



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 Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ColtFire>
<https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/mtmts-colt-fire>

Wednesday, August 2, 2023 at 10:00 am

Location: 15 miles northwest of Seeley Lake, Montana

Start Date: 7/17/2023

Cause: Lightning

Size: 6,860 acres

Containment: 19%

Total Personnel: 630

Engines: 15

Helicopters: 5

Hand Crews: 17

KEY MESSAGE

A high-pressure ridge weather system is keeping smoke from nearby and far away wildfires in the area. An Air Resource Advisor is on site and working with the Incident Management Team to provide daily Smoke Outlooks. These outlooks can help everyone prepare and plan for mitigating smoke impacts in the community. Smoke information can be found at <https://fire.airnow.gov>.

CURRENT STATUS

The fire remained active in the southeast and southwest corners on Tuesday as hot temperatures and low humidity levels continued to encompass the fire area. Containment increased to 19% and the overnight infrared flight mapped the fire at approximately 6,860 acres in size, an increase of 156 acres. Firefighters monitored two main areas of active heat and fire near the fire's edge in Uhler Creek on the southeast corner and between Beaver and Sunset Ridges on the southwest corner. In response, crews continued to hold and secure the southeast corner and aerial retardant drops were used to slow fire spread on the southwest corner. Helicopters were used to cool hot spots. Along the south side crews continued to work on handline construction north of the West Fork of the Clearwater River continuing to move to the west. On the east side, along Forest Road 646 (Colt/Uhler Road) engine crews continued to patrol, mop up, and increase containment. On the north side, crews and equipment took holding actions along the established fire control lines, monitored for spot fires, and continued to construct control lines. This includes working near Colt Lake and Beaver Lake. The Structure Protection Group patrolled the Highway 83 corridor and worked on assessments in the Lindbergh Lake area.

PLANNED ACTIONS

On the southeast corner and east side along Forest Road 646 (Colt/Uhler Road) firefighters will continue to hold and mop up along the line. Patrol and mop up will also continue in areas on the north side of the fire. In the northwest corner crews will continue to construct indirect line working to connect between Colt and Beaver Lakes. Along the west side crews and equipment will access the area and start working to prepare Forest Road 9570 as an indirect control line. Access routes have been found and an attempt will be made to bring equipment into the southwest corner if fire activity safely allows. Helicopters will continue to be used to keep the fire checked up on the west side and southwest corner. On the south side, and north of the West Fork of the Clearwater River, crews will move from east to west working on fire control line construction. These crews will start to spike camp closer to the line to decrease travel time. The night shift of engines will patrol and monitor fire conditions.

WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

On Wednesday, high temperatures in the fire area will range from 84-92 degrees and relative humidity levels as low as 10-15%. A slight chance for thunderstorms exists today. Winds will be from the southeast shifting to the west at 10 mph with higher gusts possible. It will be another warm and dry day which could lead to active fire behavior. Moderate growth is expected with the fire moving through the heavy dead and down surface fuels. 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; 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!**