



Gravel Pit Fire Fact Sheet



Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Northwest Land Office

WESTERN MONTANA ALL HAZARDS IMT | INCIDENT COMMANDER: KEN PARKS

<https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/mtmts-gravel-pit-fire>
Tuesday, August 8, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.

Location: 25 miles southeast of Libby, near Silver Butte

Start Date: 8/1/23

Cause: Human

Size: 304 acres

Containment: 15%

Total Personnel: 107

Engines: 12

Helicopters: 3

Hand Crews: 4

SPECIAL MESSAGE

There will be a community meeting on Tuesday, August 8 at 6:00 p.m. at the Fisher River Fire Hall located at 70 W Camp Road, Happy's Inn.

CURRENT STATUS

A late afternoon thunderstorm brought beneficial precipitation to the fire area yesterday. The thunderstorm also brought a significant amount of lightning, creating a high potential for new fire ignitions. To the north of the fire, crews responded to one new lightning-caused fire start. Helicopters aided in the suppression effort, providing water bucket drops to minimize fire growth. To the northwest, crews continued to build a shaded fuel break. Dozers continued tying in fireline around the north and west sides of the fire. Crews brushed and improved the dozer line, widening the fire break.

PLANNED ACTIONS

Today, crews will hike into the new start to the north of the Gravel Pit Fire and continue with initial attack activities. To the north, dozers will continue to construct fireline. Crews will also improve fireline in this area to build a shaded fuel break. Recent precipitation may hide hot spots within the fire perimeter. Crews will continue to look for heat sources on the fire's interior and mop up hot spots. With lightning from yesterday's thunderstorm, holdover fire starts within the TFR are likely today, and in coming days. Crews will respond to new fire starts within the temporary flight restriction (TFR) area and extinguish any ignitions that occur.

WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

Increasing temperatures and lower relative humidity values are expected over the coming week. On Wednesday, a cold front will enter the area bringing the potential for an uptick in winds, showers, and thunderstorms.

Fire behavior was minimal yesterday with creeping, short-range spotting, and single tree torching.

EVACUATIONS AND CLOSURES

An evacuation warning will remain in place for residents near the fire area along the Highway 2 corridor. The Lincoln County Sheriff's Office has notified these residents. All Lincoln County residents are encouraged to sign up for emergency alerts by downloading the Code Red application and entering contact information.