



# 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>

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Sunday, August 13, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.

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**Location:** 25 miles southeast of Libby, near Silver Butte

**Start Date:** 8/1/23

**Cause:** Human

**Size:** 304 acres

**Containment:** 45%

**Total Personnel:** 94

**Engines:** 11

**Tenders:** 2

**Hand Crews:** 2

## CURRENT STATUS

Yesterday, to the east and west, crews continued with mop-up activities, working in a grid pattern to locate and extinguish hot spots. Additionally, to the north, crews located and extinguished flare-ups on the interior of the fire perimeter. On the lower portion of the fire, crews began backhauling hose.

## PLANNED ACTIONS

Today, crews will continue with mop-up activities, locating and extinguishing sources of heat to prevent flare-ups from occurring. Flare-ups are a sudden, localized intensification of the fire behavior. The right combination of temperature, fuel dryness, and wind will result in previously smoldering materials flaring up. Ember wash from flare-ups within the fire perimeter can ignite unburned flammable materials outside of the fire perimeter, increasing fire intensity and spread. Engines will move throughout the fire area to locate flare-ups and maintain readiness to respond to any new fire starts that occur. To the southeast, crews will backhaul hose and continue with mop-up activities.

## WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

The warming and drying trend will continue with intensifying thermal belts. Afternoon temperatures will be near record highs this week with valley locations approaching 100° F. Winds will be light from the north to northeast on the ridges. Mid and lower slopes will see light erratic winds.

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.