



Grouse Fire

Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest



Fire Information: 406-865-0941

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

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

July 30, 2024 9:00 a.m.

Incident Commander: D. Hammack

Location: 10 miles southwest of Wise River, MT

Start Date: 7/25/2024

Cause: Undetermined

Size: 230 acres

Resources on Site: 4 type 2 hand crews; 5 engines; 2 helicopters available to assist

Total Personnel: 116

KEY MESSAGES:

Numerous firefighting resources are present along the Pioneer Scenic Byway (Mt Hwy 73). Motorists in the area are urged to be aware of the increased traffic, slow down, and yield right-of-way to firefighting apparatus and vehicles.

Fire managers are urging people to stay out of the fire area, especially Pettengill Creek, Grouse Creek, Stine Creek, and the Stine Creek Road area, for safety reasons. Fire managers and agency officials are discussing necessary area, road, and trail closures. Ensuring public and firefighter safety and protecting life and property are of the utmost importance.

CURRENT STATUS/PLANNED ACTIONS:

Crews progressed with structure protection measures, working from the junction of Pettengill Road and along the Pioneer Scenic Byway to the north. They improved a section of existing line, utilizing both natural (marshy areas of Pettengill Creek) and manmade control features (fuel breaks previously constructed during the Alder Creek Fire of 2021). Other crews constructed additional fuel breaks northward along the Byway, utilizing natural rock features. Firefighters installed water-handling equipment (pumps, hoses, and sprinklers) around structures in the Pettengill Creek area.

Additional resources will be arriving today. Crews will continue with structure protection preparations, progressing northward along the Byway and identifying locations where fire suppression actions can be taken in the event the fire advances towards the Byway.

WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR:

The fire is moving primarily up the Grouse Creek drainage and sub-drainages. Both flanks or sides of the fire are moving actively, with fire backing downhill towards Pettengill Creek and spotting to the north towards Grouse Creek. The fire is burning mainly in a subalpine fir fuel model, in heavy timber on steep rocky terrain. Available fuels are unseasonably dry and include large amounts of standing dead and down trees. Fire behavior has been very active, including group tree torching on all flanks, short runs, and spotting. Fire activity increased yesterday, as afternoon build-up created gusty outflow winds.

Dead fuels along the ridges at the highest elevations are consuming completely. If winds align with terrain, in combination with the dry fuels, extreme fire behavior with active movement can be expected. These conditions pose additional hazards to firefighters, limiting access and affecting on-the-ground progress.



There is a chance of showers and thunderstorms throughout the day, with associated precipitation. Rain activity will increase late overnight Tuesday and into Wednesday morning. Thunderstorms are possible in the afternoon hours. Winds will be light with relative humidity at considerably higher levels Tuesday afternoon.

CLOSURES AND RESTRICTIONS:

A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) is in place over the fire area.

The Forest is in Stage 1 Fire Restrictions. Campfires are allowed only in a permanent metal fire grate/ring provided by the Forest Service in a designated, developed recreation site. Smoking is restricted to vehicles, in buildings, or in an area clear of flammable materials. Devices with an on/off switch that use LPG fuels are allowed in an area clear of flammable materials within 3 feet of the device.

