



River Road East Fire Fact Sheet



Wednesday, August 30, 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

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

Location: 6 miles southeast of Plains, Montana

Start Date: 8/18/2023

Cause: Unknown

Size: 17,227 acres

Containment: 26%

Total Personnel: 685

Crews: 15

Engines: 40

Helicopters: 6

KEY MESSAGE: Following firing operations in recent days, fire crews focused on mop-up operations along the control lines to contain the fire and prevent its spread. Mop-up is the process of extinguishing or removing burning material near control lines, felling fire damage trees, and cooling ash pits to make a fire less likely to escape. Rain received overnight is expected to diminish fire activity today.

CURRENT STATUS: Yesterday, crews continued working on the control line along the north flank of the fire above Henry's Creek. The containment lines around Henry's Peak and the northeast corner were patrolled and monitored. On the eastern side of the fire along the forest and CSKT boundary, crews continued working on the control line making more progress to the south towards an indirect line already constructed. On the southeastern corner crews were again working in a couple of areas along the unburnt island and Knowles Creek. Over on the southwest corner and western flank crews and equipment continued their work on control line construction and strengthening. On the northwest corner where firing operations were completed yesterday, crews worked along the edge mopping up and extinguishing hot spots. Smoke continued to be visible as interior pockets of trees and vegetation burned. A cold front with thunderstorms moved through the fire area in the late afternoon with lightning and high winds. Firefighters from the incident supported the local units by responding to new fires started by the lightning.

PLANNED ACTIONS: The weather and road conditions will determine the plan of work for today following steady rain received overnight. Approximately ½ inch of rain fell on the fire area which will help with suppression efforts. Engine crews will monitor and patrol the Highway 200 corridor near Paradise. Crews will patrol and mop up along the northern, western and eastern control lines as well. If conditions allow, crews will continue constructing control line off the southwestern corner near Sheep Creek, moving west toward the Clark Fork River. Low cloud cover and forecasted rain could prevent helicopters from being used today.

WEATHER: The weather will be mostly cloudy with rain showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms in the morning and rain likely in the afternoon. Temperatures will be 55-65 degrees in the valleys and 48-58 degrees on the ridges. Minimum relative humidity levels will be 59-69%. Winds will be from the southwest at 20-30 mph.

CLOSURES: The Flathead River closure from the Perma Bridge to the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes boundary has been rescinded as of August 30, 2023.

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks has a closure in place on segments of the Flathead River and Clark Fork River within and near the River Road East Fire area. Details can be found at 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.

