

Lolo Peak Fire News Release

InciWeb - Incident Information System

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Lolo Peak Fire Update 7/30

Incident: Lolo Peak Fire Wildfire
Released: 7/30/2017

Stage II Fire Restrictions are in effect for Missoula and Ravalli Counties and across the Lolo and Bitterroot National Forests. Highway 12 remains open.

Related Information
Lolo Peak Fire Update 7/30 (pdf 90 kb)

Summary: Saturday morning fire fighters completed extinguishing the spot fires in the Duffy Lake area and were flown out later in the day. Light winds and cloud cover over the fire area moderated fire activity. Some growth, in a northerly direction, did occur on the portion of the fire west of the South Fork Lolo Creek. In late afternoon, two Type 1 helicopters successfully used bucket drops of retardant out of the Elk Meadows Mobile Retardant Base (MRB), to hold the fire along the ridgeline.

We are continuing preparation to protect the valley and its residents as well as our firefighters. Supporting that objective, approximately 900 homeowners have been personally contacted to assess their property for structure protection. Based on historical knowledge of fire behavior in this immediate area, and where this fire has the potential to move, 12 miles of control line between homes and the fire has been completed along the Highway 12 and Hwy 93 corridor. Construction of control line continues south along Highway 93.

The majority of this control line is approximately 100 feet wide, consisting of a 12 feet wide dozer line down to mineral soil adjacent to 90 feet of a "shaded" fuel break. Construction of this fuel break consisted of removing dense stands of small trees and brush and the lower limbs of larger trees. The fuel break is intended to reduce the intensity of the fire as it approaches the dozer line.

Alternate fire lines between the fire and the control line are also being constructed. Some of the line locations will use preexisting open and closed roads while others will be constructed with heavy equipment and incorporate natural features (rock slopes, etc.). To reduce the intensity and impact of fire and keep it off private land, these lines will be used to fight the fire before it moves closer to the control line.

We will continue to keep the public informed as we help you prepare for this fire. Please stop by the Firewise trailer, located on the eastside of the intersection of Hwy 12 and Hwy 93 or the Florence-Carlton School for current information.

Today: Record setting temperatures remain in the forecast for late next week; so fire managers are taking advantage of the moderate fire activity to focus efforts on improving both the primary and secondary control lines. Crews continue installing hose lays and portable water tanks as well as staging equipment along the Highway 12 corridor. Locating alternate control lines closer to the fire's edge remain a high priority for fire managers.

Weather and Fire Behavior: A significant warming and drying trend is forecasted for next week. Fire behavior predictions indicate the fire will move north and cross Lantern Ridge. The prevailing winds from the west southwest will push the fire northeast toward the valley floor and Highway 12. We are focusing our efforts with this in mind and feel we can scale our resources appropriately to meet this challenge. We continue to work closely with our cooperators, keeping public and firefighter safety our top priority.

Closures: 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; **Eik 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.

A temporary flight restriction is in place surrounding the fire.

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.

FireWise Message:

Is your home fire-safe? While nothing is ever fire-proof, there are some things you can do to protect your home and community now. Here are just a few actions you can take:

Clean out gutters, sweep decks and clean off your roof. These places can catch wind-driven embers that will ignite your home.

- Remove leaf clutter and branches overhanging the roof. Vegetation should not touch the home.
- Make sure that there are no flammable materials within 3 to 5 feet around the building.
- Dispose of plant debris according to local regulations.
- Keep your grass cut short and well-watered within a 30 foot radius of structures.
- Store firewood away from the house.
- Organize a neighborhood cleanup day. By helping your entire community, you'll be providing better protection to yourself.

· Helpful Links:

Fire Safe Montana: <http://firesafemt.org/>

FireWise Communities: <http://www.firewise.org/?sso=0>

Montana DNRC: <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/forestry/fire-and-aviation/fire-prevention-and-preparedness>

Cooperators: Stevensville, Ravalli & Missoula County Government; Ravalli County Sheriff's Office; Missoula County Sheriff's Office; Lolo School District; Missoula Rural Fire; Florence VFD; MDOT;

Carlton and Bass Lake Irrigation; Florence – Carlton School District; Ravalli and Missoula County DES; Private Landowners

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