



**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: 260
- Engines: 8
- Type 2 Hand crews: 6
- Helicopters: 2
- 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 p.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.

Crews located, isolated, and put out hot-spots interior to the fire's edge on all flanks. Crews re-positioned from the southern edge to the northern flank to assist with mop-up and gridding. Heavy equipment that completed the northern contingency line has been demobilized off the fire. Crews on the southern edge coordinated with landowners to monitor areas around structures and address any "flare-ups," removing residual heat. Fire personnel worked with the local Fire Department to assess structures outside the fire area to the north. The data collected will be used to document the fire risk for those structures in the event of future fires. Smoke from other fires on the west coast could continue to affect air operations. Resources no longer needed will demobilize, returning to home units or receiving orders for reassignment to other incidents.

Personnel will be utilizing an Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) to locate hot-spots along the fire perimeter on the northern flank. The use of UAS to assess fire activity has less risk, reducing ground-based firefighter exposure in steep, rugged, and rocky terrain. These operations are more cost effective than some traditional aerial operations. The end result is rapid assessment of current fire conditions through the utilization of sensors and cameras not readily available in traditional firefighting aircraft.

WEATHER/FIRE BEHAVIOR:

Good relative humidity recovery is expected in the overnight hours. Temperatures tomorrow are expected to drop slightly into the high 70s, with higher relative humidity in the mid-teens and winds similar to previous days. Large fuels will continue to smolder, and creeping fire behavior is expected in duff and lighter fuels. Drift smoke from other fires in the West is expected to remain in the greater Bozeman area. The extended forecast calls for a 60% chance of rain over the upcoming weekend, with measurable precipitation expected (0.3 inch).

CLOSURES/NOTIFICATIONS:

Bridger Canyon Road in its entirety is OPEN to the public. Travelers should SLOW DOWN and watch for fire traffic, as firefighting resources remain in the area.

The Forest has modified the area closure order for National Forest System lands in the Bridger Foothills Fire area, effective at midnight tonight. This closes the area, roads, and trails to all human entry within the Bridgers, west of Highway 86 and south of a line from the Brackett Creek intersection ("the Y") extending to the west through Ross Peak to the western Forest boundary. Popular trails like Middle Cottonwood, Bridger Foothills, Sypes Canyon, all Bridger Bowl trails to the ridge and all trails south of Brackett Creek and up and over Ross Peak remain closed. Trail users should refrain from attempting to run the ridge or loop the Bridger Foothills trail; many connector trails are still closed.

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/>.



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

Media Inquiries: 406-219-7136

Inciweb: inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7144

Email: 2020.bridgerfoothills@firenet.gov

Facebook: CusterGallatinNationalForest