



# 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>  
2023.gravelpit@firenet.gov (406) 247-0514  
Wednesday, August 16, 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:** 76%

**Total Personnel:** 80

**Engines:** 7

**Tenders:** 1

**Hand Crews:** 2

## SPECIAL WEATHER MESSAGE

The National Weather Service has issued a **Heat Advisory** from noon on Tuesday through midnight on Thursday in much of northwest Montana, including the fire area, with valley temperatures of 105°F possible.

The National Weather Service has also issued a **Fire Weather Watch** from noon Thursday through 10:00 p.m. on Thursday in much of western Montana. Fires will start easily, intensify rapidly, and spread quickly. Eliminate human-caused fire starts.

## CURRENT STATUS

Yesterday, fire crews looked for and extinguished sources of heat, working in a grid pattern through green islands within the fire perimeter. Crews continued to backhaul hose that is no longer necessary, but left hose in place where sources of heat remain. An excavator was utilized to dig through dozer line berms to expose and extinguish hot spots.

## PLANNED ACTIONS

With the Heat Advisory in effect, heat-related injuries are a prime concern. To mitigate this, crews will perform the most physical aspects of their work in the morning. Today, crews will continue to work in a grid pattern to locate sources of heat within the fire perimeter and extinguish them. With internal flare-ups occurring, ember wash can produce spot fires outside of the fireline. To address this, engines will patrol the fire area and seek out any sources of heat. Engines and crews will remain ready for initial attack and respond to new fire starts in the area.

## WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

Hot, dry, windy conditions will dominate northwest Montana on Wednesday and Thursday. Expect temperatures in the upper 90s to low 100s, low teens to single-digit relative humidity values, and poor overnight RH recoveries and wind gusts from 20-25 mph over the next two days.

Fire behavior is low, with smoldering and creeping, but the potential exists for more active fire behavior with the hot, dry weather pattern over the next three days.

## EVACUATIONS AND CLOSURES

There are no evacuation warnings, evacuations, or closures currently in effect. 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.