



NW Montana Joint Information Center

Fire Update

September 5, 2003, 10:00 A.M.

Center Hours 6 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Phone # (406) 755-3910

www.fs.fed.us/nwacfire

[For information on closures on the Flathead National Forest call 406-758-6491.](#)

[For information on closures at Glacier National Park call 406-888-7800.](#)

BLACKFOOT LAKE COMPLEX Includes the Beta Lake-Doris Ridge fires, Ball fire, Mid Fire and the Blackfoot lake complex of fires located on Flathead National Forest, 19 miles East of Kalispell, MT. Fire Information (406) 755-3910, 387-4609.

Size: Beta Lake – 1,344 acres

total personnel: 1,538

containment: 4%

Size: Doris Ridge- 3,058 acres

For entire complex

For entire complex

Size: Blackfoot Lake Fires – 4,629 acres

Size: Ball Fire – 3,275 acres

Size: Mid Fire – 9,657 acres

Status: The Ball Fire and Blackfoot Lake Fires experienced downhill runs, spotting, crown fires, and torching trees once the inversion lifted. The fires continue to move both east and west across primary lines. Because of this crews were pulled off. Air resources were limited yesterday due to poor visibility. The Mid Fire was active in the western side of the wilderness. Helicopters dropped retardant in the southwestern corner of the fire.

Outlook: Crews on Beta Lake and Doris Ridge will be utilizing direct and indirect line around main fires and spots. Burning is occurring between the Beta and Doris Fires. Crews will be working on the northern flank. Blackfoot Lake Fire crews and equipment will continue preparation of contingency lines. Crews on the Ball Fire will attempt to hold the line they held yesterday and scout out new lines for the next three operational periods. The Mid Fire will be monitored from the air and air resources will be used to confine it to the wilderness on the west side.

CRAZY HORSE FIRE Located on private and Flathead National Forest land, 8 miles south of Condon, MT. Fire Information: (406) 754-4620, (406) 754-2295, (406) 754-2291, (406) 754-3137

Size: 11,200 acres

total personnel: 197

containment: 80%

Status: In the Hemlock Lake area, the fire is actively backing and making short runs. In the Red Butte Basin area some interior, isolated pockets of fuels were consumed by isolated torching and creeping ground fire. In both locations, fire intensity is being controlled with helicopter bucket drops. Rehab is proceeding well.

Outlook: Continue patrol, mop-up and rehab outside of the Wilderness. Inside of the Wilderness, patrol and mop-up will utilize helicopter bucket work to control fire intensity and to suppress any spots outside of the fire edge.

A community meeting will be held tonight at 6:30 pm at the Swan Valley Community Center.

LITTLE SALMON COMPLEX Located in the Bob Marshall Wilderness, 47 miles southeast of Kalispell, MT. Fire Information: (406) 758-5376

Size: 44,385 acres

total personnel: 80

containment: N/A

Status: The Little Salmon complex is managing both Wild Fire Use and Suppression incidents. The complex consists of **15 active fires**: **8 Wildland Fire Use fires** (Little Salmon, Pagoda Mtn., Lime Creek, Independence Park, Salmon Point, Casey Creek, South Spud, & Little Hammer) and **7 modified-suppression fires** that are more than 15 acres include Gordon, Gyp, Crimson, Molly Creek, Leota, Some Creek, and High Fires. Fire behavior was limited through mid afternoon due to the heavy inversion. Fire activity was mostly creeping ground fire with isolated torching. Once the inversion lifted at about 4:30 pm, plume dominated fires were observed on several of the complexes fires with some fires making substantial runs. The retardant plant is in full operation. Fire reconnaissance wasn't able to fly until 3:30. Fire continues on all sides of Big Prairie

Ranger Station with the structural protection plan successfully implemented. Structure protection is in place for Hahn, Shaw, Basin, and Pendant Administrative cabins.

Outlook: Structure protection at Big Prairie is in place with consolidation of equipment and mop up as fire activity dictates. Continued Air Operations with the retardant plant as priorities dictate. Map, reconnaissance and evaluate fires within the complex as environmental conditions allow,

MIDDLE FORK COMPLEX Located 5 miles east of West Glacier, MT. The complex consists of the Belton, Center and Harrison Fires. Fire Information (406) 892-0946, (406) 892-0948.

