



# Bowles Creek Fire

Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest and Bitterroot National Forest

Fire Information: 406-426-9130

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

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

**July 28, 2023 at 10:30 a.m.**

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**Location:** 3 miles west of Skalkaho Pass in the Bowles Creek drainage  
**Start Date:** 7/20/2023    **Cause:** Lightning    **Size:** 1,698 acres    **Completion:** 0%  
**Total Personnel:** 184    **Engines:** 4    **Helicopters:** 1    **Hand Crews:** 4

**Fire Danger is VERY HIGH on both forests (Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF and Bitterroot NF).  
Thunderstorms and lightning forecasted for Friday**

## CURRENT SITUATION & PLANNED ACTIONS

On the west side of the fire, a hotshot crew completed fireline construction from Forest Road 711 to a rock scree and will continue handline towards Forest Road 711A to serve as an indirect control line for containment. A rock scree is a mass of rock on the side of a mountain that can serve as a natural barrier used in containment lines. Heavy equipment and masticators (machines for grinding or pulping material), will work to open up forest roads and work on fireline construction in locations that have high probability of success to contain the fire. Previous firelines and dozer lines constructed in the 2022 Hog Trough fire are being utilized. An Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) crew is available for scouting and reconnaissance to support planning objectives.

On the east of the fire, crews have been working diligently on improving fireline along Forest Trail 313 to Forest Road 5070 to minimize spread and give time to implement suppression objectives. Heavy equipment, including a chipper (machine capable of reducing trees to wood chips) and a feller buncher (a machine with a cutting head that is capable of holding more than one tree at a time) continue work creating fuel breaks on Forest Roads 5070 and 5071. Fire personnel are utilizing a helicopter as needed to support operations on both ends of the fire area.

## WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

Last night, the fire area had thunderstorms and lightning with some areas receiving some wetting rain. Rainfall of 0.10 inch and more is considered wetting rain. Friday's forecast calls for a 10-20 percent chance of more thunderstorms into Friday evening, with gusty winds expected. Any storms that develop are capable of erratic outflow winds of about 30 mph. An incoming pressure system will develop later today shifting winds easterly in the 10 mph range. Temperatures will be in the low 70s for Friday. Saturday is forecasted to see a warming and dry trend return with temperatures in the 80s and humidity decreasing to 20 percent.

## CLOSURES

The Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest and Bitterroot National Forest issued an emergency closure of roads and trails (Closure #02-08-23-19) effective July 25, 2023. This Order is for public and firefighter safety during fire suppression efforts of the Bowles Creek Fire. See the following link for a complete listing of the roads and trails listed in the closure: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/bdnf/alerts-notice/?aid=81818>. Closure information and maps are 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.