



McDermott Fire

Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest

Fire Information: 406-502-8205

[Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF Wildland Fire Information Facebook](#)

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

September 7, 2024 4:00 p.m.



Incident Commander: David McPhee

Location: 16 miles northwest of Philipsburg, MT

Start Date: 8/26/2024

Cause: Undetermined

Size: 216 acres

Resources on Site: 2 crews; 2 engines; 1 helicopter; miscellaneous heavy equipment

Total Personnel: 31

The McDermott Fire, located in the Upper Willow Creek area, is burning in an inaccessible area containing a large concentration of standing dead trees ("snags") that pose challenges to ensuring firefighter safety and in responding to potential medical emergencies.

Fire managers from the Forest, working in collaboration with local county officials and cooperating agency representatives, have identified and prioritized critical values at risk in the fire area. The closest values are located three miles to the east of the fire's location.

Helicopters dropped water on the fire during the initial attack phase, but high winds and the inaccessibility of the fire location resulted in fire growth. Additionally, drift smoke from other large fires to the west and south resulted in the inability to fly additional helicopters for air operations in subsequent days.

CURRENT STATUS/PLANNED ACTIONS:

Helicopters will continue to support ground crews with water bucket drops on the east flank to cool hot spots and prevent fire progression. The crew will continue to construct handline on the fire, east of the Black Pine Trail.

WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR:

Gusty outflow winds associated with passing thunderstorms materialized over the fire area days ago, with little to no measurable precipitation. Temperatures are expected to continue in the mid to upper 80s with low relative humidities until early next week.

Fire behavior initially was active, with spotting and group torching and a moderate rate of spread. The fire showed little to no movement and was burning internal pockets of timber in the McDermott Ridge area.

CLOSURES AND RESTRICTIONS:

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.

Forest fire managers have closed trails in the area near the fire for public safety. These trails include the following:

- Black Pine Ridge Trail #8006
- McDermott Gulch Trail # 8238
- Pole Ridge Trail # 8237
- Horsetheif Trail # 8297



Schilo Creek Trail # 8240
Upper Will Trail #8106
Rattling Gulch Trail

The public is encouraged to refrain from entering these areas for their safety and to allow for safe and effective firefighting operations. Heavy equipment, helicopters, and firefighters will be operating near the eastern flank of the fire and adjacent areas.

