

Big Knife

August 25, 2023, 9:00 AM MDT



Northern Rockies
Incident Management Team 8
Brad Bergman,
Incident Commander

FIRE INFORMATION

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INCIDENT STATISTICS

Location: 5 miles east of Arlee, MT

Cause: Lightning

Fire Size: 7,275 acres

Containment: 13%

RESOURCES ASSIGNED

Crews: 1

Engines: 5

Water Tenders: 3

Total Personnel: 139

Wisps of smoke are visible within the footprint of the fire area, as the temperatures rise, and sheltered fuels continue to dry out. A final piece of line will be constructed today, reaching from the S Canal Rd to the fire's edge. Crews are beginning to "time out", reaching the end of their working days here and either returning home or being reassigned to other fires. With moderated fire activity, remaining crews have been busy with the start of suppression repair work. In the last two days, almost 10 miles of hose lay from S Canal Road and Agency Creek have been backhauled and crews have been busy rolling it to send back to the cache.

It's not often realized how much work goes into this stage of a fire. In the coming weeks, dozer line will need to be naturalized and the rest of the equipment will be removed off the fire line. The objective is to leave it in as good condition, or better, than we found it.

The Big Knife Fire is currently 1.25 miles north of the Rattlesnake Wilderness Boundary (Lolo National Forest) with no significant growth towards the Lolo National Forest in the last week. Smoke from the fire may impact the Snowbowl area, however the Lolo National Forest does not have any forest closures in place on the Missoula Ranger District.

CLOSURES AND SPECIAL MESSAGES: Several areas near the base of the mountains west of the Big Knife Fire remain in PRE-EVACUATION WARNING by order of the Lake County Sheriff. See the map for those locations in yellow (Jocko, Canal, Francis). The Tribal Primitive Area, Belmore Slough and Burnt Cabin Roads are closed.

A PRE-EVACUATION WARNING means you may remain in your home. Individuals in this status should not bring back evacuated livestock until this status is lifted.

A temporary flight restriction (TFR) is in effect around the fire area. Do not fly unmanned aircraft (drones) near the fire areas.

Weather: With the passage of a weak, dry cold front, cloud cover will increase. There is a slight chance of afternoon thunderstorms, with wind gusts up to 40 mph off those storms. Otherwise, temperatures will remain in the upper 70s and winds will gust up to 22 mph.

FIRE RESTRICTIONS: Stage 1 fire restrictions are currently in place across the Flathead Indian Reservation and Lake County. Stage 1 fire restrictions remain in place in Granite County. In Stage 1 fire restrictions the following are prohibited until rescinded: Building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire or campfire except within a developed recreation site or improved site. Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials. On the Flathead Reservation, operating a motorized vehicles off designated roads and trails. Visit <https://www.mtfireinfo.org/> for more fire restriction information across Montana.

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