

**INTERAGENCY WILDLAND FIRE DECISION DOCUMENT
FOR THE
Colt Fire**

The purpose of this decision document is to document the decisions and major actions of those Agencies that have responsibilities related to the fire. This includes the: who, what, why, when, and where to support those decision and actions. It should also document those situations when we agree to disagree. In addition, the decisions and rationale contained in this document will determine if costs are going to be apportioned. If costs are to be apportioned, then a cost share agreement will be developed and serve as an addendum to this decision document.

INTENT

It is the intention of the affected agencies to collaborate, cooperate, and work together on the fire. The goal of this document is to outline the joint and agency specific responsibilities and decisions reached between the Montana DNRC – Southwestern Land Office (SWLO) and Northwestern Land Office (NWLO), and the USFS – Lolo and Flathead National Forests (NFs). It will be used, in conjunction with the delegation of authority, Leader’s Intent, WFDSS and Long-Term Strategy to provide sound guidance and direction to the assigned Incident Management Organization.

This decision document covers the period of time from 7/24 (start) to End of Incident (end).

FIRE DETAILS

General Information

Fire Name: Colt

Fire Location (legal description): 18N, R16W, Sec 5 (top center - NW of NE Sec 5)

Fire Start Date/Time: 7/18/23 at 06:59

Fire Numbers by Protection Agency: MT-SWS-200549 – MTDNRC 903164 and USFS is PNQD24/1522

Protecting Agencies Strategies

Fire Situation Description: see attached map for fire area and areas of protection responsibility.

DNRC: The strategy(s) for the portion of the fire on MT DNRC protection will be: Full Suppression Response, using control features.

USFS: The strategy(s) for the portion of the fire on Lolo and/or Flathead NF protection will be: Full Suppression Response, using control features.

Incident Objectives

Firefighter and Public Safety

Safety of fire personnel and local residents/visitors is the highest priority followed by protection of structures/infrastructure. All strategic and tactical decisions will be based on sound risk management principles utilizing ICS. Fire management personnel will identify and execute tactics and strategies that balance safety with the highest probability of success.

Infrastructure and High Value Resources and Assets

A primary goal is to minimize fire threats and impacts to the local communities and the infrastructure that services them. Specific goals include: Minimize fire threats and impacts to Forest Service administrative and recreational sites. Assess community protection opportunities for the Highway 83 corridor and surrounding areas. Execute strategies and tactics to reduce negative fire impacts to private and commercial structures in these areas. Weigh suppression actions with consideration of identified T and E species habitats (Bull Trout, Lynx, Grizzly Bear, Whitebark Pine). Coordinate suppression actions with assigned Resource Advisors.

Social and Political Interest

Maintain coordination and timely communication with all agencies and landowners involved (Lolo National Forest, Flathead National Forest, Montana DNRC, Montana FWP, CSKT, MTDOT, MEC, Missoula County Commissioners, Missoula County Sheriff Department, Missoula County OES Coordinator, private landowners). Consider tactics and strategies that incorporate community reliance on natural resources. Provide information venues that are accessible to the local community.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Fire Protection Responsibilities

Does the fire area, or any mitigation actions taken, affect more than 1 agency's protection responsibility? Yes

Entity & Protection Area Description	Wildland Fire Responsibility (Y or N)	Structure Protection Responsibility (Y or N)	Structure Suppression Responsibility (Y or N)
USFS Lolo and Flathead NFs	Yes	Yes	No
MT DNRC SWLO and NWLO	Yes	Yes	No

Initial Attack Responsibilities

The IMT has been delegated initial attack responsibilities within the TFR

Summary of Responsibilities

The DNRC SWLO and NWLO have wildland fire protection responsibilities within their recognized direct protection boundaries. The Lolo and Flathead NFs have wildland fire protection responsibilities within their recognized direct protection boundaries. Lolo and Flathead NFs have responsibility for the evacuation of their administrative facilities and recreation sites. The Missoula County Sheriff has the responsibility for all other evacuations. The MT DOT will be responsible for public safety if smoke impacts Highway 83.

