



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.



Incident Commander: Chris Hericks

Location: Southwest of Branham Lakes Campground

Start Date: 09/04/2024

Cause: Lightning

Size: estimated at 45 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-.6 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 relatively calm most of today. A new spot fire has established further to the north, and slightly closer to Lower Branham Lake. Fire managers were focused on point protection for the cabin closest to the fire and operated the sprinkler system today. A helicopter was used for a short time in the morning, and again in the afternoon, to drop water on the fire to slow fire movement into an un-favorable area that would pose a threat to fire personnel and certain values. Barricades were placed at the intersection of Mill Creek Road (FS RD 111) and the Middle Fork Mill Creek Road (FS RD 7313) to limit public access into the fire area and Branham Lakes Campground. As the fire moves north fire personnel continue to assess the other identified values at risk in and around Branham Lakes Campground for protection needs, order the appropriate resources and equipment, and identify timely implementation of the protection measures. One permitted-claim owner arrived to secure belongings from the claim. An overnight mapping mission using infrared has been ordered for tonight.

Tomorrow's actions will continue with structure protection of the cabin closest to the fire by patrolling for spot fires and operating the sprinkler system. Fire personnel will also assess, and potentially initiate, pro-active burning around Branham Lakes Campground. These actions will reduce the amount of fuel available to burn. Reducing these fuels will help protect the infrastructure and vegetation in the campground, as well as lessen the intensity of a future wildfire and the threat that would pose to recreationists and first responders. The main fire will continue to be monitored for fire spread and threat to identified values.

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 fire received a very small amount of rain last night. That moisture, combined with the very heavy smoke, helped limit fire activity today. Tomorrow is forecasted for another dry, warm, and windy day. The low-pressure system arriving Wednesday has approximately 0.5” of rain forecasted through Friday, 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.

