



Bowles Creek Fire

Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest and Bitterroot National Forest

Fire Information: 406-426-9130

Email: 2023.bowlescreek@firenet.gov

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Bowles-Creek-Fire-Information>

<https://inciweb.nwgc.gov/incident-information/mtbdf-bowles-creek>

August 2, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.

Location: 3 miles west of Skalkaho Pass in the Bowles Creek drainage

Start Date: 7/20/2023

Cause: Lightning

Size: 3,213 acres

Completion/Containment: 3%

Total Personnel: 228

Engines: 4

Helicopters: 1

Hand Crews: 4

A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) is in effect over the fire area for the safety of the aviation resources.

CURRENT SITUATION & PLANNED ACTIONS

Last evening's infrared flight showed the fire increased by 337 acres, with a new size of 3,213 acres. On the west side of the fire, hose lay and sprinklers are being utilized by hand crews to support suppression efforts. Heavy equipment and masticators continue improving and constructing indirect fuel break along Forest Road 711A towards Railroad Creek. Fire personnel are monitoring various spot fires towards the south and improving handline.

On the east side of the fire, hand crews and heavy equipment continued indirect fireline along Forest Road 5071 towards Forest Road 5070, creating shaded fuel breaks by clearing dead and down vegetation. Yesterday's high winds and lower relative humidity increased active surface fire towards the east and south edge of the fire. Fire is established northeast across Bowles Creek and has crossed Forest Trail 313 to the southeast. Heavy equipment on the east flank was pulled back due to increased fire activity, and will resume today. Fire personnel will continue scouting for containment opportunities to the North and South, including the use of previous firelines from the 2022 Hog Trough Fire.

Fire personnel are utilizing helicopters to support operations on both ends of the fire area, pending availability.

WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

Hot, dry, and windy conditions are forecasted for Wednesday with temperatures around 80F. Relative humidity is forecasted in the 15-20 percent range and skies will be mostly cloudy. There is a slight chance of lightning, and in the afternoon, southwest winds of 5-10 mph are expected to shift easterly. Fuels are drying out quickly with the hot, dry, and windy conditions in the fire area. Surface fire spread should moderate as cooler, more humid weather moves in over the fire area.

Smoke is moving in from various fires in the region, for more information visit www.airnow.gov or www.montanawildfiresmoke.org.

CLOSURES

The Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest and Bitterroot National Forest issued an emergency closure of roads and trails (Closure #02-08-23-19) effective July 25, 2023. This Order is for public and firefighter safety during fire suppression efforts of the Bowles Creek Fire. See the following link for a complete listing of the roads and trails listed in the closure: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/bdnf/alerts-notices/?aid=81818>. Closure information and maps are posted on the Forests' website and the fire's Inciweb page as they are in place.

The Skalkaho Pass Road remains open. Those recreating or traveling in the fire area are encouraged to be aware of the situation and reduce speed due to increased fire traffic.