



Northern Rockies
Incident Management Team 8
Brad Bergman,
Incident Commander

FIRE INFORMATION

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INCIDENT STATISTICS

Location: 5 miles east of Arlee, MT

Cause: Lightning

Fire Size: 7,275 acres

Containment: 13%

RESOURCES ASSIGNED

Crews: 1

Engines: 5

Water Tenders: 3

Total Personnel: 106

Big Knife

August 26, 2023, 9:00 AM MDT

Yesterday, aerial observations detected residual heat in the dead and down fuels in the eastern half of the fire. Fuels are continuing to smolder as they dry out, which may lead to more observable smoke over the fire's footprint than in previous days. As temperatures return to seasonal averages in the 70s and 80s, personnel are continuing to monitor containment lines and fire behavior. Firefighters are expected to finish constructing handline and the supporting hose-lay today from the S Canal Rd up to the fire's edge.

Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) teams are also on the fire, assessing disturbances to the environment and post-fire mitigation strategies. BAER teams evaluate a host of potential issues, such as soil erosion and loss of vegetation, and develop plans for suppression activity repair, burned area rehabilitation, and long-term restoration.

The Big Knife Fire is currently 1.25 miles north of the Rattlesnake Wilderness Boundary (Lolo National Forest) with no significant growth towards the Lolo National Forest in the last week. Smoke from the fire may impact the Snowbowl area, however the Lolo National Forest does not have any forest closures in place on the Missoula Ranger District.

CLOSURES AND SPECIAL MESSAGES: Several areas near the base of the mountains west of the Big Knife Fire remain in PRE-EVACUATION WARNING by order of the Lake County Sheriff. See the map for those locations in yellow (Jocko, Canal, Francis). The Tribal Primitive Area, Belmore Slough and Burnt Cabin Roads are closed.

A PRE-EVACUATION WARNING means you may remain in your home. Individuals in this status should not bring back evacuated livestock until this status is lifted.

A temporary flight restriction (TFR) is in effect around the fire area. Do not fly unmanned aircraft (drones) near the fire areas.

Weather: As a trough moves out of the area, sunny weather is to be expected today with highs in the 70s and 80s with relative humidities dropping into the 30% range. Winds will be light, between 6 – 12 mph, with gusts up to 22.

FIRE RESTRICTIONS: Stage 1 fire restrictions are currently in place across the Flathead Indian Reservation and Lake County. Stage 1 fire restrictions remain in place in Granite County. In Stage 1 fire restrictions the following are prohibited until rescinded: Building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire or campfire except within a developed recreation site or improved site. Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials. On the Flathead Reservation, operating a motorized vehicles off designated roads and trails. Visit <https://www.mtfireinfo.org/> for more fire restriction information across Montana.

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