



# 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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Monday, August 14, 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:** 65%

**Total Personnel:** 80

**Engines:** 7

**Tenders:** 2

**Hand Crews:** 2

**Yesterday afternoon, crews assigned to the Gravel Pit Fire provided initial response for two fire starts, one near Silver Butte Pass and the other near Mount Sterling.**

## CURRENT STATUS

Yesterday, crews backhauled hose from the lower elevations of the fire, but left hose lays in place to the north where crews continue to locate smoldering materials and flare-ups. To the north crews continued to work in a grid pattern to locate hot spots within the fire perimeter. To the south, crews are working off of dozer line to ensure that any remaining heat sources are extinguished. Light winds combined with hot, dry conditions provide the opportunity for any smoldering combustion, such as holdover sparks from lightning strikes, to flare-up, intensify and spread. Crews were called away from the Gravel Pit Fire to assist with initial attack on two new fire starts in the area.

## PLANNED ACTIONS

Crews will continue to provide initial support attack on the new fire starts near Silver Butte Pass and Mount Sterling. To the north, crews will continue with mop-up activities to ensure the hot spots are extinguished and minimize flare-ups within the perimeter. To the south, crews will continue mopping up and backhauling hose. With hot, dry weather expected crews will maintain readiness to provide an initial attack to other new fire starts and put them out.

## WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

**The National Weather Service has issued a heat advisory** in the fire area from noon on Tuesday through midnight on Thursday with temperatures expected to reach 105°F. Triple-digit heat with relative humidity values in the teens and poor overnight RH recoveries are expected over the next several days.

Fire behavior is low, with smoldering and creeping, but the potential exists for more active fire behavior and new fire starts with the dry, hot weather pattern in the coming days.

## EVACUATIONS AND CLOSURES

**The evacuation warning in place for residents near the fire area along the Highway 2 corridor has been lifted.** 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.