



Blacktail Canyon

Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest

Fire Information: 406-865-0941 Email: 2024.blacktailcanyon@firenet.gov

<https://www.facebook.com/usfsbdf/>

<https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/mtbdf-blacktail-canyon>

July 24, 2024 9:00 a.m.

Incident Commander J. Willoughby

Location: southeast of Butte, MT between Interstate 90 and Highway 2

Start Date: 7/19/2024

Cause: Undetermined

Size: 80 acres

Resources on Site: 3 engines, 1 helicopter, 2 type 1 "hotshot" hand crews, 4 type 2 hand crews

Total Personnel Assigned: 160

KEY MESSAGES:

The evacuation warning issued by Butte-Silver Bow Law Enforcement Department for Blacktail Canyon Road southeast of Homestake Road, Homestake Road east of Blacktail Canyon Road, and Passmore Canyon is still in effect.

A RED FLAG WARNING will be in effect today. The combination of low relative humidity and thunderstorm outflow winds will result in critical fire weather conditions. These conditions increase the risk for new and existing fires to spread quickly. Winds will be from the southwest at 10-15 mph, and gusts associated with thunderstorms may reach 30 mph. Relative humidity will bottom out at 12-17 percent. Fire officials are keeping a close tab on these conditions, as they affect fire behavior and subsequent firefighting operations. Securing the fire edge is paramount, in anticipation of the cold front passage with gusty southwest winds on Thursday.

The combination of these weather conditions, the volume of fuel in and adjacent to the fire area, and the amount of internal residual heat result in significant potential for this fire. Winds associated with passing thunderstorms will test the efficacy of constructed firelines. The public is advised to stay out of the area, as crews and helicopters continue their work. Ensuring firefighter safety and protecting life and property are of the utmost importance during any incident.

CURRENT STATUS/PLANNED ACTIONS:

"Drones" were used for more precise infrared mapping operations, placing the fire at 80 acres. Helicopters assisted ground operations with reconnaissance flights and sling loads of cargo.

Residual heat is still present in the smoldering fuels throughout the fire footprint. Crews progressed with "mop-up" operations, working along the previously constructed sawline and handline. Crews canvassed the ground along the fire edge and one chain (66 feet) into the interior, locating and extinguishing hot spots. Crews were able to complete these "mop-up" operations along approximately 40% of the fire footprint so far. Crews will continue these operations, expanding along both flanks of the fire and working toward 100% completion of the "mop-up" objectives. Engine crews and helicopters will be available for initial attack of new fires in the area, given the predicted weather conditions.

Helicopters will be available for aerial support with bucket drops and movement of cargo through "sling loads."



WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

Fire behavior was moderate yesterday, with smoldering and creeping observed, despite the hot and dry conditions. Larger fuels continue to consume, producing small areas of smoke interior to the fire's edge.

Winds will be from the south, switching to the southwest at 10-15 mph, and erratic gusts associated with thunderstorms may reach 30 mph. Relative humidity will bottom out at 12-17 percent. Temperatures will remain in the upper 80s to low 90s. Increased winds and dry thunderstorms enter the area, as the ridge of high pressure breaks down and a cold front moves through on Thursday. Little to no precipitation is expected.

