



Horse Gulch Fire

July 15, 2024

Fire Information: 406-924-3858 / Media: 406-393-7580



Email: 2024.horsegulch@firenet.gov

https://linktr.ee/horse_gulch.2024



Start Date/Location: July 9, 2024/5 miles south of York, MT

Cause: Human, under investigation

Size: 12,797 acres

Containment: 0%

CURRENT STATUS

Yesterday, crews and aerial assets were successful in containing two large spot fires that took root outside the fire area during the wind event on Saturday afternoon. Hand line was started in the steep terrain between the 693B1 Road and 425 Road, to tie in with dozer line that is nearly complete up Neversweat Gulch towards the 4136B Road. Along the fire's southern edge, crews continued to strengthen the existing line. Progress was made to build and reinforce fire line from Jimtown Road to York and that has been holding well. The Structure Group worked on assessing and protecting properties threatened by potential fire activity. Aerial resources were busy most of the day, delivering 80,000 gallons of retardant, 70,000 gallons of water by helicopter, and 300,000 gallons of water by Super Scoopers. In order for all these aerial drops to be effective, it is essential for there to be resources on the ground that can back them up by going in after the drop cools the flames and digging line. Otherwise, the water/retardant burns off and the fire continues on its way. The night crews worked to strengthen lines and patrolled the perimeter, watching for spot fires.

Today, crews and equipment will be bridging the gaps between existing fire line and reinforcing the lines by cooling the edge and "cold trailing". Cold trailing is a process where firefighters line up in a grid and physically touch the ground, inspecting for any hidden areas of heat. When they find heat, they will dig it out, mix it with cool soil and add water when it is available, so no trace of heat remains. This process is necessary before any portion of the fire edge can be declared "contained". Unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), also known as drones, aid suppression efforts by applying fire to back burn when appropriate and by using infrared cameras to identify areas of heat near the perimeter that need attention.

WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

Yesterday, high cloud cover shaded the fire and moderated fire activity. Humidity got down into the lower teens and temps were in the lower 90's across the fire area. Today, temps are expected to trend a few degrees cooler while humidity continues to decrease. Winds are expected to be lighter than they have been with afternoon gusts around 15mph. There is no Red Flag Warning issued for today.

EVACUATIONS AND CLOSURES

Evacuations (UPDATED): Effective 7/14/24, the evacuation order for the area from Jimtown Road to Hellgate Gulch Road south of Canyon Ferry Road will transition to an evacuation warning. This area will be open to residents only, proof of residency required. <https://www.lccountymt.gov/Emergency-Management/HORSE-GULCH-FIRE-Information>

Road Closure: Canyon Ferry Road is closed at Canyon Ferry Village to the Broadwater County line. Campground closures include Hellgate, Court Sheriff, Chinamen's Gulch, and Riverside.

Forest Closure: The Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest has issued a road, trail, and area closure order, which can be found at [Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest - Home \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/helena-lewis-and-clark-national-forest)

BLM Closure: The Butte Field Office has issued a closure on BLM lands near the fire area. <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-publication/mthlf-horse-gulch-fire/signed-blm-area-closure-07-14-2024>

