



# Bowles Creek Fire

Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest and Bitterroot National Forest

Fire Information: 406-426-9130

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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Bowles-Creek-Fire-Information>

<https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident-information/mtbdf-bowles-creek>

August 18, 2023

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**Location:** 27 miles southwest of Philipsburg, Montana

**Start Date:** 7/20/2023    **Cause:** Lightning    **Size:** 6,847 acres    **Completion:** 20%

**Total Personnel:** 179    **Engines:** 6    **Helicopters:** 2    **Hand Crews:** 4

The Bowles Creek Fire has increased to 6,847 acres. This increase includes fire growth from the last two days, as fire managers were able to map the fire with an IR flight late last night. The fire remains very active on the northeast perimeter and is approaching areas that may affect Hwy 38, Skalkaho Road. Travelers wishing to travel Hwy 38 are urged to check for updates to ensure the road remains open. Updated information can be found on the incident Facebook page, as well as on Inciweb. In the event Hwy 38 is temporarily impacted by fire activity, an announcement will be made. While the road remains open, motorists should drive with extreme caution due to smoke impacts, as well as the increased presence of fire personnel on the road. The fire also spread on the south perimeter across Railroad Creek.

## CURRENT SITUATION & PLANNED ACTIONS

The fire was very active yesterday and may continue to increase today. Firefighters observed flanking, group tree torching, and spotting. Fire crews continue to construct fuel breaks along several roads and other values at risk. Fire officials continue to monitor fire spread and fire behavior. Firefighters are utilizing firing operations to strengthen containment lines. Fire crews also continue installation of sprinklers to protect values at risk and have also increased road patrols to better monitor spotting and spreading.

## WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

Extreme fire weather remains in effect today, with a RED FLAG WARNING in effect. Wind will be the driving factor for fire activity. Winds may continue to push fire across the Sapphire roadless area, north of the Hog Trough Fire footprint. Spot fires on the northern line of the fire are growing and aligning with slope and available fuels. There is a slight chance of rain today, with potential for lightning late in the afternoon. Relative humidities will remain below 25%.

## CLOSURES

The Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest and Bitterroot National Forest issued an emergency closure of roads and trails (Closure #02-08-23-19) effective July 25, 2023. This Order is for public and firefighter safety during fire suppression efforts of the Bowles Creek Fire. For a complete listing of the closed roads and trails, visit: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/bdnf/alerts-notice/?aid=81818>. Closure information and maps are also posted on the Forests' website and the fire's Inciweb page. The Skalkaho Pass Road remains open. Those recreating or traveling in the fire area are encouraged to be aware of the situation and to pay attention to increased fire traffic. A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) is in effect over the fire area for the safety of the aviation resources.