



## Pedro Mine Fire

Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest

Fire Information: 406-502-8205

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

**September 08, 2024 7:00 p.m.**



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**Incident Commander: Chris Hericks**

**Location:** Southwest of Branham Lakes Campground

**Start Date:** 09/04/2024

**Cause:** Lightning

**Size:** estimated at 40 acres

**Resources on Site:** 3 Initial Attack Modules

**Total Personnel:** 14

The Pedro Mine Fire, located nine miles east of Sheridan in the Mill Creek area, is burning in steep, rocky terrain with little to no access for firefighters. The area contains a large concentration of standing dead trees ("snags") that pose challenges to ensuring firefighter safety and in responding to potential medical emergencies, jeopardizing the well-being of firefighters and other responders.

Fire managers from the Forest, working in collaboration with local Madison County officials have identified and prioritized critical values at risk in the fire area. Firefighting efforts will focus available resources on the protection of structures on private inholdings, active mining claims, and Branham Lakes Campground. All these values are approximately .1-.7 miles from the fire.

There are several factors involved in making wildfire management decisions. These factors include, firefighter safety, resource availability and threats to public safety and property. As well as, terrain, fire behavior, fire season outlook and modeling, and past prescribed fire units and vegetation management projects in the area. Fire managers are strategic in their approach and continually reassess conditions and alter management strategies to protect critical values.

### **CURRENT STATUS/PLANNED ACTIONS:**

The fire was active from approximately 01:00 pm until 5:00 pm. Fire growth was the result of one main drainage of fire that burned to the ridgetop. This activity meant embers were lofted ahead of the main fire and started a spot fire, approximately .4 miles to the north towards Branham Lakes Campground. Smoke could be seen from Alder, Laurin and Sheridan. Fire managers were focused on point protection for the cabin closest to the fire and operated the sprinkler system today. As a result of the increased fire behavior, they also contacted recreators in the Campground and informed them of what was happening and directed them to leave the area by this evening. They continue to assess the other identified values at risk for protection needs, order the appropriate resources and equipment, and identify timely implementation of the protection measures. Point protection objectives will be accomplished by reducing fuels around the structures and installing sprinkler systems. These actions will only occur if the fire poses an imminent threat to the structures.

Tomorrow's actions will begin with barricading the Mill Creek Road where it intersects with the Middle Fork of Mill Creek and preventing access through the fire area and to Branham Lakes Campground. This will protect the public and allow fire personnel to operate on the tight road system with less congestion. Fire personnel will continue mechanically reducing fuels around the other values, monitoring fire activity and subsequent movement, and observing and recording weather trends. An additional four-person Initial Attack module will arrive on the fire tomorrow to replace one of the modules who have worked their 14-day assignment and will be headed home at the end of the shift.

These actions are designed to allow fire personnel to protect the identified values at risk while operating in areas that have much better access and egress to safety.



Agency representatives continue to compile contact information for affected landowners immediately adjacent to the fire area.

**WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR:**

The forecast shows a chance of mainly dry thunderstorms that could produce gusty, erratic winds up to 40 mph around outflows Monday and Tuesday. The low-pressure system forecasted for mid-week is trending towards higher amounts of moisture, while conditions return to a cooler, more fall-like weather pattern.

**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.

