



# Bridger Foothills Fire Morning Update

September 12, 2020 – 9:00 am

## **Rocky Mountain Incident Management Team - Dan Dallas, Incident Commander**

Information Center: 406-219-7052 (8:00 am to 8:00 pm)

Media Inquiries: 406-219-7136

InciWeb: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7144/> Email: [2020.bridgerfoothills@firenet.gov](mailto:2020.bridgerfoothills@firenet.gov)

Bridger Foothills Fire Story Map: <https://arcg.is/1eqjm0>

**Special Notes:** Northern Rockies Team 5, a Montana-based Type 2 Incident Management Team, will take command of the incident at 8:00 pm this evening. Today is a transition period with the Rocky Mountain Type 1 Team to exchange information and bring the new team up to full capability before taking over. The Rocky Mountain team will leave Sunday morning to another fire assignment with location yet to be determined.

To continue addressing the needs of people directly impacted by the Bridger Foothills Fire, the Southwest Montana COAD (Community Organizations Active in Disaster), in coordination with Gallatin County Emergency Management, the Gallatin County Sheriff's Office and the Custer Gallatin National Forest, will be offering numerous options for assistance to impacted residents today. For more information see <https://www.gallatinmedia.org/?p=7532>.

The US Forest Service, with support from the Gallatin County Sheriff's office, has completed the initial investigation to determine what started the Bridger Foothills Fire. The fire was first reported on September 4, 2020. Investigators have announced that the likely cause of the fire appears to be the result of a hold-over lightning strike. Investigators will continue following up on any additional leads received prior to releasing a final cause determination. For more information: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/custergallatin/news-events/?cid=FSEPRD802672>.

Gallatin County, Montana DNRC, Custer Gallatin National Forest, and the Incident Management Teams continue their strong partnership in suppressing this wildfire and assisting residents affected by the fire.

**Current Situation:** The fire is 8,224 acres with 72% containment. There are still isolated pockets of heat within the fire perimeter. Residents can expect to see occasional smoke in interior portions of the fire until more precipitation arrives. Most of the fire, except the north end, is contained and in patrol status. Today's fire suppression activity: crews will continue to build line on the north end of the fire. Helicopters with buckets are available to assist in this area as needed. The timber taskforce (a team of skilled logging equipment operators who, under direction of fire operations staff, remove trees to make a fuel break) will continue to establish a contingency fuel break in heavily timbered areas north of the fire. Crews are patrolling on the west flank. A Burned Area Emergency Rehab (BAER) team is beginning rehabilitation assessments along the Bridger Ridge trail and in the Pine Creek drainage. Their work will help prevent soil erosion and damage to infrastructure when rains come.

**Weather & Fuel Conditions:** Fire behavior potential continues to increase today with warmer, drier weather. A gradual warming trend continues with temperatures reaching the mid-70s by Sunday and lower 80s likely on Monday with humidity dropping into the mid-teens. Winds will generally be light and will be terrain influenced until Monday, when a cold front passage will bring strong NW winds gusting 25-30mph in the afternoon. There is a chance of showers Tuesday and Wednesday.

**Evacuations and Closures:** Bridger Canyon Road remains closed to the public from Boylan Road to Brackett Creek. *This includes bikers and runners.* The section of road is open for residents only and for service providers that are requested by residents, such as contractors, construction crews, insurance personnel and trash companies. Residents and others should stay off the roads from 7 AM to 10 AM, and from 6 PM to 8 PM to allow fire crews to travel.

For further details on these closures see the Gallatin County Sheriff's Office Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/gallatincountysheriffsoffice/> or <https://www.gallatinmedia.org/>

The forest area closure and maps for the Custer Gallatin National Forest are listed on the Forest Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/CusterGallatinNationalForest/>), on InciWeb (<https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7144/>), and on the Custer-Gallatin National Forest webpage ([https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/fseprd802593.pdf](https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd802593.pdf)).

*It is important to remember that the area is closed to all human entry, including the roads and trails within the closure area. The Custer Gallatin Forest is re-evaluating the closure daily and will adjust the boundaries as soon as it is safe to do so.*

**Bridger Foothills Fire Statistics:**

Size: 8,224 acres

Containment: 72%

Total Personnel: approximately 373

Location: NE of Bozeman, approx. 2.5 miles up from M parking lot, near the Bridger Foothills trail

Reported: September 4, 2020

Cause: The likely cause of the fire appears to be the result of a hold-over lightning strike. For more information: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/custergallatin/news-events/?cid=FSEPRD802672>.

**Resources Include:** Air resources include 2 medium helicopters and 1 light helicopter. Other personnel and equipment include 2 Interagency Hotshot (Type 1) hand crews, 8 Type 2 hand crews, 13 engines, 2 water tenders, 1 ambulance, and 2 dozers.

