



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>
Saturday, August 12, 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: 45%

Total Personnel: 116

Engines: 11

Tenders: 2

Hand Crews: 2

CURRENT STATUS

Yesterday to the west, crews located and extinguished sources of heat. Containment fireline is completed around the north, east, and south of the fire extending inward from the fire's edge to a depth of two chains (132 feet). Rollouts are a concern in areas to the north and west. Rollouts are rolling logs and debris that are on fire and can ignite fuels below the crew building fireline.

PLANNED ACTIONS

To the south, crews will continue to search for sources of heat, working in a grid pattern to locate and extinguish hot spots. To the west, crews will continue with mop-up activities, extinguishing burning and smoldering material near containment lines, and trenching logs to prevent rollouts. Log decks and stumps continue to provide a good environment for fire to smolder until conditions exist for flare-ups. Additionally, crews will begin backhauling hose off the fire, leaving hose in place in areas of higher concern. Crews and engines will maintain readiness to respond to any new fire starts that occur in the area.

WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

The warming and drying trend will continue through the weekend. A weak weather system passing on Saturday will result in some increased cloud cover and bring some breezy west to northwest winds in the afternoon and evening. A wind shift will be evident on Saturday night into Sunday morning, with winds becoming more northeasterly.

Fire behavior is low, with smoldering and creeping, but the potential exists for more active fire behavior with the drying weather pattern in the 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.