



# 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](mailto:2023.Colt@firenet.gov)    Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ColtFire>  
<https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/mtmts-colt-fire>

**Wednesday, July 26, 2023 at 9:00 am**

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**Location:** 15 miles northwest of Seeley Lake, Montana

**Start Date:** 7/17/2023

**Cause:** Lightning

**Size:** 4,390 acres

**Containment:** 0%

**Total Personnel:** 467

**Engines:** 14

**Helicopters:** 7

**Hand Crews:** 12

## KEY MESSAGE

**A Community Meeting has been scheduled for today, July 26 from 7-8pm at the Condon Community Center. Fire personnel will provide updates and be available for questions. We are planning to livestream this public meeting. However, if internet strength makes it difficult to livestream, we will record the meeting and post the video.**

## CURRENT STATUS

Following the passage of a dry cold front on Monday, Tuesday's temperatures were cooler, and winds were lighter resulting in moderate fire activity. The overnight infrared mapping flight was unable to obtain an updated size of the fire due to cloud cover over the fire area.

Yesterday, on the east side of the fire, crews worked to contain the spot fires east of Forest Road 646 (Colt/Uhler Road). On the south side, crews looked for opportunities to work on direct fire line along the West Fork of the Clearwater River. The fire's edge is currently held up just north of the river. On the north side, crews and equipment started working to reduce vegetation along Forest Road 906 (Beaver Creek Road) and look for access routes and opportunities to work on fire line construction in locations that have a high probability of success to contain the fire. The Structure Protection group has completed numerous structure assessments and continued preparation work in the areas along Highway 83 and around the lakes south and east of the fire. Structure protection efforts include cutting vegetation to create defensible space and setting up pumps, hoses, and sprinklers. Helicopters were effectively used throughout the day to drop water and cool hot spots on the fire.

## PLANNED ACTIONS

Personnel will continue to work on securing the spot fires on the east flank and begin to burn ground vegetation in select locations between the fire's edge and Forest Road 646 (Colt/Uhler Road). On the south side, crews will construct direct hand line where appropriate and continue to assess road systems as potential control features near the West Fork of the Clearwater River. Crews and a Heavy Equipment Task Force will continue working on vegetation removal and control line preparation along the Beaver Creek Road on the north side of the fire. The north and south Structure Protection Groups will continue structure assessments, remove fuels, and install water handling equipment as needed. Helicopters will be used to drop water on the fire and have been very effective when needed. Firefighter and public safety remain the number one priority as fire suppression work progresses.

## WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

The temperatures on Wednesday will be as high as 80 degrees and relative humidity levels as low as 20-30%. Light west winds will increase from 9-14 mph in the morning. Winds could gust as high as 21 mph in the afternoon. Fire behavior is expected to be moderate and will move along the active fire edges through the heavy dead and down surface vegetation. Torching and spotting are possible in the subalpine fir and lodgepole pine.

## 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
- Lake Inez 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 5407 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!**