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Lolo Peak Fire News Release

Fire Update August 14, 2017

Incident: Lolo Peak Fire Wildfire
Released: 2 hrs. ago

Community Fire Information Briefing: Tonight, at 7:00 p.m., Lolo Public School (Upper Gym), 11395 Hwy 93, South Lolo, MT.

Related Information
Printable Format (pdf 146 kb)

Weather and fire behavior: It will be partly cloudy with a 20-percent chance of showers. Wind will be from the west 5-10-mph with gusts to 20 mph. Max temperatures will be 65-70 along ridges and 78-83 in the valleys. Minimum relative humidity will be 25-30-percent today. Current fuel conditions are favorable for active fire behavior. Some crown fire is possible where wind, terrain and vegetation align as well as torching of individual trees and groups of trees.

Yesterday: The fire was extremely active Sunday morning following strong outflow winds from thunderstorms Saturday night and into the morning, which pushed the fire to the north and east into Tevis and Mill Creek drainages. The fire behavior and movement with predicted strong west winds Sunday afternoon, and potential for rapid fire spread down to the valley floor, prompted fire officials and Missoula County Sheriff's Office to evacuate both sides of US Highway 12 between Bear Creek and Fort Fizzle. The fire did not cross primary containment lines. The unexpected duration of the rain, corresponding rise in humidity, and quieter winds than expected moderated fire behavior. The fire also expanded on the west side dropping further into Johnny Creek and Dick Creek. Crews continued monitoring the fire perimeter while maintaining pumps, hoses and sprinklers to ensure they will be ready to protect homes and reinforce the fire line, if needed.

Today: Firefighters will take advantage of the break in weather to begin burnout operations to remove fire alignment with wind, terrain and fuel to slowly bring fire down to containment lines. Burnout operations involve carefully introducing fire in unburned areas between the active fire perimeter and containment lines to consume fuel next to the containment line, fighting fire with fire, to slow the advance of the fire front.

Evacuations will remain in place because of the fire proximity to homes and the very real potential to become very active over the next couple of days with continued forecast for windy conditions. Evacuations and road closures are based upon the safety of the public and firefighters, current fire behavior, forecasted weather, and planned suppression operation.

Fire officials, Missoula County Sheriff's Office, and Montana Department of Transportation will evaluate the evacuation and road closures on a daily basis. The Incident Commander, Missoula Rural Fire Chief, and the Missoula County Sheriff appreciate your patience and will work hard to get you back into your homes as soon as safely possible.

Evacuations/Closure Information: Evacuation Orders are in effect for both the north and south sides of Highway 12 between Fort Fizzle west to Mile Post 20 at Bear Creek, which includes the Mill Creek Road and Elk Meadows Road areas. A Evacuation Warning has been issued for both the north and south sides of Highway 12 from Fort Fizzle east to Balsam Root Road, as well as residents on Morman Creek Road past Vann Drive and those on Vann Drive. This Warning is not an order to evacuate, only a warning so that citizens can prepare should evacuations become necessary. For further information call 258-INFO (4636).

Highway 12 is closed between Fort Fizzle and Grave's Creek Road. Please do not stop along the road to view fire activity as it creates a traffic hazard.



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