



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>
Friday, August 11, 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: 39%

Total Personnel: 98 **Engines:** 11

Tenders: 3

Hand Crews: 2

CURRENT STATUS

Yesterday, crews monitored and patrolled around the fireline to ensure hot spots and flare-ups stayed within containment lines. With containment fireline completed to the north, east, and south of the fire, crews focused on eliminating potential heat sources, digging out stumps, and opening log decks to expose and extinguish hot spots. To the east, crews continued mopping up hot spots on the fire to keep the fire west of the 763 road. With hot, dry weather in the forecast, hose lays and water tanks will remain in place.

PLANNED ACTIONS

Crews will continue with mop-up efforts, finding and extinguishing sources of heat on the fire's interior, focusing on areas within two chains (132 feet) of the fire's edge. To the north and east, crews will continue to patrol and monitor for hot spots, using a grid pattern to locate and extinguish any heat sources that have potential to flare up. Log decks and stumps will smolder and retain heat that is likely to flare up in coming days as hot temperatures and low humidity prevail over the fire area. Crews and engines will provide initial attack for any fires that occur in the fire area. Hazard trees within the fire's perimeter pose a significant safety hazard to firefighters. The intense heat from the fire has resulted in dead trees left standing on destabilized ground, making conditions ripe for falling trees.

WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

Temperatures will be warmer today with low relative humidity. Winds will increase from the west in the afternoon but should overall be weaker than Thursday.

Fire behavior is low, with smoldering and creeping, 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.