

## MONTANA OFFICE OF TOURISM FIRE UPDATE

August 30, 2011

### Recent Articles on Montana's Fire Season

#### Wildfire west of Billings grows, but homes not in danger

<http://billingsgazette.com/#ixzz1WWzCWwQG> - *Billings Gazette* (8/30/11)

#### Rain aids crews fighting West Riverside fire; Missoula County bumps fire danger to 'extreme'

[http://missoulain.com/news/local/article\\_7ce1b144-d283-11e0-86fa-001cc4c002e0.html#ixzz1WXmVXCG9](http://missoulain.com/news/local/article_7ce1b144-d283-11e0-86fa-001cc4c002e0.html#ixzz1WXmVXCG9) - *Missoulain* (8/30/11)

### Current Fire Activity as of: **Tuesday, August 30, 2011 – 2:00 p.m.**

A map of locations of any major fires in Montana can be found at: <http://activefiremaps.fs.fed.us/>

For the most up-to-date information on fires in Montana, visit: <http://www.inciweb.org/state/27/>

Analyzed Fires and Smoke from Satellite:

<http://www.firedetect.noaa.gov/viewer.htm?box=-1490116.93859803:282654.815634218:-292646.984705805:1062563.20058996&Layers=111000001010101010111000000001&ActiveLayer=2>

#### Glacier Country:

**FORTY ONE COMPLEX (Hamilton)** – Four fires are burning approximately 10 miles east of Hamilton in the Sapphire Mountains on the Darby Ranger District. Smoke from these fires is visible from downtown Hamilton. The complex is currently 100 acres with the largest fire being 50 acres. Fire managers will manage these fires as one complex called the Forty One Complex with their first priority being to keep the fires from moving west onto private land.

#### Temporary Closures:

- There will likely be several road and trail closures associated with these fires including Gird Road #714 off Skalkaho Highway.

**SADDLE FIRE (Hamilton)** – This fire started in Idaho and on August 22 made a run into the Bitterroot National Forest. Total size of the fire is 22,949 of which 13,097 acres have burned in the Bitterroot. Structure protection is in place at homes furthest up the West Fork drainage. Stage 1 evacuations orders in effect for about 50 homes south of Painted Rocks.

**WEST RIVERSIDE FIRE (Bonner)** – This 3,600 acre wildfire burning 5 miles east of Missoula is 35% contained. Fire activity reduced due to lower temperatures, lower winds, and higher humidity.

#### Temporary Closures:

- The Blackfoot River remains closed to recreational use from Wisherd Bridge down to the old mill site.

- In addition, national forest land north of Highway 200 from Marshall Canyon Road to Gold Creek Road nine miles up the Blackfoot is closed. It includes the system of roads in the Gold Creek and Twin Creek drainages.
- Much of the Sheep Mountain Trail accessed from Missoula's Rattlesnake Valley from Woods Gulch is also closed, as are the Sheep Mountain Loop Trail, the East Fork Rattlesnake Trail, Mineral Peak Trail and Upper Twin Creek Trail.
- **SPECIAL MESSAGES:** Those traveling in the fire area along Highway 200 and the Frontage Road are encouraged not to stop along the roadways for public and firefighter safety reasons. When driving, be aware of increased traffic in the area, especially at Mile Marker 5 on Highway 200 where the Incident Command Post is located. Speed is reduced to 35 mph near the Command Post.

**BIG SALMON LAKE FIRE (Bob Marshall Wilderness)** – This fire is burning in the Bob Marshall Wilderness on the north side of Big Salmon Lake which is east of Holland Lake. It is currently 4,100 acres and has minimal fire behavior. Structure protection is being implemented for cabins and bridges in the area.

**Temporary Closures:**

**Closed Trails:**

- Closure of Trail # 110, 111 and 451 in the Big Salmon Creek drainage.

**ARIANE 2 FIRE (Libby)** - This fire is currently 210 acres primarily on Plum Creek and some State of Montana lands in the Fisher River drainage near Libby, MT. It is 75% contained.

**SOUTH FORK LOST CREEK FIRE (Swan Lake)** – This fire, which was first reported Saturday, August 13, is burning approximately 7 miles southeast of Swan Lake and is expected to burn for several more weeks. It is currently 1,681 acres with 35% contained.

**Temporary Closures:**

**Closed Trails:**

These roads are closed to all motorized vehicles, foot, bicycle, and horse activities for public safety due to fire activity.

