



**NORTHERN ROCKIES  
INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM 5**  
Joe Sampson,  
Incident Commander

#### INCIDENT STATISTICS

**Location:** Custer Gallatin NF  
3 miles NE of Bozeman, MT  
**Start date:** September 4, 2020  
**Size:** 8,224 acres  
**Percent Contained:** 77%  
**Cause:** Lightning

#### Resources Assigned:

- Total personnel: 277
- Engines: 6
- Type 1 "Hot Shot" crews: 1
- Type 2 Hand crews: 5
- Helicopters: 2
- Dozers: 1
- Water tenders: 1

#### SUMMARY:

The Bridger Foothills Fire started around 3 pm on September 4, 2020. Initial attack forces responded, but were unable to suppress the fire, given the extreme dry and windy conditions.

By that night the fire had grown to about 400 acres. Local resources attempted extended attack on Saturday, but a frontal passage with strong winds pushed the fire to an estimated 7,000 acres. The fire has shown minimal fire behavior on the perimeter in recent days, with interior smokes still visible. Firefighters continue to patrol, mop-up hot spots and secure the fire edge. Resource advisors are evaluating the fire area and coordinating suppression repair.

#### SAFETY:

There is a Temporary Flight Restriction in place over the fire area. Wildfires are a NO DRONE ZONE. If you fly, we can't. Flying a drone near a wildfire can shut down all air operations.

#### COOPERATING AGENCIES:

Gallatin County  
Montana DNRC  
Custer Gallatin NF

# BRIDGER FOOTHILLS FIRE

September 15, 2020 - 8:00 a.m.

#### CURRENT STATUS:

Acreage remains at 8,224 acres. Containment remains at 77%. The south side of the fire, a large portion of the east and west sides, and the large spot east of the fire are contained.

Despite predicted Red Flag conditions, the fire exhibited minimal fire behavior, with creeping and smoldering yesterday. Gusty winds did not materialize, as forecast. Crews located, isolated, and put out hot-spots interior to the fire's edge on all flanks. Firefighters worked to secure the perimeter on the northeast corner, addressing heat sources and "gridding" non-burned areas. To the north, crews found a burning snag which will burn out on its own. Today, crews will reposition from the southern edge to the northern flank to assist others with mop-up and gridding. Heavy equipment completed the fuel break directly north of the fire, "buttoning up" that section. Resource advisors are identifying any damages to minimize potential soil erosion and impacts from suppression operations. Crews to the south will coordinate with landowners to mop-up and monitor areas around structures, locating hot-spots and removing residual heat. Smoke from other fires on the west coast could affect air operations. Resources no longer needed will demobilize, returning to home units or receiving orders for reassignment to other incidents.

#### WEATHER/FIRE BEHAVIOR:

Temperatures are expected to drop slightly into the high 70s, with higher relative humidity in the mid-teens. However, fuel moisture remains low. Ridgetop winds up to 10-15 mph are predicted, with lighter winds at lower elevations, shifting from the SW to the W. Winds are expected to be more terrain-driven, which may cause more fire activity than previous days on the west ridge. Large fuels will continue to smolder, and creeping fire behavior is expected to remain in the greater Bozeman area. The extended forecast calls for a 50% chance of rain over the upcoming weekend, with on and off showers.

#### EVACUATIONS/CLOSURES/NOTIFICATIONS:

Bridger Canyon Drive from Boylan Road to Brackett Creek Road is closed to the public. This includes bikers and runners. The entire Bridger Canyon Road is open FOR RESIDENTS ONLY. Residents should reduce speed and watch for fire traffic. Residents should also refrain from using the roads from 7 am to 10 am and from 6 pm to 8 pm to allow for safer travel by fire crews. For more information, see <https://www.gallatinmedia.org/>.

There is an area closure for National Forest System lands in the Bridger Foothills Fire area. This closes the area, roads, and trails to all human entry within the Bridgers south of Flathead Pass and all of the Bangtails. The Forest and the Incident Management Team are re-evaluating the closure daily and will adjust boundaries according to the situation on the ground.

The Gallatin County Emergency Management Office encourages all residents to be prepared for future emergencies, by signing up to receive emergency notifications through the Community Notification System. Information can be found at <https://www.readygallatin.com/public-warning/community-notification-system/>.

#### SPECIAL MESSAGES:

People recreating or spending time outdoors are reminded to be careful with activities that could cause a spark, potentially igniting new wildfires.

Folks are reminded to completely extinguish campfires; the local Forest has responded to 6 abandoned campfires recently. Drown, stir, and feel until cold to the touch.



Fire Information Line: 406-219-7052 (8 am to 8 pm)

Media Inquiries: 406-219-7136

Inciweb: [inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7144](https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7144)

Email: [2020.bridgerfoothills@firenet.gov](mailto:2020.bridgerfoothills@firenet.gov)

Facebook: CusterGallatinNationalForest