



Lolo Peak Fire Update

Friday, August 18, 2017, 8:30 am
Northern Rockies Incident Management Team
Greg Poncin, Incident Commander

Fire Information: (406) 272-5433 Hours: 7am – 9pm
Email: LoloPeakFire@gmail.com
Websites: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/5375/>
<https://www.missoulacounty.us/government/public-safety/sheriff-s-office>
<http://ravalli.us/245/Sheriff>
Facebook: Bitterroot National Forest Facebook Page
Lolo National Forest Facebook Page
For Missoula County evacuees: call 406 258-INFO (4636).
For Ravalli County evacuees: call 406-375-4055.

Location: Ten miles southwest of Lolo.

Several structures were burned last night. The sheriff's offices and the Fire Department are assessing the structures this morning and will notify the affected owners. At this time no information is available concerning the exact number and type of structures lost.

Highway 12 remains open with a pilot car for access through the fire area.

Summary: A public meeting was held last night at the Florence Baptist Church. Approximately 500 people attended this meeting where they received an update about the fire from the Northern Rockies Incident Management Team. Additional meetings will be scheduled as needed.

Fire activity continued yesterday along the ridge north of Carlton Lake and into the top of Mormon Creek drainage in the area impacted by Wednesday's run. Additional evacuation orders and warnings were given to residents on the east side of the fire (reference below under Evacuations/Closure Information). The evacuation orders and warnings along both the highway 12 and 93 corridors are still in effect. About 31,758 gallons of retardant were dropped by heavy air tankers yesterday in addition to helicopter water drops that assisted the firefighters by cooling the fire edge and reducing the rate of spread, allowing them time to strengthen lines. Burnout operations along the control line were started in the afternoon in the vicinity of the ski runs and Mormon Creek. Structure protection resources (engines and firefighters) continued to protect structures that have been identified as being imminently threatened. In addition, they worked to improve their hose lays in an effort to insure that adequate water will be available when and where needed. Fire activity was readily apparent from both highways 12 and 93 throughout the afternoon and evening.

Today: Red Flag Warnings will be in effect beginning at noon today and extending through Saturday morning! A dry cold front will pass through the fire area this afternoon. Winds ranging from 15 to 25 mph with gusts to 40 mph are expected between 3:00 PM to 9:00 PM this afternoon. In addition to the winds, relative humidity will drop to the mid-teens today and the atmosphere will be unstable, contributing to the potential for extreme fire growth. These weather conditions, along with the very dry fuels, provide the potential for very significant fire growth today.

Firefighters will concentrate most of their resources on the northeast side of the fire as fire behavior is expected to be more severe than yesterday, including active fire well into the evening hours. The fire will continue to grow in multiple directions on the northeast side as it tries to move off the mountain into the valleys. Firing operations along the control line in the valley will continue today to create black line on the fire side of the control line. Along the east side of the fire, where most of the activity is expected to occur today, firefighters will work this morning to strengthen the primary control line and work on slop overs and spots in preparation for this afternoons high winds. Meanwhile, structure

Incident Statistics

Size:	18,896 acres
Containment	0 %
Primary Control Line	
Complete:	99 %
Injuries:	None
Fatalities:	1
Date detected:	July 15, 2017
Cause:	Lightning
Structures Threatened	743
Structures Lost	0
Estimated cost	\$17.9 million

Resources

Hand Crews:	11
Engines:	27
Helicopters:	9
Air tankers	3
Dozers:	2
Water tenders:	13
Total Personnel:	603

protection resources will work to improve their hose lays to protect threatened structures this afternoon. On the western side of the fire, resources will attempt to hold the fire in place and prevent any further movement to the west.

Please do not stop along the highways to view fire activity as it creates a significant traffic hazard. In addition to traffic hazards, stopping along the highways impedes firefighter traffic, impacts the safety of firefighters and citizens, and increases the chances that the fire may escape control lines. *Consider the risks that you take, is that photo worth the risk that you cause to firefighters and your neighbors properties?*

Stop by the Firewise trailer on the eastside of the intersection of Hwy 12 and Hwy 93 or the Florence-Carlton School for the most current fire information.

Evacuations/Closure Information: Evacuations and warnings are still in effect. For current information visit the Missoula County and the Ravalli County Sheriffs' Facebook pages (web addresses listed above).

Evacuations and road closures are based upon the need to provide for safety of the public and firefighters, current fire behavior, forecasted weather, and planned suppression operation. Please cooperate when asked to evacuate or prepare to evacuate.

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 County Rural Fire Chief, Ravalli County Fire Warden, the Missoula County Sheriff and Ravalli County Sheriff appreciate your patience and will work hard to get you back into your homes as soon as safely possible.

The Temporary Flight Restrictions for the Lolo Peak Fire has been extended 1.5 miles east of Highway 93. This restriction includes "drones" or unmanned aerial vehicles. **If drones are detected, air operations will stop. "If you fly, we can't!**

The Red Cross has opened a shelter at the University Congregation Church located at 405 University Avenue in Missoula. For animal sheltering call Animal Control at 541-7387 and leave a message.

Stage II Fire Restrictions are in effect for Missoula and Ravalli Counties and across the Lolo and Bitterroot National Forests. Additional information can be found on Inciweb.

Closures: The Bitterroot National Forest issued an Amendment, on August 1, 2017 for the Lolo Peak Fire that now includes Bass Creek NFSR #1136, beginning at the junction of NFSR#1316 and the Charles Waters Campground and through section 32, T.10N, R20W. The Charles Waters Campground remains open.

The Area Closure was Amended, on July 27, 2017 for the Lolo Peak Fire and now includes the following roads and trails as well as those encompassed by the area closure intersecting with open roads and trails; Elk Meadow Road (NFSR #451) from Junction US Hwy 12 to the Clearwater National Forest Boundary, West Fork Butte Road (NFSR #37) from the West Fork Butte Lookout to the intersection with the Elk Meadow Road (NFSR #451), Mormon Peak Road (NFSR #612), South Fork Lolo Creek Road (NFSR #2160), Small Creek Road (NFSR #4292), West Fork Butte Trail (NFST #320), Mill Creek Trail (NFST #1310), Sweeney Trail (NFST #393), and Bass Creek Trail (NFST #4). For specific road, trail and area closure information please visit the Inciweb website.

The fire is under the jurisdiction of the Lolo and Bitterroot National Forests and the Montana Department of Natural Resources (MTDNRC).

Missoula County residents can receive emergency notifications of critical alerts via their choice of text, phone and/or email by signing up at Smart911.com. Residents in Ravalli County can download the **Ravalli County Sheriff's app** to their mobile devices to receive critical information notifications.

Cooperators: The city of Stevensville, Ravalli & Missoula County Government; Ravalli County Sheriff's Office; Missoula County Sheriff's Office; Lolo School District; Missoula Rural Fire; Florence VFD; MDOT; Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks; Carlton and Bass Lake Irrigation; Florence – Carlton School District; Ravalli and Missoula County DES; Private Landowners