Other Responsibilities

Does the fire area, or any mitigation actions taken, affect an Agency's Jurisdictional responsibility or other Jurisdictional Agencies? Yes

Use the following matrix to identify those Jurisdictional Agencies that have responsibilities for activities or mitigation actions taken related to the fire.

Entity & Jurisdictional Area Description	Evacuation Responsibility (Y or N)	Road Responsibility (Y or N)	Search & Rescue Responsibility (Y or N)
Missoula County Sheriff Area Description: Missoula County	Yes	No	Yes
MT DOT Area Description: Highway 83	No	Yes	No

DECISIONS AND ACTIONS

Date: 7/26/2023

Decision: Costs prior to 7/24 will be the responsibility of MT DNRC. Cost share will start 7/24 when the Colt fire crossed protection boundaries to the northwest (Flathead NF) and east (Lolo NF). We are using a cost share by acres burned as our methodology for apportioning costs.

Rationale: The fire was active for several days before burning onto USFS protection, therefore costs prior to 7/24 will be 100% the responsibility of the MT DNRC.

Line Officer Decision Makers: Mike O'Herron – SWLO Area Manager, Greg Poncin – NWLO Area Manager, Carolyn Upton – Lolo NF Forest Supervisor, and Carol Hatfield - Flathead NF Forest Supervisor. Agency Administrators are defined as those assigned to the fire with a delegation.

Action(s) Taken to Implement Decision: Line Officers and Incident Business Advisors verbally communicated decision, rationale, and intent behind acres burned cost share methodology with the IMT to ensure overall understanding. Both Agencies and IMT recognize this and are willing to work together to achieve desired outcome.

Financial Responsibility for Actions: MT DNRC and USFS.

REFERENCES/GUIDELINES

Decisions made were based on the following references/guidelines:

- 2023 Montana Statewide Coop. Fire Management Agreement
- 2023 Montana Statewide Operating Plan
- 2023 Montana Overset Protection Map
- 2019 NRCG Cost Share Methodologies

COST ACCOUNTING

- The Incident Management Organization will each keep a set of records tracking resources for all incident related activities, including appropriate tracking of resources and accurate IAP documentation.
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- It has been agreed by all Agencies that costs will be shared for this fire. A Cost Share agreement utilizing acres burned methodology has been developed.

PRINCIPAL CONTACTS

- The following are the principal contacts for the decisions made during this fire.

Title:	Name:	Agency/Organization:
Agency Line Officer	Mike O’Herron	MT DNRC SWLO
Agency Administrator	Kristen Baker-Dickinson	MT DNRC Clearwater Unit
Agency Line Officer	Greg Poncin	MT DNRC NWLO
Agency Administrator	David Marx	MT DNRC Swan Unit
Agency Line Officer	Carolyn Upton	Lolo NF
Agency Administrator	Quinn Carver	Lolo NF – Seeley Lake RD
Agency Line Officer	Carol Hatfield	Flathead F
Agency Administrator	Chris Dowling	Flathead NF – Swan Lake RD
Incident Business Advisor	Natasha Bucklin	MT DNRC SWLO

Incident Business Advisor	Deanna Crawford	Lolo NF
Incident Business Specialist	Biddy Simet	Flathead NF

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• **ADDENDUMS TO THIS DOCUMENT**

Addendums to this document include:

- Appendix A – Map of Fire Area with protection layer
- Appendix B – Colt Fire Cost Share Agreement
- Appendix C – Cost Share Implementation guidance

SIGNATURES OF AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL

Agency Name: Montana DNRC – Southwestern Land Office
 Name and Title: Mike O’Herron – Area Manager
 Signature and Date: _____

Agency Name: USFS Lolo National Forest
 Name and Title: Carolyn Upton – Forest Supervisor
 Signature and Date: _____

Agency Name: USFS Flathead National Forest
 Name and Title: Carol Hatfield – Forest Supervisor
 Signature and Date: _____