



# 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>

**Friday, July 28, 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:** 5,252 acres

**Containment:** 3%

**Total Personnel:** 538

**Engines:** 15

**Helicopters:** 5

**Hand Crews:** 12

## KEY MESSAGE

**A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) has been implemented over the fire area and the Condon airstrip has been closed for general aviation. This allows for firefighting aircraft to safely work over the fire area and the Condon airstrip is being used as a firefighting helicopter base. Pilots in the area should check these NOTAMs and follow all directions for both public and firefighter safety.**

## CURRENT STATUS

Yesterday, fire activity was observed as moderate while temperatures continued to trend a few degrees warmer and relative humidity levels dropping lower. The overnight infrared flight mapped the fire at approximately 5,252 acres in size, increasing by 315 acres.

Yesterday, on the east side of the fire along Forest Road 646 (Colt/Uhler Road) burning operations progressed well. The intent of this operation is to further secure the road's use as a primary fire control line. Crews continued working to secure the spot fires in the area that ignited east of Forest Road 646 earlier in the week. On the fire's north side, a Heavy Equipment Task Force and hand crews continued work reducing vegetation along Forest Road 906 (Beaver Creek Road) in preparation for burning operations. Personnel also searched the west flank for opportunities to construct fire line in locations that have a high probability of success to contain the fire. On the south side, crews worked directly on the fire edge, anchoring from constructed dozer and hand lines. Additionally in this area, two spot fires were discovered and secured. South Structure Protection worked on structure assessments on the east side of Lake Inez. North Structure Protection engines assisted in operations along Forest Road 646 (Colt/Uhler Road). Helicopter bucket water drops were effectively used to cool hot spots as needed.

## PLANNED ACTIONS

Crews will continue burning operations along Forest Road 646 (Colt/Uhler Road) to secure the north and east flanks of the fire. On the south side, crews will continue to secure the spot fires, construct direct hand line towards the west, and assess road systems for potential control features near the West Fork of the Clearwater River. A Heavy Equipment Task Force and crews will continue working on vegetation removal and control line preparation along the Beaver Creek Road on the north side of the fire. South Structure Protection will continue structure assessments and protection work at Lake Inez. A night shift of engines and personnel will patrol and monitor fire conditions. Helicopters will be used to drop water on the fire as needed and where they can be most effective.

## WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

The high temperatures in the fire area on Friday will range from 71-81 degrees, with relative humidity levels 20-30%. Winds will be from the south at 5-9 mph with gusts up to 12 mph. There is a 20% chance of thunderstorms over the area and thunderstorm outflow winds could potentially gust to 25-30 mph. Fire behavior is expected to be low to moderate and with the active fire edge moving 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.

If conditions rapidly change 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](https://www.smart911.com); and be familiar with the Missoula County evacuation process and what an order and warning means by clicking on the following link: <https://www.missoulacounty.us/government/public-safety/office-of-emergency-management/evacuation-information>. For evolving Evacuations and Warnings please visit the Missoula County Sheriff's Office Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/MissoulaCountySheriffsOffice>.

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 03/0291**) to provide a safe environment for firefighting aircraft operating in the area. An airport closure is in place for the Condon Airstrip (**FDC 07/110**) for firefighting helicopter operations. Remember that temporary flight restrictions also apply to unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) or drones. **If you fly, we can't!**