



**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:** 83%  
**Cause:** Lightning

#### Resources Assigned:

- Total personnel: 196
- Engines: 5
- Type 2 Hand crews: 4
- 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 19, 2020 - 8:00 a.m.

#### CURRENT STATUS:

Acreage remains at 8,224 acres. Containment remains at 83%. 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.

**Northern Rockies Team 5 will transfer command of the fire to a local incident management organization, effective tomorrow morning.**

Fire personnel and an engine responded to a report of a hot spot early this morning at 4:30 a.m., just south of Pine Creek along the eastern edge of the fire. The heat was interior to the fireline and did not pose a threat. Crews patrolled and "mopped-up" hot spots interior to the fire's edge on all flanks. Fire personnel and local Fire Department representatives continued to assess structures outside the fire area, progressing from Jackson Creek to the south and east. Over 220 structure assessments have been completed so far. The data collected will be used to document the fire risk for those structures in the event of future fires. Resources no longer needed are demobilizing and traveling home, as the organization downsizes over the next few days.

#### WEATHER/FIRE BEHAVIOR:

The fire experienced good relative humidity recovery overnight. Much cooler temperatures (low 60s) and cloudy conditions are expected today, with relative humidity in the 50-54% range. Winds associated with the cold front could gust to 20 mph in the afternoon. Smoke from other fires in the western U.S. will linger in the Bozeman area, but is expected to be somewhat less. There is a 90% chance of wetting rain, up to .1 inch. The extended forecast for next week calls for a return to warmer and drier conditions.

Large fuels will continue to smolder, and creeping fire behavior is expected in duff and lighter fuels. Expected fire behavior is low, given the cooler, damp conditions.

#### 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. 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. Visit the [Inciweb page](#), [Closures tab](#), for a detailed description and map of the modified closure.

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/>.

Personal responsibility and prevention of the next ignition is of utmost importance in preventing the next wildfire. Take extra precaution when having campfires; put them dead out and cold to the touch before leaving. Refrain from parking vehicles on dry grass and make sure all power equipment is in good working condition.



**Fire Information Line: 406-219-7052 (9 am to 7 pm)**  
**Inciweb: [inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7144](https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7144)**  
**Email: [2020.bridgerfoothills@firenet.gov](mailto:2020.bridgerfoothills@firenet.gov)**  
**Facebook: CusterGallatinNationalForest**