



Sawlog Fire

Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest



Fire Information: 406-683-3920

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61563603874079>

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

May 8, 2025 10:00 a.m.

Incident Commander: Richard Griffin (Type 3 IC) and Kyle Errecart (Type 3 IC Trainee)

Location: 15 miles northeast of Wisdom, MT in the Sawlog Creek drainage

Start Date: 05/01/2025

Cause: Undetermined – under investigation

Size: 1,412 acres

Resources Assigned: 4 crews; 3 engines; 2 helicopters; 1 water tender; 3 skidgens

Total Personnel: 173

Containment: 20%

CURRENT STATUS/PLANNED ACTIONS:

A reconnaissance flight and the infrared UAS showed scattered heat present in the smoldering fuels throughout the fire footprint yesterday. Crews progressed with "mop-up" operations, working along the previously constructed sawline and handline on the southern edge and the northern flank. Crews were able to complete these "mop-up" operations along approximately 20% of the fire footprint so far. Crews will continue these operations, expanding along both flanks of the fire and working toward 100% completion of the "mop-up" objectives. Fire behavior is expected to pick up today as the dry cold front passes through with gusty winds.

On the western edge, the Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) has been supporting the fire by flying infrared (IR) and reconnaissance operations that are inaccessible by foot and thick with hazard trees or "snags." Crews are continuing with structure assessments working north along the Highway 43 corridor.

On the northern flank, the smokejumpers in conjunction with a large skidgen (2,500-gallon water tank) are locating and extinguishing hot spots working to the south. A "hotshot" crew was flown into the Tucker Creek area yesterday and will look for opportunities to safely construct fireline, tying into existing roads/trails, to prevent progression of the fire eastward.

On the southern edge, firefighters have completed approximately two miles of fireline (immediately adjacent to the fire's edge) from the Big Hole River north of Toomey Creek. Crews will continue to hold and secure the constructed lines, "mopping-up" areas of residual heat. Two "hotshot" crews and two skidgens will begin improving previous control lines from the 2021 Alder Creek fire footprint by removing fuels and mitigating "snag" hazards on both sides of Sawlog Creek.

The fire remains under investigation. Neither the Forest Service nor the BLM had any prescribed fires (commonly referred to as "controlled burns") in that area.

WEATHER, FUELS, AND FIRE BEHAVIOR:

A dry cold front will move over the area during the day today keeping temperatures similar to where they were Wednesday, creating a slight chance for an afternoon/evening shower or even thunderstorm. Minimal to no accumulation expected from these showers but they are likely to produce erratic gusty winds up to 40 mph. Warmer, drier conditions are expected Friday with an even smaller chance for showers or thunderstorms and similar gust potential.

Fire behavior could exhibit moderate to extreme fire behavior today with the passage of the dry cold front. When winds have aligned with the orientation of drainages, fire behavior has the potential to be extreme. Fuel conditions, during this time of year (pre-green up), are extremely dry.

The fire is burning mainly in sagebrush and Lodgepole pine timber. The north-facing slopes in the area consist of a high "dead and downed" fuel component in a mixed conifer forest, and numerous "snags" or hazard trees are present. This fuel combination poses additional hazards for firefighters and affects on-the-ground progress. Ensuring firefighter safety and protecting life and property are of the utmost importance during any incident.

The fire footprint from the 2021 Alder Fire is located to the east, and the fire footprint from the 2021 Christensen Fire lies to the south.

CLOSURES:

For public safety reasons, the Bureau of Land Management has issued a temporary closure for the Sawlog dispersed camping area, located at the Big Hole River ford site. Specific closure language can be viewed on the [Sawlog Fire Inciweb page](#), Closures tab.

A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) has been implemented over the fire area. This allows for firefighting aircraft to safely work over the fire area. Firefighting aircraft and drones are a dangerous combination. Drones in the area could lead to accidents or slow down wildfire suppression operations. If you fly...we can't.