

NW Montana Joint Information Center

Fire Update

September 7, 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/Doris – 4,852 acres

total personnel: 1,272

containment: 13%

Size: Blackfoot Lake Fires – 13,795 acres

For entire complex

For entire complex

Size: Ball Fire – 6,458 acres

Status: Increased fire activity was observed yesterday with surface fires, torching, and four foot flame lengths. The Blackfoot Lake Fires and the Ball Fire made significant runs toward the Hungry Horse Reservoir yesterday once the inversion lifted.

Outlook: Crews on the Beta/Doris Fire will complete construction and fire out unburned areas of potential threat to the Westside Reservoir Road (Road # 895). The Ball Fire is under a Red Flag Warning. Resources will attempt to keep the fire from entering Spotted Bear.

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: 167

containment: 80%

Status: The smoke inversion held fire behavior down yesterday. Burnouts by isolated torching and minimal ground fire were observed with spotting up to 1,000 feet. In the area of Hemlock Lake, fire is actively backing and making short runs with torching at times. The Red Butte Basin area has some interior, isolated pockets of fuels that were consumed by torching and creeping ground fire. In both of these areas fire intensity is being controlled with helicopter bucket drops. Rehabilitation is proceeding well.

Outlook: Continue patrol, mop-up and rehab outside of the Wilderness. Inside of the Wilderness, patrol and mop-up while utilizing helicopter bucket work to control fire intensity and to suppress any spots outside of the fire edge. Transition to a Type III Team is scheduled for Tuesday, September 9, at 6:00 am.

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

Size: 70,282 acres

total personnel: 74

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 totaling 32,811 acres(Little Salmon, Pagoda Mtn., Lime Creek, Independence Park, Salmon Point, Casey Creek, South Spud, & Little Hammer) and 7modified-suppression fires that total 37,471 acres and include Gordon, Gyp, Crimson, Molly Creek, Leota, Some Creek, Mid, and High Fires. The Mid Fire was reabsorbed into the Little Salmon Complex. Fire behavior was limited below the inversion which was intact past 6:00 pm. The activity that was observed was creeping ground fire with isolated torching. The Mid, Gordon, and Gyp Fires were active above the inversion with some large smoke columns and open flames noted in the areas of activity. Due to the significant fire growth and activity, additional area closures were instated. Activity from the adjacent Ball Fire on September 5 has resulted in additional structural protection and precautionary measures at Spotted Bear Ranger Station.

Outlook: A Fire Weather Watch has been issued for the Little Salmon Complex. Continued Air Operations with the retardant plant as priorities dictate. Map, reconnaissance and evaluate fires within the complex as environmental conditions allow. Continue with structure protection of the Ranger Station, Administrative

Cabins, pack bridges, and lookouts. Special concern is to evaluate Danaher Administrative Cabin for structure protection.

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: 10,601 acres (961 acres growth since 9/6) **total personnel:** shared with Robert **containment:** 5%

Status: Moderate ground fire with torching and short crown runs were observed yesterday.

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: 20,871 (345 acres growth since 9/6) **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 (4,182 acres growth since 9/6) **total personnel:** 513 **containment:** 60%

Status: Moderate surface fire, torching, and spotting were observed on the fire.

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

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 - 45% Wolf Gun: size – 10,700 acres, Containment - 50% 3) total personnel: 3

Status: 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: 52,030 (595 acres increase since 9/6) **total personnel:** 671 **containment:** 81%

Status: Group torching and running associated with short range spotting in the northeastern and southeastern areas of the fire. Active backing and flanking fire with torching occurred in the Trail Creek area and southeastern central area. The remainder of the fire area exhibited isolated interior torching and smoldering. Residents are reminded that evacuations remain in effect from Moose Creek to the Canadian Border. Structure protection measures continue. Crews made progress with direct attack handline in the Trail Creek area. Burnout operations in the area are also going well. Crews also made progress with holding and extending the burnout, which was accomplished yesterday, in the southeastern section of the fire. Developing and providing structure protection in the Teepee Lake, Trail Creek, North Fork Road and Bowman Lake areas.

Outlook: Continuation with burnouts and holding actions in the Trail Creek area will be supported with helicopters. Burnout operations will continue in the southeastern flank of the fire. Mop up will continue in remaining divisions along with enhancing structure protection plans.

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.

