

# Tin Soldier Complex Fact Sheet



Flathead National Forest Land Management

FLATHEAD INTERAGENCY TYPE 3 TEAM  
Fire Information: 406-758-5314

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<https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident-information/mtfnf-tin-soldier-complex>

Thursday, August 17, 2023, at 10:00 am

**Location:** 17 miles east of Swan Lake, Montana

**Start Date:** 7/30/2023

**Cause:** Lightning

**Size:** 3,361 acres

**Containment:** 0%

**Total Personnel:** 69

**Engines:** 2

**Type 2 IA Crew:** 1

**Wildland Fire Module:** 3

## SUMMARY

Based on the IR flight data from yesterday, 8/16/2023, The Tin Soldier Complex is estimated at 3,361 acres in size and remains 0% contained. *It is estimated that the Bruce Fire has since grown by approx. 1,500 acres in addition to the values listed below. Official acreage will be posted as soon as it is available.*

- Bruce Fire – 1,096 acres at 0% containment
- Sullivan Fire – 2,265 acres at 0% containment
- Con Kelly Fire – 0.25 acres – Out.
- Kah Mountain Fire – combined with Sullivan Fire as of 8/16/2023

**Due to the hot and dry weather projected for the next few days, fire behavior is expected to increase across the complex. Smoke columns from the Tin Soldier Complex may be visible from the Flathead Valley.**

## PAST AND PLANNED ACTIONS

Both fires were active yesterday, with the most notable growth on the southeastern flanks of the fires. The Sullivan Fire (formerly the Kah Mountain and Sullivan Fires) moved toward the head of the Soldier Creek Drainage. The Bruce Fire crossed Stony Creek near the mouth of the creek and has burned across the face of Stony Hill and has also established in the head of Tin Creek to the north. Defensive firing operations were conducted to improve point protection between the Bruce Fire and the Stony Communications Site. These burn out operations allow for the fire to progress toward values at risk in a more controlled manner by removing fuel between the main fire and communication site. Firefighter safety remains the number one priority for the Team.

Today's actions will include ongoing structure protection efforts for the commercial guest ranches, Spotted Bear Ranger Station compound, Heinrude residential community, and other infrastructure in the area. Crews will continue daily testing and pre-treatment with the sprinkler systems and water pumps for identified values at risk and conducting additional firing operations as necessary.

## EVACUATIONS, CLOSURES AND RESTRICTIONS

**Evacuations:** An evacuation has been issued by the Flathead County Sheriff for Heinrude community.

### Restrictions/Closures:

- Stage 2 fire restrictions are in effect as of August 5<sup>th</sup>.
- An area closure is in effect for the Hungry Horse Reservoir, the front country of the Spotted Bear district as well the Gorge Creek drainage within the Bob Marshall Wilderness area due to the Stadium Fire.
- A Temporary Flight Restriction is in place for air space over the Tin Soldier Complex to provide a safe environment for fire aircraft operating in the area. This includes the Spotted Bear and Meadow Creek Airstrips! Remember that temporary flight restrictions also apply to UAS or drones. **If you fly, we can't!**

## WEATHER

Near critical fire conditions are expected today. Temperatures are expected to be in the mid to high 90s, with predicted wind gusts up to 20-25 MPH across ridge areas. A Fire Weather Watch is in place for Friday due to the combination of hot, dry, and windy conditions.