



Ratio Mountain Fire

Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest

Fire Information: 406-865-0941

[Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF Wildland Fire Information Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/Beaverhead-Deerlodge-NF-Wildland-Fire-Information)

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

September 2, 2024 9:00 a.m.



Incident Commander: Matt Racicot, Noah Criner (T)

Location: 15 miles north/northwest of Whitehall, MT

Start Date: 8/18/2024

Cause: Lightning

Size: 1,058 acres

Resources on Site: 4 crews; 1 engine

Total Personnel: 74

The northern, eastern, and southern edges of the fire are currently where fire managers want them, preventing forward progression of the fire toward critical values at risk. Recent strategic firing operations have been successful at protecting these values identified by local Jefferson County officials and cooperating agency representatives, by keeping the fire on Forest Service land west of the Hay Canyon Road and north of Little Whitetail Creek.

The fire, located between Ratio Mountain and Whitetail Reservoir, is burning in an area that has recently experienced several large fires. Fire footprints (or previously burned areas) lie to the north (State Creek Fire of 2020), the south (McClusky Fire of 2019), and the west (Placer Fire of 2021) of the fire location.

The entire area, including the previous fire footprints and the area immediately surrounding the Ratio Mountain fire, 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 all responders.

CURRENT STATUS/PLANNED ACTIONS:

Crews, utilizing hand ignitions with drip torches, completed additional firing operations along the southern section of line on the southeast corner of the fire and moving to the west. The fire is currently holding in an unnamed drainage on this side. Crews will continue to "mop-up" and extinguish pockets of residual heat, securing and holding the edges where all firing operations have taken place.

The UAS will be utilized to monitor and patrol the more remote portions of the fire via aerial reconnaissance, in anticipation of predicted gusty winds and subsequent fire movement.

Utilizing Unmanned Aircraft System ("drone") due to the steep, rocky slopes and numerous snags in the fire area, crews successfully implemented strategic firing operations to connect the eastern section of line to the fire footprint from the State Creek Fire of 2020. Crews completed similar strategic firing operations on the eastern side of the fire last week, igniting and burning the fuels along the Hay Canyon Road, working southerly along Pony Creek.

These firing operations have created some depth (reducing fuels available to burn) along the constructed lines.

WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR:

There is a RED FLAG WARNING in effect until 10 p.m. tonight. The combination of low relative humidity and thunderstorm outflow winds may result in critical fire weather conditions, increasing the risk for new and existing fires to spread quickly. The forecast calls for relative humidity at 15-20% and southwest winds 15-25 mph, with stronger outflow winds up to 50 mph with passing thunderstorms.



Fire behavior consists of isolated torching, backing, and creeping. Fire progression to the northeast and east has been mitigated with the successful strategic firing operations; fire movement uphill to the northwest is possible, given the Red Flag conditions through tonight.

CLOSURES AND RESTRICTIONS:

The Forest has issued an area closure around the fire area, north of Whitehall on the Butte Ranger District. An area closure often involves specific trail and road sections. The area closure information and maps can be found on the Forest website, under the Closures and Alerts tab. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/bdnf/alerts-notices>

This closure applies to the following National Forest System (NFS) lands, approximately 15 miles north of Whitehall.

All National Forest System lands within:

- T3N, R5W, SECTIONS 1, 2, 3
- T4N, R5W SECTION 35

Closures surrounding a fire area are necessary to protect the safety and welfare of the public and provide for safe firefighting efforts and access.

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.

