



Bowles Creek Fire

Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest and Bitterroot National Forest

Fire Information: 406-426-9130

Email: 2023.bowlescreek@firenet.gov

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Bowles-Creek-Fire-Information>

<https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident-information/mtbdf-bowles-creek>

July 24, 2023 at 11:30 a.m.

Location: 3 miles west of Skalkaho Pass in the Bowles Creek drainage

Start Date: 7/20/2023

Cause: Lightning

Size: 1,258 acres

Completion: 0%

Total Personnel: 139

Engines: 4

Helicopters: 3

Hand Crews: 3

Fire Danger has been elevated to VERY HIGH on both forests (Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF and Bitterroot NF). An incoming cold front could drive southwesterly winds 20-35 mph, with possible gusts of 45 mph.

These critical wind speeds can increase fire behavior.

CURRENT SITUATION & PLANNED ACTIONS

Firefighting crews and resources from both Forests continue to establish opportunities on both sides of the fire for “indirect” (away from the active fire edge) firelines. Previous fire lines and dozer lines used in the 2022 Hog Trough fire have provided success in planning objectives. On the west side, resources will be prepping the Daly Creek Road (711 Road) and 711A Road), constructing a fuel break adjacent to the road with hand crews. On the east side, crews will be working to the south from the Bowles Creek Road (5071 Road) to the 313 Trail. A small spot fire occurred yesterday north of Bowles Creek, and bucket drops from helicopters helped delay fire growth of these starts.

WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

Hot and dry conditions will continue today. The weather forecast calls for a dry, cold front to move into the area that will bring an increase in southwesterly winds. Winds could range in the 20-35 mph range, increasing the chance of spot fires. Along the cold front is a chance for mixed, downward gusts reaching upwards of 45 mph. High temperatures are expected in the mid 80's with relative humidity in the 10-15% range. Overnight winds will decrease to around 15 mph. Tuesday calls for cooler temperatures with chance of thunderstorms later into the week.

Timbered drainages with heavy dead and down trees will expect active fire with potential for torching. Grass and brush are still green, however they will still support fire spread.

The fire is producing smoke that is visible from numerous locations along the Skalkaho Highway and in the Bitterroot Valley and Philipsburg.

CLOSURES

Road and trail closures in the fire area are being considered to provide for public and firefighter safety. Specific closure information and maps will be posted on the Forests' website and the fire's Inciweb page as they are in place.

The Skalkaho Pass Road remains open. Those recreating or traveling in the fire area are encouraged to be aware of the situation and to pay attention to increased fire traffic.

A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) is in effect over the fire area for the safety of the aviation resources.