

# Fire Information – Paola Ridge Fire

Thursday Aug 16, 2018 8:00 AM



*Flathead National Forest*

InciWeb: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/6140/>

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

## QUICK FACTS:

**Location:** 2 miles northwest of Essex, MT, in the Flathead National Forest

**Detected:** August 11, 2018, 10:40 p.m. **Cause:** Lightning

**Lat/Long:** Lat. 48° 18.755, Long. 113° 39.263 **Current size:** 400 acres **Containment:** 0%

**Resources on the fire:** 3 engine crews, 2 heavy equipment task forces & additional support equipment, 2 Type 2 initial attack crews, and 1 hotshot crew; **Ownership/Jurisdiction:** Flathead National Forest; **Other cooperators:** Flathead County Sheriff, Office of Emergency Services, MT Department of Transportation, and BNSF Railroad.

**FIRE SUMMARY:** The Paola Ridge Fire is burning in the Flathead National Forest. This fire is being managed with modified confine and contain strategy with indirect tactics; firefighter and public safety is top priority. The fire is burning in steep terrain with subalpine forest and brushy avalanche chutes.

**CURRENT SITUATION:** Fire behavior has been active with some group tree torching. The fire was active overnight between August 15 and 16, and continued growth is anticipated as hot dry weather continues into the weekend. The fire is now backing down into Paola Creek drainage. Firefighters have constructed a shaded fuel break from Dickey Creek Road to the local gravel pit and are working north towards Paola Creek Road. Crews have assessed primary structures impacted by the evacuation notice. Fire crews have begun installing pumps, water hose, and sprinklers for structures affected by the evacuation notice. There are over 78 people working on the fire line.



Fuel break construction by heavy equipment.

Today, August 16, the plan is for heavy equipment, which includes skidgine, feller-bunchers, skidder, dozer, processor, and fire crews to continue working north implementing a shaded fuel break in the area, near the railroad and Highway 2. Weather forecast predicts higher temperatures with lower relative humidity, and a potential for thunderstorms today and Friday. The fire will continue to be monitored overnight.

An area closure order is in place, closing the area and local roads and trails, though local landowner traffic will be permitted. Highway 2 is not closed by this area closure. Please see the enclosed map. A temporary flight restriction is in place; aircraft and drones are not allowed over the fire area.

No evacuation orders have been issued. Flathead County Sheriff has issued an EVACUATION WARNING for a small number of residents near Essex, effective at 12:00 noon on August 15, 2018. The evacuation warning is being coordinated by Flathead County Office of Emergency Services. For more information follow @FlatheadOES on twitter and Facebook.

**GENERAL INFORMATION:** The Flathead National Forest, except the Great Bear and Bob Marshal Wilderness Areas, is implementing Stage 2 fire restrictions on Thursday Aug 16<sup>th</sup>. For more information see: <https://firerestrictions.us/>