



# River Road East Fire Fact Sheet



Saturday, September 2, 2023 at 10:00 am

NORTHERN ROCKIES TEAM 1

INCIDENT COMMANDER: BRENT OLSON

Information Phone: 406-345-5972

<https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident-information/mtlnf-river-road-east-fire>

Email: [2023.RiverRoadEast@firenet.gov](mailto:2023.RiverRoadEast@firenet.gov)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/riverroadeastfire>

Location: 6 miles southeast of Plains, Montana

Start Date: 8/18/2023

Cause: Unknown

Size: 17,308 acres

Containment: 54%

Total Personnel: 383

Crews: 8

Engines: 18

Helicopters: 3

**KEY MESSAGE:** Based on increased containment around the fire and decreased fire activity, the segments of the Flathead River and the Clark Fork River that had been closed for safety are now reopened for public use. Please use caution while on the river as helicopters may still need to dip for water drops based on fire activity. If you see a helicopter dipping in the river for water, please stay clear of the area.

**CURRENT STATUS:** Crews patrolled and monitored the containment lines along the north (Henry's Creek), northeast corner, and east (forest and CSKT boundary) sides of the fire. Little to no heat or smoke was found along the lines. On the southeast corner one crew completed structure protection preparation work while other crews continued to work on direct control line seeking out and extinguishing pockets of heat. An Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) was used to map out the heat and focus the crew's work efforts. Along the west flank heavy equipment continued to clean up vegetation and trees that had been cut as a part of constructing the shaded fuels break control line. Patrolling and mopping up continued around the northwest corner of the fire. On the southwest corner one crew continued working on a fuels break control line working from the west while a second small crew started working directly along the fire edge to extinguish hot spots.

**PLANNED ACTIONS:** Crews will patrol and monitor the northern (Henry's Creek), northwestern corner, and eastern (forest and CSKT boundary) sides of the fire. On the southeastern corner crews will continue working on direct control line and extinguishing hot spots on two lobes of the fire edge, eventually tying into the rock scree above the Flathead River breaks. Heavy equipment will start moving out of the western flank north of Pat's Knob since work has been completed on the shaded fuels break control line. On the northwestern corner of the fire crews will pack up and start backhauling hose and gear that was used to secure control lines during the firing operations several days ago. The crews working along the southwestern corner and south fire edge will continue the work they were doing yesterday, constructing a fuels break control line and hot spotting along the fire's edge. Plans to transition the fire to a smaller fire management organization have been made and are on track for early next week.

**WEATHER:** The weather will be partly cloudy. Temperatures will be 80-90 degrees in the valleys and 70-80 degrees on the ridges. Minimum relative humidity levels will be 20-30% in the valleys and 29-39% on the ridges. Winds will be from the southwest at 10-15 mph on the ridge tops and upslope/up valley at 4-8 mph at lower elevation.

**CLOSURES:** Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks has lifted the closure that they had in place on segments of the Flathead River and Clark Fork River within and near the River Road East Fire area. The latest status can be found at Restrictions and Closures: <https://fwp.mt.gov/news/current-closures-restrictions>.

The Lolo National Forest has an emergency closure of roads and trails (**Closure #23-010-Lolo-D5**) effective August 21, 2023. This Order is for public and firefighter safety during fire suppression efforts of the River Road East Fire. For a complete listing of the closed roads & trails visit: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/lolo/alerts-notice>.

A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) is in effect over the fire (**FDC 3/9687**) for the safety of aviation resources.

