



# River Road East Fire

## Fact Sheet



NORTHERN ROCKIES TEAM 1

Phone: 406-345-5972

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INCIDENT COMMANDER: BRENT OLSON

<https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/mtlnf-river-road-east-fire>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/riverroadeastfire>

**Sunday, August 20, 2023 at 9:00 am**

**Location:** 6 miles east of Plains, Montana

**Start Date:** 8/18/2023

**Cause:** Unknown

**Size:** 11,951 acres

**Containment:** 0%

**Total Personnel:** 282

**Crews:** 7

**Engines:** 12

**KEY MESSAGE:** A Community Meeting has been scheduled for today, August 20 from 3-4pm at the Plains High School Gym. Fire personnel and local officials will provide updates and be available for questions about the fire. We are planning to livestream this public meeting. However, if internet strength makes it difficult to livestream, we will record the meeting and post the video.

**CURRENT STATUS:** The fire is approximately 11,951 acres in size and 0% contained. Brent Olson's Northern Rockies Complex Incident Management Team 1 assumed command of the fire at 6:00 pm last night. Additional fire personnel and equipment have been arriving to support suppression efforts.

Yesterday, the fire was quiet in the morning but became active in the afternoon as wind speeds increased. One load of retardant was dropped by aircraft early in the day to protect Pat's Knob Lookout and communications site. Unfortunately, heavy smoke conditions in the afternoon prevented aircraft use for firefighting operations. On the north side of the highway fire crews made progress constructing control line near structures and the active fire perimeter in the community of Paradise. They also started working to anchor control lines up the slopes both east and west of Paradise. Fire personnel continue to focus on public safety and point protection of structures where safe to do so.

**PLANNED ACTIONS:** Structure protection within and near the fire area will remain high priority as crews also look for opportunities to engage in fire suppression in locations with the greatest opportunity for success. Control lines will be strengthened in the Paradise and McLaughlin Creek areas to protect structures. South of Highway 200 besides structure protection the focus will also be to strengthen fire control lines and add retardant if possible to protect the Pat's Knob Lookout and Communication infrastructure site. Fire personnel will be looking for opportunities to construct direct or indirect fire control lines in various locations. Line construction will continue working north and east of Paradise. A long-term fire suppression plan is in development to help identify actions needed, risk to responders, and probability of success to accomplish fire containment. Low level smoke conditions may limit the ability for firefighting aircraft to fly due to safety concerns.

**WEATHER:** The weather will be partly cloudy then becoming cloudy with a chance of rain showers in the afternoon. Temperatures will range from 75-85 degrees in the valley. Relative humidity levels will be as low as 32-42%. Winds will be from the east at 10-15 mph.

### EVACUATIONS AND CLOSURES

For Evacuation updates please visit the Sanders County Sheriff's Office Facebook Page at

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064593409765>

The Montana Red Cross has opened a shelter at the Church on the Move, 300 Clayton St., in Plains, MT.