Size: 7,598 acres **total personnel:** shared with Robert **containment:** 5%

Status: Moderate surface fire with some torching and spotting was observed yesterday. The Center Fire continued to spread approximately 1 mile last night.

Outlook: Continuation of structure protection, monitoring, reconnaissance, aerial suppression, and continue ground action on the Belton Fire to keep it from moving toward West Glacier.

RAMPAGE COMPLEX Located 15 miles southeast of West Glacier, MT. The complex consists of the Rampage, Riverview 1, Riverview 2, and Double Mountain 2 fires. The Double Mountain Fires 1 and 2 have grown together. Fire Information (406) 892-0946, (406) 892-0948.

Size: 20,434 **total personnel:** shared with Robert **containment:** 0%

Status: Moderate surface fires with torching and short crown runs were observed yesterday.

Outlook: Continued contingency planning and structure protection.

ROBERT FIRE Located on Flathead National Forest and Glacier National Park, 8 miles north of Columbia Falls, MT. Fire Information (406) 892-0946, 892-0948.

Size: 52,648 (329 acres growth since 9/4) **total personnel:** 623 **containment:** 70%

Status: Moderate surface fire, torching, and spotting were observed on the fire. The inversion continues to restrict air operations and mapping.

Outlook: Mopping up and controlling of the fire lines will continue. Rehabilitation of cooler portions of the fire will also continue.

A public meeting will be held Friday, September 5, at the East Glacier Motel at 8:00 pm.

TRAPPER CREEK COMPLEX (Trapper Creek fire, Paul Bunyan fire, Trout Creek and Wolf Gun Fire) Located in Glacier National Park, 45 miles north of Kalispell, MT. Fire Information: (406) 892-0946, 892-0948.

Complex size – 29,807 Trapper Creek: size – 19,107 acres, Containment - 65% Wolf Gun: size – 10,700 acres, Containment - 50% 3) total personnel: 29

Status: Suppression actions were taken today with a hand crew on the southwest edge of the fire with continual aerial monitoring. Smoldering, creeping, short upslope surface fire runs and torching were observed yesterday.

Outlook: All fires remain in a monitoring status and aerial monitoring of fire activity will continue. Extremely dry fuels, inaccessible terrain, and the remote nature of this fire preclude containment and confinement.

WEDGE CANYON FIRE Located on the Flathead National Forest and Glacier National Park, north of Polebridge, MT and six miles south of the Canadian border. Fire Information (801) 413-0525.

Size: 51,201 (84 acres increase since 9/3) **total personnel:** 696 **containment:** 81%

Status: Fire behavior was moderated yesterday due to the inversion; however, torching and associated short range spotting occurred. Active backing fire with torching occurring was observed in the southeastern and north central areas of the fire. Air operations were grounded until about 5:00 pm. yesterday due to the heavy inversion. Crews made good progress holding and extending the burnout accomplished Tuesday in the southeastern and south central areas of the fire. Residents are reminded that evacuations remain in effect from Moose Creek to the Canadian Border. Structure protection measures continue.

Outlook: Direct attack handlines will be initiated in the Trail Creek area and supported by helicopters and water handling equipment. Burnout operations in the southeastern area will continue with helicopter support and water handling equipment. Handline improvement and mop up of spot fires in the eastern section of the southeastern area of the fire will continue. Patrol and mop up will continue in all other areas. Rehabilitation will continue in the cooler sections of the fire.

A public meeting at Polebridge will be held every night at 8:00 pm. Community meetings at Larry Wilson's place are held at 9:00 am every other day starting 8/25.

FIRES ON THE IDAHO PANHANDLE NATIONAL FOREST Call (208) 762-6900 for other fires or fire conditions in Northern Idaho or for specific fire information concerning the Myrtle Creek Fire (Mama's Cascade) please call (208) 267-6725.

MYRTLE CREEK FIRE Located 5 miles west-northwest of Bonners Ferry, ID.

Size: 610 acres **total personnel:** 214 **containment:** 30%

Status: The fire exhibited continuous active behavior, including numerous runs and single/group torching. Forest Service Roads 633 and 661 (Myrtle Creek and Cooks Pass Roads) were temporarily closed for the protection of public health and safety.

Outlook: Line construction along the ridge and across the top of the fire and flanking along the east and west sides will continue. Construction will be supported by helicopter bucket drops, hose lays, and retardant (if needed).