

COLT FIRE UPDATE

Montana DNRC Southwestern Land Office

Thursday, July 20, 2022

Fire Situation: The 15-acre Colt Fire is burning in dense timber with heavy dead and down fuels northwest of Colt Lake, approximately 15 miles northwest of Seeley Lake. Caused by lightning that came through the area on Monday, July 17, the fire was detected the morning of Tuesday, July 18. It is on land managed by the Lolo National Forest but under Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation fire protection and is **currently 0% contained**. Firefighters are working the perimeter of the fire with chainsaws to create a break in fuels (saw line) and finding success with aerial resources committed to the fire.

Fire Behavior: Active torching and burning. The fire is located in a thermal belt and burned actively throughout the night Tuesday and Wednesday.

Weather: Warm and dry conditions are expected over the next few days. Temperatures will be hovering around 90 with light westerly winds Thursday. High pressure over the area through the weekend will strengthen thermal belts, leading to poor humidity recovery overnight. No precipitation is expected.

Evacuations & Closures: There are no structures threatened, no evacuations in place, and no closures at this time, **HOWEVER**, fire managers request that the public **AVOID** the Beaver Lake and Colt Lake areas where crews and resources are actively working.

Summary: The **Colt Fire** was started by lightning on Monday, July 17. Local DNRC and USFS firefighters responded quickly upon detection on July 18. The fire is 0% contained and on-the-ground resources include the Bitterroot Interagency Hotshot crew, four engines (USFS-Lolo National Forest, DNRC-Clearwater, DNRC-Swan, and USFS-Flathead National Forest), one Type 2 Initial Attack DNRC hand crew, and USFS Seeley Lake Ranger District personnel. Aviation resources include four helicopters (two Type 1, one Type 2, and one Type 3), air attack, and two CL-215 "Super Scoopers" from Idaho. Two single-engine air tankers (SEATs) dropping retardant have also been used to slow fire progression. Fire activity has included torching and active consumption of heavy fuels.

Current Fire Danger & Restrictions: **High Fire Danger and no fire restrictions at this time.**



The Montana Department of
**Natural Resources
& Conservation**

Fire location: 15 miles northwest of Seeley Lake

Size: 15 acres

Containment: 0%

Cause: Lightning

Resources assigned:

- 4 Engines
- 4 Helicopters
- 2 Scooper planes
- 1 Interagency hotshot crew (IHC)
- 1 Type 2 IA hand crew

Fire Information Contact:

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Prevention Message: Please do your part to prevent a wildfire start and visit www.MTFireInfo.org to learn about active fires and fire restrictions in place throughout Montana.



1. Colt Fire 7/19/23; photo credit Randy Okon.