



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
Thursday, August 17, 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: 80%

Total Personnel: 80

Engines: 5

Tenders: 2

Hand Crews: 2

SPECIAL WEATHER MESSAGE

The National Weather Service has issued a **Heat Advisory** that is in effect until midnight on Thursday in much of northwest Montana, including the fire area.

The National Weather Service has also issued a **Red Flag Warning** for Friday from 3:00 p.m. on Thursday through midnight on Friday in much of western Montana. Fires will start easily, intensify rapidly, and spread quickly. Eliminate human-caused fire starts.

CURRENT STATUS

Yesterday to the west, fire crews located and extinguished hot spots, working in a grid pattern through green islands within the fire perimeter. To the east, crews removed burning stumps and opened brush piles to expose sources of heat. Crews performed the most physical aspect of their work in the morning to mitigate the risk of heat-related illness.

PLANNED ACTIONS

Hot spots and flare-ups continue to occur in pockets of unburned fuel to the south and west of the fire. Predicted winds are likely to cause smoldering materials to flare-ups. With flare-ups and wind the potential of spot fires to occur will increase. To address this, engines will patrol the fire area and seek out any sources of heat and crews will continue to work in a grid pattern to locate and extinguish sources of heat within the fire perimeter. Engines and crews will remain ready for initial attack and respond to new fire starts in the area. 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.

WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

Hot and dry conditions will continue today. Smokey skies may prevent temperatures from reaching their full potential. Winds gusts are predicted to reach 20 mph.

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 for the Gravel Pit Fire. 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.