

InciWeb - Incident Information System

Lolo Peak Fire News Release

Lolo Peak Fire Update August 24

Incident: Lolo Peak Fire Wildfire
Released: 6 hrs. ago

Lolo Peak Fire Update

Thursday, August 24, 2017; 8:30 AM

Northern Rockies Incident Management Team

Greg Poncin, Incident Commander

Related Information
Lolo Peak Fire Update August 24 (docx 46 kb)

Fire origin: July 15, 2017, ten miles southwest of Lolo, MT.

Fire Information: (406) 272-5433 Hours: 7am – 9pm

Email: LoloPeakFire@gmail.com

Websites: Inciweb: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/5375/>

Missoula County Sheriff: <https://tinyurl.com/ya93jpuf>

Ravalli County Sheriff: <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: call 406-375-6650.

Evacuations and Warnings: At 8:48 last night, the Ravalli County Sheriff issued an evacuation order for all residents on Sweeney Creek Loop north of and including Outback Road to include Woodtick Hollow, Sweeney Creek Trail, Upper Sweeney Creek Loop, Hill Drive, Koeplin Lane and Smith Fork. All other evacuations and warnings are still in effect, and can change at any time based on fire behavior. For current information visit the Missoula County and the Ravalli County Sheriffs' Facebook pages.

RETURNING HOME: As residents return home, they may see changes to their property as a result of firefighting operations. Once home, check your property for evidence of fire, your well/pump, and electric/gas meter and propane tank.

Highway 12 is open with a 45 mile per hour speed limit through the fire area.

Old highway 93 is closed to all traffic, except emergency vehicles, from Tie Chute Lane north to County Line Road. Resident passes are available for those people who live in this area between the Old 93 and New 93 Highways. Contact the Ravalli County Sheriffs' office for details.

Fire Information Locations: Staffed fire information is available at: Farmers State Bank parking lot at 5501 Old Highway 93 North in Florence; and the Firewise Trailer, located at the weigh station in Lolo at the corner of Highways 12 and 93.

Summary: Yesterday afternoon the fire became very active between Carlton and Tie Chute creeks. The potential for the fire to move south triggered an evacuation order for most of the Sweeney Creek area. As the fire moved east, it ran into Monday's burnout operation, preventing it from moving toward Florence. Retardant was used to stall the fire's growth to the south. Crews burned between two dozer lines 1.5 mile west of the roadblock on One Horse Creek Road to provide a barrier to any potential fire movement down One Horse Creek. During the day, firefighters continued to fortify control lines and mopped up hot spots. Firefighters in the Mill Creek area had to move off the fire line for three hours while the Missoula County Sheriff's Department responded to gunfire near the fireline, which turned out to be a resident shooting squirrels.

Today: Weather is expected to moderate fire activity today due to predicted cloud cover, higher humidity and light precipitation. However, thunderstorms are forecast to bring gusty winds into the area from the west. If weather conditions permit, firefighters will conduct a burnout operation along the control line near Sweeney

Creek Trail by Forest Service road 1315 to keep the fire from reaching the One Horse Creek drainage and moving east. Engines will continue to patrol along the 93 and 12 highway corridors and around structures, assist firefighters on the control line and be available for the possibility of new starts from spotting or lightning. Mop up will continue along the fire's perimeter.

Please do not stop along the highways to view fire activity. 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 could escape control lines.

Firewise: For information on how to improve the chances of your homes and structures surviving a wildfire, visit the Firewise website at www.Firewise.org.

Evacuation/Closure Information: 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 operations. Fire officials, Missoula and Ravalli County Sheriff's Offices, and Montana Department of Transportation will evaluate the evacuation and road closures daily. The Incident Commander, Missoula County Rural Fire Chief, Ravalli County Fire Warden, and the Missoula and Ravalli County Sheriffs appreciate your patience and will work hard to get you back into your homes as soon as it is safe to do so.

The Red Cross has opened a shelter at the University Congregation Church located at 405 University Avenue in Missoula.

For Missoula County animal sheltering call Animal Control at 541-7387 and leave a message.

Drones and TFR: The Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) for the Lolo Peak Fire remains in effect. **The restriction includes "drones" or unmanned aerial vehicles. If drones are detected, air operations stop. "If you fly, we can't!"** If you see a drone in the fire area, including the evacuation areas, report it immediately to 406-272-5433. Please provide your name, phone number, location and time you observed the drone. Your cooperation is needed to insure the safety of our pilots.

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: Aug. 1 Bitterroot National Forest Amendment for the Lolo Peak Fire included Bass Creek FR #1136, beginning at the junction of FR#1316, the Charles Waters Campground and through section 32, T.10N, R20W.

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 (FR #2160), Small Creek Road (FR #4292), West Fork Butte Trail (#320), Mill Creek Trail (#1310), Sweeney Trail (#393), and Bass Creek Trail (#4). For specific 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). It is being managed under unified command consisting of Incident Commander Poncin, Missoula Rural Fire Chief Newman and Ravalli County Fire Warden Mohn. **Montana National Guard** soldiers are providing assistance to the Missoula and Ravalli County Sheriffs' offices in road closures and evacuation programs.

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: Stevensville, Ravalli & Missoula County Government; Ravalli and Missoula County Sheriffs' Offices; Lolo Schools; Florence and Carlton Schools, Missoula Rural Fire; Florence VFD; Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes; MDOT; Carlton and Bass Lake Irrigation; Ravalli and Missoula County DES; Private Landowners.



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