

Fire Information – Elbow Pass Complex

September 3, 2012 10:00 AM

Incident Team: Type 3 IMT Bill King, Brett Witte (T)

Cause: Lightning

Acres: 20,705 acres

Resources: 2 helicopters

Containment 0%

Total Personnel: 25

Contact: Glenda Scott 562-3791

The Elbow Pass Complex is comprised of five different lightning ignitions from July 12 through July 31. These four fires have merged into one fire, the Elbow Pass Complex: Triple Divide Fire, Rapid Creek Fire, Elbow Pass Fire, and Bar Creek Fire. The fires are generally located 25 miles west southwest of Augusta, Montana. The Falls Point fire is south of the Complex. All are located in inaccessible terrain in heavy fuels. The fires are in the Bob Marshall and Scapegoat Wilderness Areas and are on three national forests.

The Elbow Pass Complex acreage remains at 20,705 acres; 16,169 acres on the Lewis & Clark National Forest, 3,797 acres on the Flathead National Forest, and 769 acres on the Lolo National Forest. Additionally, fire managers are managing the Falls Point fire on the Lolo National forest, currently 266 acres.

Yesterday's Activities: High winds prevented aerial reconnaissance or other helicopter work. The fire continues to creep and smolder with individual tree and group torching. Based on lookout observations, fire was active in the South Fork Sun River with limited growth up the side slopes of the drainage in the morning. Winds also increased activity in the west and south portions of the fire where heat remains. Smoke from the Elbow Pass Complex and East Fork fire (Helena National Forest) settled into the Augusta valley yesterday. Falls Point fire continues to have heat on the east side of the perimeter.

Today's Update: RED FLAG WARNINGS continue until 9 pm tonight. Winds are not expected to be as high today but with continued very dry conditions, the red flag warnings were extended through today. Fire activity is expected to continue similar to the past few days with widespread single tree torching and some group tree torching in areas with remaining heat. Short uphill runs are possible where heat, wind, and slope align. Heat continues in the south and west side of the fire where some fire spread will continue in the Dry Fork Blackfoot south of the Continental Divide, Rapid Creek and South Fork Sun River. Fire managers will fly the fire if winds allow early in the morning for reconnaissance. Structure protection remains in place for Danaher and Basin Cabins. Hazard trees are being removed from around the Green River cabin. Firefighter and public safety during all operations is our number one priority. Fire managers and the helicopters assigned to the fire are prepared for initial attack.

Recreation Opportunities: While the Benchmark Road is open, the area is closed beginning a half mile west of the road. Numerous trails remain closed. Please check with local offices for specific recreation information. Please note that vehicles parked at the trailhead could be at fire risk due to possible future fire activity. The Benchmark Air Strip is closed, the Augusta air strip is open.

For more information on these or other wildland fires, and related information visit:

www.inciweb.org or call:

Augusta Information Station 406-562-3247

Choteau District Office

406-466-5341

Seeley Lake Ranger District 406-677-2233

Spotted Bear Ranger District

406-758-5376