



# River Road East Fire Fact Sheet



Monday, August 28, 2023 at 10:00 am

NORTHERN ROCKIES TEAM 1

INCIDENT COMMANDER: BRENT OLSON

**Information Phone:** 406-345-5972

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

**Email:** [2023.RiverRoadEast@firenet.gov](mailto:2023.RiverRoadEast@firenet.gov)

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

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

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

**Cause:** Unknown

**Size:** 17,115 acres

**Containment:** 14%

**Total Personnel:** 711

**Crews:** 15

**Engines:** 45

**Helicopters:** 6

**KEY MESSAGE:** Smoke from the fire's northwest corner was visible from Plains yesterday as fire crews conducted a limited firing operation north of Pat's Knob. This operation's intent is to aid in securing the control line by removing unburnt vegetation in advance of the fire's active fire edge. Additional firing operations are planned for today on a small triangle section just north of the fire upslope and west of River Road East. Smoke from this area will also be visible from Plains today.

**CURRENT STATUS:** Yesterday, crews continued to improve control line on the north side of the fire both west and east of Henry's Peak. Crews continued to work on direct control line on the fire's east flank which is along the Lolo National Forest and CSKT boundary. On the southeast corner, firefighters and equipment completed the indirect control line near the forest and CSKT boundary south to the Flathead River. Patrolling and mop up work continued along the fire edge within the Highway 200 corridor near Paradise. A heavy equipment task force improved the shaded fuels break line along the western side of the fire near Pat's Knob. Helicopters were utilized for water drops in key areas to reduce heat and extinguish fire. Firing operations were completed near the northwest corner of the fire and the night shift monitored that area to keep it secure.

**PLANNED ACTIONS:** Another day of hot and dry conditions will lead to increased smoke visible from interior locations on the fire. Crews will work on connecting control lines along the northern edge of the fire near Henry's Peak. There are some areas of the fire's edge along the eastern side where crews will continue to keep working on control line construction and strengthening along the National Forest and CSKT boundary. Within a large unburned island on the east side, control line construction will continue working towards the southeast. There is a pocket of heat on the south side of the fire along the Flathead River that will be monitored and cooled with helicopter water buckets if needed. Control line construction will progress on the southwest corner of the fire south of Pat's Knob. Engine crews will patrol the Highway 200 corridor control lines near Paradise to make sure they are secure. The Structure Protection Group remains prepared to respond as necessary. A burning operation is planned on the fire's northwest edge, west of the River Road East about 3 miles south of Plains to secure that edge of the fire. Smoke from the firing operations will be visible from the Highway 200 corridor.

**WEATHER:** The weather will be mostly sunny with temperatures from 85-95 degrees in the valleys and 75-85 degrees on the ridges. Relative humidity levels will drop to 16-26%. Winds will be from the east at 5-10 mph.

**CLOSURES:** A section of the Flathead River at Perma Bridge to the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes boundary is closed for the safety of fishermen and recreationalists due to the River Road East Fire. The boat ramp at Perma Bridge is still open and boaters can go east, upstream.

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Restrictions and Closures: <https://fwp.mt.gov/news/current-closures-restrictions>.

The Lolo National Forest has an emergency closure of roads and trails (**Closure #23-010-Lolo-D5**) effective August 21, 2023. This Order is for public and firefighter safety during fire suppression efforts of the River Road East Fire. For a complete listing of the closed roads & trails visit: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/lolo/alerts-notice>.

A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) is in effect over the fire (**FDC 3/9687**) for the safety of aviation resources.

