



Liberty Fire Update

Friday, September 8, 2017, 8:30 am

Northern Rockies Incident Management Team

Greg Poncin, Incident Commander

Fire Information: 406-272-4354, 8 am – 8 pm

Email: LibertyFire2017@gmail.com

Websites: inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/5437/#

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/lolonationalforest/>

Location: 17 miles SE of Arlee, Montana in the South Fork Primitive Area

Yesterday's Accomplishments: It was an active fire day as firefighters monitored, strengthened line, contained spot fires, and conducted burnout operations as needed to strengthen lines and reduce fuels. The southeast perimeter of the fire continues to be the priority and crews focused their efforts to secure lines in the Wild Horse Creek drainage and along Wild Horse road in anticipation of predicted winds Saturday. Additional burnout operations were conducted, where conditions permitted, to reinforce line from the Wild Horse drainage to the fire's edge at Black Mountain. Fire was secured near the Boles and Finley creek drainages where additional burnout operations were conducted. Crews monitored fire spread to the east in the direction of the Northwestern Energy Powerline and started structure assessments in the Placid Lake area. They also improved the Belmont Road, for use as a containment line, using two heavy equipment task forces. On the south edge of the fire, near the wilderness, crews continued mop up and line assessment.

Today's Planned Actions: Crews will continue to hold the line, contain spot fires and burn out as needed south of the Jocko Road and power line corridor to check fire spread to the east in order to protect the Placid Lake area. The same is planned for the Boles Meadow area. Crews will also monitor, mop up, and secure yesterday's successful burn out along Forest Road 4224 all the way to Belmont Road in the Belmont Creek area. On the south edge of the fire, crews will continue mop up and line assessment. Structure protection will begin on the west side of Placid Lake area as a precautionary measure.

Weather and Fire Behavior: Stagnant air, courtesy of upper level high pressure will remain over the incident again today with the strong inversion in place. Some moisture is expected later today, but chances of wetting rain is minimal. There is an increased chance of wetting rains Saturday afternoon through Saturday evening. Winds will also be on the increase as a cold front approaches and eventually passes through on Saturday. Any thunderstorms could produce gusty and erratic winds and lightning. Winds will continue to be primarily terrain driven. Expect active fire in the heavy fuels, even within the 2007 Jocko Lakes Fire scar. Expect the interior island to continue to burn from recent firing operations. Wind direction will not be favorable for firefighting efforts in the Belmont Road area. Expect short duration crown runs and single to group tree torching. In the south and east portion of the fire near the wilderness expect minimal activity.

Air Operations: Aircraft assigned to the fire are available for this incident and for initial attack. A temporary flight restriction is in effect over the fire area. Flying drones over the fire is prohibited. **If drones are detected, air operations will stop.**

Closures: An area closure is in place for public health and safety due to wildfire. The closure area begins on the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) reservation Boundary line and continues east following the CSKT Boundary along the Middle Fork of Jocko River and Jocko Lake turning southwest; then heading East and southeast

Incident Statistics

Size:	23,611 acres
Containment:	17 percent
Structures damaged:	0
Structures destroyed:	1
Injuries:	17
Date detected:	July 15, 2017
Cause:	Lightning
Estimated cost	\$16.8 million

Resources

Hand Crews:	6
Camp Crews:	1
Engines:	8
Helicopters:	2
Air tankers	
Dozers:	7
Water tenders:	9
Masticators:	
Skidgines:	8
Total personnel:	271

crossing Second Creek, Grouse Creek, Buck Creek and Finley Creek; then south to Boles Creek. Continuing due east to Vaughn Creek, then due south crossing North Fork Blanchard Creek, Cold Brook and Blanchard Creek; continuing west crossing Belmont Creek and Gold Creek then turning northwest crossing Spring Creek, West Fork Gold Creek, next to and including Boulder Lake, Wapiti Lake and Crazy Fish Lake; heading north on a straight line until it intersects with the point of beginning.

All trails and roads that are within, and those that make up the boundaries to this area closure, are closed due to the Liberty fire. The South Fork Primitive area of Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes is closed.

Evacuations: Currently, there are no evacuation warnings or orders

The fire is under the jurisdiction of Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, Montana Department of Natural Resources (DNRC), and Lolo National Forest

Cooperating Agencies: Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Lake County Office of Emergency Management, Lake County Office of Emergency Services, Missoula County and Seeley Lake Fire, and The Nature Conservancy

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(End)