Lake and Lindbergh Lake need to stay clear of fire aircraft when they are scooping water from the lakes for firefighting efforts.

The National Weather Service has issued a Red Flag Warning today from 2pm until 12 midnight. A combination of low humidity and gusty winds will lead to critical fire weather conditions.

CURRENT STATUS

An overnight infrared flight mapped the Colt Fire at approximately 2,927 acres in size and it remains 0% contained. The fire size has increased by 1,352 acres over the past two days. Fire activity on Sunday was moderate with light winds and stable air over the area. Additional fire crews and equipment have been assigned to fire operations.

Crews continued to prepare an indirect fire line on the northeast side of the fire along Forest Road 646 by hand cutting and removing brush and other ground vegetation. Personnel working on the south, west and north sides of the fire looked at road systems for access and for opportunities to develop direct or indirect fire lines. The Structure Protection group conducted assessments and preparations for structure protection in the areas along Highway 83 and around the lakes south and east of the fire. Air Operations was busy using helicopters and the CL415 water scooper fixed wing aircraft to drop water on areas on the fire. The fire continued to actively burn and remained active during the night.

PLANNED ACTIONS

Fire personnel completed the fuels removal and access improvement work along Forest Road 646, the primary control line feature for the East side of the fire. Personnel will now be working on the North and South sides of the fire to open existing roads and begin fire line construction in areas that have a high probability of success of containing the fire. Access to the north side of the fire is proving to be a bit more challenging. The Structure Protection Group will continue their structure assessments and preparations. Helicopters and fixed wing water scooping aircraft will be used to drop water on the fire if the flying conditions remain safe. Firefighter and public safety are the number one priority as suppression work continues. With a Red Flag Warning forecasted for the area, fire managers and crews will review their escape routes and safety zones and work with a heightened awareness of changing weather and fire activity.

WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

The National Weather Service has issued a Red Flag Warning in the fire area from 2:00pm to midnight today for low humidity and strong winds. Winds are forecasted to be 20 mph with gusts up to 30 mph. Humidity levels will drop below 30% in the fire area. Winds will be blowing directly across the fire area.

EVACUATIONS AND CLOSURES

The Missoula County Sheriff's Office Evacuation Warning and Order summary:

- Residents on Beaver Creek Road (near the summit) are under an Evacuation Warning.
- Mile marker 31 (Beaver Creek Road at the intersection of Hwy 83) south towards Seeley Lake to mile marker 27, and including residences in Rovero Flats, are under an Evacuation Order.
- Residences beginning at mile marker 27, south end of Rovero Flats, to mile marker 25.5 (the intersection of the West Fork of the Clearwater Road and Hwy 83) are under an Evacuation Warning.
- Residences on the north and south ends of Lake Inez are under an Evacuation Warning. The east side of Lake Inez, along Hwy 83, is not under any Warning or Order.

For evolving Evacuations and Warnings please visit the Missoula County Sheriff's Office Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/MissoulaCountySheriffsOffice> .

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 Lolo and Flathead National Forests have closed several forest roads, areas, and campgrounds near the fire area for public safety. The list of current closures includes:

- Forest Road 906 (closed at Highway 83)
- Rainy Lake Campground access road 4357 (closed at Highway 83)
- Rainy Lake Campground
- Alva Lake Campground access road (closed by gate at Highway 83)
- Alva Lake Campground
- Lakeside Campground access road (closed by gate at Highway 83)
- Lakeside Campground
- Forest Road 646 (closed at the junction of FSR 552; FSR 4354; Forest Road 552 (beyond the turn off to west side Lake Inez access
- Forest Road 5507 and 463 closed beyond the West Side snowmobile trailhead (these roads access the Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Marshall Wildlife Management Area and Lake Marshall)
- Temporarily closing the Forest System Road loops of the Clearwater (FSR 4370 and 4353) and Richmond (FSR 667 and 720)

TEMPORARY FLIGHT RESTRICTIONS

A Temporary Flight Restriction is in place for air space over the Colt Fire (**FDC 3/0291**) to provide a safe environment for firefighting aircraft operating in the area. Remember that temporary flight restrictions also apply to unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) or drones. **If you fly, we can't!**