



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>
Thursday, August 10, 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:** 35%
Total Personnel: 99 **Engines:** 11 **Tenders:** 5 **Hand Crews:** 2

CURRENT STATUS

Crews have completed constructing fireline to a depth of two chains (132 feet) on the north, east, and south flanks of the fire to keep the fire to the west of the 763 road. Hose lays and water tanks will remain in place. To the north of the fire, hand crews improved dozer line and continued to mop up heat sources to secure the fireline. On the east flank of the fire, crews mopped up and patrolled the fire line to keep the fire east of the 76 road.

PLANNED ACTIONS

Crews will continue with mop up efforts, finding and extinguishing sources of heat on the fire's interior. To the east, crews will continue to monitor and patrol for heat sources. To the south, many areas of heat remain on the lower portion of the fire. Stumps and log decks provide places for hot spots to smolder for days before flaring up. Today, crews will dig out stumps inside the fire perimeter that are retaining heat after actively burning. Crews will also open up log decks to expose heat sources and extinguish them. Log decks on the exterior of the fire will be processed to reduce fuels in the fire area. Spot fires and new fire starts from lightning holdovers remain a primary concern. Engines will provide initial attack and suppress new fire starts across the fire area. Firefighter safety remains the top priority. Crews identified a helicopter landing zone in the northeast area of the fire and installed a temporary mountaintop portable radio repeater to the south of the fire to allow for direct communications should a medical evacuation be required.

WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

Breezy conditions will combine with warming temperatures, elevating fire weather concerns. Fire behavior is low, but the potential exists for more active fire behavior with the drying weather pattern in coming days.

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. Code Red is the primary notification system to alert residents of evacuations.