- **Trail #7**, Alpine Trail - Closed to public use between Inspiration Pass in Section 32, T24N, R16W and junction Trail #396 Connor Trail in Section 23; T25N, R17W; PMM.
- **Trail #101**, Bunker Creek - Closed to public use between Section 24, T24N, R16W and Trail #82, Section 2, T24N, R16W; PMM;
- **Trail #101A**, Bunker/Alpine Connector- Closed to public use between Trail #101 in section 32, T25N, R16W to trail termini, Section 31, T25N, R16W; PMM;
- **Trail #86**, Lost Creek - Closed to public use between Road #680, Section 7, T24N, R16W and Trail # 7, Section 32, T24N, R16W; PMM;
- **Trail #108** - Closed to public use between Road #9521, Section 4, T24N, R17W and Trail #86, Section 19, T24N, R16W; PMM;
- **Road #680** - Closed to public use between Road #5206, Section 31, T25N, R17W and Termini, Section 7, T24N, R16W; PMM;
- **Road #5206** - Closed to public use between Road #680, Section 31, T25N, R17W and Termini, Section 26, T25N, R17W; PMM

**HAMMER CREEK FIRE (Condon - Flathead National Forest)** – This fire is now 2,800 acres and continues to grow slowly a remote area of the Bob Marshall Wilderness about 40 miles south of the Spotted Bear Ranger District. The fire is being monitored by firefighters on the ground and air patrol. Boaters on the South Fork of the Flathead River floating North of Big Prairie should not be impacted by the fire. It is recommended to not go to shore in the fire area.

- All visitors are encouraged to contact Spotted Bear Station (406-758-5376) prior to starting back country trips - all back-country visitors in the South Fork of the Flathead encouraged to visit Big Prairie station or the Black Bear Cabin.

### Temporary Closures:

#### **Closed Trails:**

- East Side Trail #80 closed to public use at jct of Lime Creek trail just north of Big Prairie Ranger Station to the White River Park and trail junctions to access the Holbrook Ford.
- Lime Creek Trail # 193 is closed in the entirety. All travel is on the West Side Travel.

**GRANITE PASS FIRE (Lolo Pass)**– This fire is 435 acres and is approximately 3 miles northwest of Lolo Pass and smoke from the fire is visible from Highway 12. Structure protection remains in place for a remote cabin in the vicinity of the fires.

### Temporary Closures:

- An area from Lolo Pass north to the border between the Missoula and Ninemile ranger districts on the Lolo National Forest is closed to the public. The eastern border of the closure is Highway 12, the northeast border is Fish Creek Road (Forest Service Road No. 343) and the western boundary is the Montana/Idaho border.

### Custer Country:

**BUFFALO TRAIL WILDFIRE (Laurel)** – This 2,000 acre wildfire is burning north of Laurel near Canyon Creek Road. It is currently burning away from homes and subdivisions so no homes or structures are in danger.

### Temporary Closures:

- Buffalo Trail between Laurel Airport Road and Lipp Road remains closed. Only residents coming to and from their homes are allowed in the area.
- Traffic is being detoured to 72nd Street West using King Avenue West to reach Lipp Road past the fire area.

**BLACK SPRINGS COMPLEX (Lame Deer)** – The Black Springs Complex consists of five fires burning near Lame Deer, MT (Water Hole (19,309 acres), Boss Ribs (4,506 acres), Two Moons, Roman Nose & Rookie). It is currently 24,038 acres and 98% contained. Mop up and rehab efforts are focused on Water Hole and Boss Ribs fires.

**DIAMOND COMPLEX (Ashland)** – This complex is comprised of three fires burning approximately 25 miles south of Ashland in the Custer National Forest (Little Fork, Maverick & Mill Fires). The complex is currently 50,370 acres and 85% contained. (Little Fork- 33,000 acres 85% contained; Mill Fire – 6,950 acres, 75% contained; Maverick Fire 11,120 acres, fully contained.)

**HOSS FIRE (Fort Smith/Crow Reservation)** – This 806 acre lightning sparked fire is burning in the steep walls of the Black Canyon in the Bighorn Mountains of the Crow Indian Reservation. As of Tuesday, Aug. 23 it was 85% contained.

### Temporary Closures:

- The Tribe has temporarily closed the Reservation's Bighorn Mountains to protect public safety due to Hoss fire operations and high fire danger.

### Yellowstone Country:

**BULL FIRE (Gardiner)** – At 540 acres, this lightning-sparked wildfire was first reported July 29th and is 13 miles east of Gardiner in the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness near Bull Mountain in the Hellroaring drainage. This is a resource benefit fire which is being monitored by four on-the-ground fire fighters.

