

Roaring Lion Fire Update

Wednesday, August 24, 2016, 7:00 a.m.

Fire Information: (406) 241-4338

Phone hours: 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Location: Bitterroot National Forest, Darby Ranger District, 5 miles southwest of Hamilton, MT.

The Moose Fire along with the Cedar fire remain active and are still producing much of the smoke that is coming into the Bitterroot Valley. Both of these fires were lightning caused and are burning approximately 8 and 10 air miles west of the Bitterroot National Forest border on the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest. Old burns and rocky patches are to the east and fire activity is expected to diminish as the fires reach those areas.

Yesterday: The minimal fire activity was observed today from the interior, where pockets of unburned fuel have been drying out and becoming more receptive to heat. Aerial resources are still being used in the Ward Bowl area, dropping buckets of water and retardant to cool fuels down when needed. Helicopters also dropped several loads of water in the Sawtooth Canyon area. Engines were patrolling in and around the fire's east and southeast perimeter. Fire managers intend to continue these patrols until they are confident that no re-ignitions near firelines or homes will occur.

Today: Firefighters stationed in the Ward Mountain area will be mopping up (extinguishing or removing burning material) near the northeast retardant line. With the assistance of firefighters and Lookouts posted near Camas Creek they will also be directing aerial resources to calm fire activity to prevent the fire from moving outside the perimeter lines. Both fixed wing (single engine air tankers or SEATs) and rotor wing (helicopters) aircraft will be seen over the area dropping buckets of water and using retardant when needed. Engines in and around the fire's east and southeast perimeter will continue to patrol around homes.

Weather: For today a few isolated showers and thunderstorms will be possible this morning and through the afternoon. The showers and thunderstorms may be spotty at best and if a storm does develop it will be slow moving. Moderate rain and lightning will be possible with any storm that arises. Winds will be light in the morning and are expected to become northeasterly around 3 pm. Thursday will be mostly sunny throughout the day with only a slight chance of thunderstorms appearing in the evening.

Smoke will continue to be visible from the interior of the burn area for the foreseeable future and is most likely until a season ending event such as substantial rain or winter weather affects the fire area.

Air Operations: Incident aircraft are providing tactical and logistical support as well as medevac capabilities should the need arise. Aerial resources, both rotor and fixed wing, continue to be available for use both on this incident and for initial attack. A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) remains in effect over this fire. ***It has been reduced in size to match the perimeter of the fire.*** Please check with the FAA or your local flight service station prior to flying in the area of the fire.

STATISTICS

Detected:	July 31, 2016
Cause:	Under Investigation
Current Size:	8,520 As of 6:00 AM August 22, 2016
Containment:	70%
Structures Lost:	16 residences and 49 outbuildings
Estimated Costs:	\$9,905,000.00
Resources:	
Camp Crews:	1
Engines:	7
Water Tenders:	2
Helicopters:	3
Overhead:	37
Total Personnel:	94

(over)

Evacuations: *The evacuation area south of the North Gold Creek Loop Road remains in Stage One Warning and Alert. On roads limited to residents only, permits will be available at roadblocks at the Ravalli Sheriff's office.* Information regarding evacuation areas can be found on the Ravalli County Sheriff's app for mobile phones, their Facebook page and by calling the Ravalli County Sheriff's Office at 406-375-4060 or at the fire information phone numbers listed above.

Closures: Area closures remain in effect. Camas Creek, Coyote Coulee, Roaring Lion, Sawtooth and Ward Mountain Trailheads are all closed and will remain closed until the risk to the public has been mitigated. The closure also includes the Coyote Coulee trail system and trail #59 up the North Fork of Lost Horse Creek. Observation Point road is also closed. Contact the Bitterroot National Forest or the Fire Information Office for details.

Residents returning to their homes should be cautious and watch out for fire weakened trees. These trees may appear to be completely healthy, but can fall with little or no warning even without wind influence. Go to <http://tinyurl.com/gut7awn> for additional information.

Cooperating Agencies: Ravalli County Sheriff, Ravalli County Volunteer Fire Departments, Montana DNRC, Red Cross, Montana DOT, Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks and Northwestern Energy.

Additional Fire Information Contacts:

Inciweb http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/	Bitterroot NF Facebook www.facebook.com/DiscoverBitterrootNF
Bitterroot NF Twitter www.twitter.com/BitterrootNF	Bitterroot NF http://bit.ly/29nsEak
Fire Restrictions http://firerestrictions.us/	Fire Information E-mail roaringlionfireinfo@gmail.com
Mobile app for Android http://bit.ly/29yFV1F	Mobile app for Apple http://apple.co/29xbl3H
Facebook www.facebook.com/Ravalli-County-Sheriffs-Office-261112620728766/?fref=nf	