



NORTHERN ROCKIES TEAM 9 INCIDENT COMMANDER: SHANE MARTIN

## Bee Top Fire

Idaho Panhandle National Forests, Sandpoint Ranger District

Fire Information 1-208-953-7021 2023.beetop@firenet.gov  
<https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/idipf-bee-top-fire>  
July 11, 2023

**Location:** 5 miles up Lightning Creek Road on Bee Top Mountain  
**Start Date:** 7/1/23 **Cause:** Lightning **Size:** 37 acres **Containment:** 16%  
**Total Personnel:** 151 **Engines:** 2 **Helicopters:** 3 **Hand Crews:** 4

Yesterday, crews laid hose and improved fireline along Lightning Creek. Crews stayed in lower elevations due the cold front moving through the area bringing strong wind, rain, and lightning. After the storm passed, helicopters resumed conducting water drops over the fire.

Today, with indirect firelines constructed, crews will begin to attack the fire directly. Firefighter safety remains the number one priority. Direct attack on a steep and rugged slope poses significant risk and this shift in tactics was driven by what crews see on the ground. While short-term risks will increase due the difficulty of the terrain, a direct attack strategy is likely to shorten the duration of the fire, reducing the number of firefighters exposed to hazards, and the time of exposure. This strategic change will accomplish the primary objective of protecting the community of Clark Fork.

The Plumas Interagency Hotshot Crew (IHC) will cut a "P-line" in to the fire laterally from the mid-slope spike camp to the west and scout areas above the fire for a helicopter landing zone or sling-in site. "P-line" is a saw line utilized for access in and out of hard to reach areas. On the southwest flank, Klamath IHC will scout for opportunities to construct direct fireline. Mad River IHC will construct an anchor in the fire perimeter on the south flank. Boise IHC will continue to improve the indirect fireline along Lightning Creek, chipping brush and finishing hose lay preparation as a contingency. With the lightning that accompanied last night's storm, Boise IHC will also be available to join the Initial Attack Group to extinguish for any new fire starts that occur in the fire area.

Helicopters will continue to cool the fire and keep fireline in check, allowing crews to construct fireline on the fire's edge. Helicopters will also support the crews return to the mid-ridge spike camp following last night's storm, slinging in food and equipment.

Initial attack (IA) crews will continue with home assessments to ascertain preparation needs and minimize damage to structures in the Clark Fork community. The IA group will also maintain readiness to rapidly respond to new fire starts caused by lightning within the fire area.

### WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

The low pressures system that brought wind, rain and lightning to the fire area continued to move through the area overnight and will persist into Tuesday morning. Expect gradual warming and drying Tuesday through Friday.

### CLOSURES AND SPECIAL MESSAGES

There are currently no road or trail closures associated with the Bee Top Fire, however road, trail, and area closures may occur if the fire reaches pre-determined decision points, creating dangerous conditions. The public is urged to use caution and check Inciweb regularly for the latest fire information before recreating in the area.