### Temporary Closures:

#### **Closed Trails:**

- To reduce safety risks for hunters and other recreational backcountry users, trail closures have been effected on the Low Specimen Trail (FS Trail #84) from its junction with the High Specimen Trail (FS Trail #252) east to its junction with the Hellroaring Trail (FS Trail #91) and on the Hellroaring Trail south of that junction to the northern boundary of Yellowstone National Park.

**HOLE IN THE WALL FIRE (Clark, Wyoming)** - The Hole in the Wall fire began 8 miles west of Clark, WY but began burning in the Custer National Forest towards Red Lodge. Most of the acreage burned has been in Wyoming and it is currently 6,200 acres and 85 percent contained.

### Temporary Closures:

#### **Closed Trails:**

- Trail closures include, Line Creek Plateau, Corral Creek Trail 9, Maurice Creek trail 6, North Grove Trail, Face of the Mountain 7, and Robertson Draw 5 have been closed to public access. Forest Road 123, Line Creek Road, and South Grove Road are closed for public safety.

### Gold West Country:

**BALD BEAR FIRE (Augusta)** – This 115 acre fire is burning 21 miles southeast of August along Bald Bear Creek in the upper Dearborn River drainage. Fire management efforts will be on limiting or preventing growth of the fire into more mature timbered areas in the Dearborn River drainage to the southeast.

**ELK PARK FIRE (White Sulphur Springs)** – This 600 acre fire is located 22 miles northwest of White Sulphur Springs. The Elk Park Fire has burned onto private property, however, no structures have been lost. Firefighters have been able to make excellent progress and the blaze is now 95 percent contained.

**LUTZ FIRE (Philipsburg)** – This fire is 20 miles west of Philipsburg in the Emerine area. It is currently 755 acres and is being managed to achieve resource objectives and protect values at risk. Fire behavior is low, with creeping and smoldering on the ground.

### Temporary Closures:

#### **Closed Trails:**

- Trails # 8016 and 8017 are closed, along with dispersed camp sites in the area closure;
- Sand Basin road # 5070 is closed at the intersection with the Bowls Road # 5071.
  - The Bowls Road will remain open.
- Skalkaho Pass is not affected by these closures or the fire.

**STEWART FIRE (Wisdom)** - This 20 acre fire is 8 miles southeast of Wisdom and is being managed to improve vegetation diversity and wildlife habitat.

- The Stewart Meadow's Trail #3180 is being monitored for access and to provide for public safety.
- At this time there are no area or trail closures.

**WHITETAIL PEAK FIRE (Butte)** – This lightning caused wildfire is now 38 acres. This fire is being managed to reduce heavy natural fuels and provide for more resilient vegetation.

Firefighters are also working to protect several historic cabins on private property to the west, and a historic homestead site to the east. Residents and visitors in Butte, Whitehall, Basin, Boulder, and the Elk Park - Interstate 15 corridor may see and smell smoke. Currently there are no area or trail closures in effect.

---

**Current Air Quality as of: *Tuesday, August 30, 2011 – 2:00 p.m.***

If air quality becomes an issue, you can find updates at:  
<http://www.deq.mt.gov/FireUpdates/default.mcp>

---

**Current Fire Restrictions as of: *Tuesday, August 30, 2011 – 2:00 p.m.***

Portions of **Glacier Country** (Lake, Sanders & Missoula Counties): **Stage 1 restrictions** –  
[http://firerestrictions.firecenter.umt.edu/FireRestriction\\_pub/](http://firerestrictions.firecenter.umt.edu/FireRestriction_pub/)

Portions of **Yellowstone Country/Custer Country** (Carbon, Yellowstone, Bighorn & Treasure Counties): **Stage 1 restrictions**

**Stage 1 Restrictions:**

(Further details provided at:  
[http://firerestrictions.firecenter.umt.edu/FireRestriction\\_pub/Stage1.htm](http://firerestrictions.firecenter.umt.edu/FireRestriction_pub/Stage1.htm))

***The following acts are prohibited until further notice:***

- 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 (3) feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials.

Portions of **Glacier Country/Gold West Country** (Ravalli County): **Local Burn Ban restrictions** –  
[http://firerestrictions.firecenter.umt.edu/FireRestriction\\_pub/](http://firerestrictions.firecenter.umt.edu/FireRestriction_pub/)

Portions of **Yellowstone Country** (Belgrade): **Local Burn Ban restrictions** –  
[http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/news/county/article\\_fc37fe9e-d030-11e0-a968-001cc4c002e0.html](http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/news/county/article_fc37fe9e-d030-11e0-a968-001cc4c002e0.html)

---