



River Road East Fire

Fact Sheet



NORTHERN ROCKIES TEAM 1

INCIDENT COMMANDER: BRENT OLSON

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<https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident-information/mtlnf-river-road-east-fire>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/riverroadeastfire>

Saturday, August 26, 2023 at 10:00 am

Location: 6 miles southeast of Plains, Montana

Start Date: 8/18/2023

Cause: Unknown

Size: 17,120 acres

Containment: 10%

Total Personnel: 681

Crews: 14

Engines: 41

Helicopters: 6

KEY MESSAGE: “Firing operations” is terminology used to describe the use of fire to burn wildland fuels between a control line and the fire’s flaming front. When successful, the main fire will slow or stop advancing since the fire’s fuel has been removed.

CURRENT STATUS: Crews continued to patrol and mop up along the fire lines in the Highway 200 corridor. A combination of direct and parallel control lines are being constructed by crews along the north and northeast side of the fire. Access to the area of the fire west of Highway 200, south of Henry Creek is challenging and a plan is being developed to complete the limited amounts of line needed on the north flank of the fire. Over on the eastern side near the boundary with the CSKT, crews and equipment continued to make progress constructing a control line along or near the fire’s edge. A combination of direct and indirect control line work is being developed on the southeast part of the fire. On the western side, crews and heavy equipment worked on constructing a shaded fuels break south of Pat’s Knob. A shaded fuels break is a line along which ground vegetation is cut and removed from one side of the control line or forest road to reduce the amount of vegetation available to burn. With less fuel, this area can be burned with lower intensity and reduces the probability of fire spotting over the control line. A crew continued to scout control line options on the southwest corner of the fire in rugged, steep terrain. Helicopter water bucket drops were completed to cool hot spots until some light rain moved across the fire area.

PLANNED ACTIONS: In the rugged corner west of Highway 200, crews will start working along the fire’s edge to tie together some control line and mop up and cool any pockets of heat. Plans are being looked at to utilize fire line explosives in this area as soon as tomorrow. Fire control line construction will continue along the eastern side and crews will return to the southeast corner to work along the north side of the unburnt island as well as construct an indirect control line along the Lolo National Forest and Flathead Reservation Tribal land boundary. Crews and equipment will continue the work to build control lines along the west side as well as the northwest side of the fire. While rugged and steep, a hotshot crew will look to start building some control line on the southwest corner of the fire. A group of engines will patrol the lines on both sides of the Highway 200 corridor where fire containment continues to increase as the line is secured. The Structure Protection Group completed their assessments and will be writing up the details of the structure protection plan. Helicopters will be used for water bucket drops on hot spots or pockets of heat as directed by ground firefighters.

WEATHER: The weather is forecasted to be warmer and mostly sunny. Temperatures will be 80-90 degrees in the valleys and 73-83 degrees on the ridges. Minimum relative humidity levels will drop to 15-25% in the valleys and 21-31% on the ridges. Winds will be from the west at 10-15 mph.

