



Blodgett/Mill Lake Fire Information

Phone: 406-426-9612 daily from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Email: 2022.blodgettlake@firenet.gov

Date: September 17, 2022

Doug Turman, Incident Commander

Contact Information: Phone: 406-426-9612 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Email: 2022.blodgettlake@firenet.gov

Start Date: 8/29/2022

Cause: Lightning

Total Personnel: 224

Engines: 3

Helicopters: 1

Crews: 6

Heavy Equipment: 3

<u>Fire Name</u>	<u>Acreage (estimated)</u>
Blodgett Lake	2290 acres
Mill Lake	908 acres
Big Creek	153 acres
Bear Creek	232 acres
Kootenai Creek:	1 acre

Summary:

Smoke continues to clear from the Bitterroot Valley giving residents their first glimpse of the Blodgett Lake Fire. The Bitterroot Hotshots hiked into the canyon and confirmed that smoke was coming from the existing fire footprint, not from a new start or fire growth.

Weather conditions over the Blodgett Lake and Mill Lake Fires favor low fire activity. Winds remain terrain driven. Little or no down-canyon growth towards the valley is expected.

Crews are continuing work on a shaded fuel break along the forest boundary in case of a return to warm and dry fire weather. Shaded fuel breaks are mechanically created buffer zones that remove shade tolerant brush, but mature trees that are more fire resistant are left standing. Without the lower and mid-level brush and trees, fires lack the "ladder" mechanism for fire to reach the tree canopy and become a high-intensity fire.

Firefighters are also performing reconnaissance and developing plans in the event of eastward fire growth on this or future incidents.

The thirty-foot-wide fuel break on the west side of Sheafman Road (FS-438) from Cow Creek trailhead is now complete. Firefighters continue building a hand line from the south end of road #1327 to the rock cliff face above Fred Burr Creek. Crews will work on indirect control lines along the Forest Service - Private Property boundary from Mill Creek south to Blodgett Canyon, utilizing heavy equipment. Crews will begin constructing an indirect hand line north of Bear Creek Trailhead along the FS boundary to road 1325. A structure protection group is coordinating with Fire Departments to scout structures adjacent to Forest Service land east of Big Creek, Bear Lake, and Blodgett Lake fires.

The Forest has implemented trail closures across the fire area. Refer to the Bitterroot National Forest website for details <https://www.fs.usda.gov/bitterroot>

Weather:

Thunderstorms will return to the fire and work areas today. There is a 70 percent chance of rain in the afternoon. Weather remains cool and unsettled through Thursday, which has the best chance of a waiting rain.

InciWeb: Mill Lake Fire: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8392/>

Bitterroot National Forest Website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/bitterroot>

Air Quality: <https://fire.airnow.gov/>

