

Instructions for the Completion of the DNRC Incident Situation Assessment (ISA)

Download & Update Situation Awareness Portion

Step 1: Download the ISA Excel file and rename it to your incident name. You may need to enable macros in the file. It is designed to get most of the incident situation information.

Step 2: Enter the date of your ISA analysis, and utilize the IOI application to get the Unique Fire ID, there is a link in the Excel document. You will copy that unique id and paste it in the unique id field. Once that is pasted in the field, click the refresh button, this will bring in the incident information into the ISA.

Step 3: Areas that are grey are brought in from IRWIN data, continue with completing the other information in the form including Area, & Unit. Preparedness levels can be found on the [Northern Rockies Coordination Center Website](#). Weather information can be found by clicking the view latest weather link in the Excel document. This will take you to the Fire Environment Mapping system map, you can zoom into the nearest weather station to your incident and get the latest information to complete this part of the form.

The screenshot shows the 'Montana DNRC - Incident Situation Assessment' form. It includes a logo for Montana DNRC and a title bar. The form is divided into several sections: 'Situational Awareness' with fields for Date of Analysis (04/25/2025 0000), Enter Fire ID# (2025-MTWS-256057), and a Refresh Data button; a warning box about Unique ID; a section for Incident Information with fields for Fire Name (Picket), Discovery Date (04/23/2025 2017), Acres (15), Dispatch Center (MTDDC), Fire Cause (Undetermined), County (Granite), Area (SWLO), Reporting Agency (DNRC, MTWS), Unit (ANA), and Jurisdictional Landowner (Private); a Preparedness Levels section with dropdowns for Local (1), NRCC (1), and National (3); and a Current Weather Conditions section with fields for Windspeed (25), Temperature (55), Wind Direction (SW), and Humidity (45). A link 'Click Here to view Latest Weather' is present. At the bottom, a button reads 'PROCEED TO #2 - Values at Risk'.

Montana DNRC - Incident Situation Assessment

Situational Awareness

Date of Analysis: 04/25/2025 0000

Enter Fire ID#: 2025-MTWS-256057 Refresh Data

Not Sure of the UniqueID? Click here to go to the ICM Map

Enter IncidentID Click on Refresh Data to Update

Fire Name: Picket

Discovery Date: 04/23/2025 2017

Acres: 15

Dispatch Center: MTDDC

Fire Cause: Undetermined

County: Granite Area: SWLO

Reporting Agency: DNRC, MTWS Unit: ANA

Jurisdictional Landowner: Private % Contained: 0

Preparedness Levels

Local: 1

NRCC: 1

National: 3

Current Weather Conditions

Windspeed: 25 Temperature: 55

Wind Direction: SW Humidity: 45

Click Here to view Latest Weather

PROCEED TO #2 - Values at Risk

Once this form is completed, you are ready to proceed to Section 2 – Values at Risk. You can do this by clicking the link at the bottom of the form, or selecting the values at risk tab.

Values at Risk

Structure Information

Structure information is accounted for according to structure type. Types are defined as follows:

Residence: a place where one lives: a house, apartment, or other shelter used as the residence of a person, family or household. This includes primary and secondary residences. Duplexes and apartments are to be considered as multiple residences.

Commercial Property: real estate zoned for business or industrial use. This includes income-producing property, such as office buildings, restaurants, shopping centers, hotels, industrial parks, warehouses, and factories.

Outbuilding/Other: a constructed building not designed for continuous human occupancy, such as barns, equipment sheds, outhouses, etc. Other structures or outbuildings do not include power poles, fences, pipelines, bridges, etc.

These are number-only entry boxes.

- **Threatened:** Enter the number of structures threatened by type for the current reporting period. A structure is threatened if it is at risk of loss or damage, or endangered during the operational reporting period. This typically includes structures subject to mandatory evacuation. This block will be cleared out each day.
- **Damaged:** Enter the number of structures damaged by type for the duration of the incident. A structure is damaged if its' usefulness or value is impaired. This block will be carried over each day.
- **Destroyed:** Enter number of structures destroyed for the duration of the incident. A structure destroyed is equivalent to a structure declared lost. This block will be carried over each day.

Threat to Human Life/Safety

Select any or all boxes that are relevant for the reporting period for each of these situations:
Evacuation(s) in progress No evacuations(s) imminent Potential future threat No likely threat
Due to the sensitivity of the information be accurate in your assessment. Provide a detailed explanation of these events in Remarks Block.

Communities and Infrastructure, timber grazing lands, watershed and other values threatened.

Describe significant threats to communities, critical infrastructure, natural and cultural resources such as timber, wildlife, habitat, watershed, grazing lands, agricultural areas, endangered species, historical resources, or other valuable resources and describe their value or significance in terms of 12, 24, 48, and 72-hour time frames. For example, a ranch house, barns and other outbuildings, located in Division C have the probability of being burned over in about 12 hours, a community of 300 homes and businesses northeast of the fire could be impacted by the fire-front in 48 hours, and the fire will directly threaten a water storage area in 72 hours. Use large block to elaborate as needed.

Montana DNRC - Incident Situation Assessment

Values at Risk

	Structure Information			Threat to Human Life/Safety
	Threatened	Damaged	Destroyed	
Residence:	12	0	0	Evacuation in Progress: Yes
Commercial:	1	0	0	Evacuations imminent: No
Outbuilding/Other:	2	1	1	Potential Future Threat: None Likely

Other Values

Communities, Critical Infrastructure, Timber, Grazing Land, Watershed, or Other Values Threatened

12 hours	Yes	This is only a test, nothing has been damaged or threatened on this incident, this is to test this process and form
24 hours	No	
48 hours	No	
72 hours	No	

PROCEED TO #3 - Fire Growth Potential

Once completed with this portion of the analysis, proceed to Fire

Fire Growth Potential

Indices, Fuels, Topography and Predicted Weather

ERC for the general area, short description of the existing fuels, fuel model as described below, general topography and general predicted weather patterns. **Links are available in the Excel page for finding current and predicted indices, and fuel model descriptions.**

For wildland fire incidents, select the appropriate primary fuel carrier from the thirteen Fire Behavior Fuel Models in the pull-down menu, list shown below. This portion of the block is required.

The Primary Fire Behavior Fuel Models include:

- 1 Short grass (1 Foot)
- 2 Timber (grass and understory)
- 3 Tall Grass (2.5 Feet)
- 4 Chaparral (6 Feet)
- 5 Brush (2 Feet)
- 6 Dormant Brush, Hardwood Slash
- 7 Southern Rough
- 8 Closed Timber Litter
- 9 Hardwood Litter
- 10 Timber (litter and understory)
- 11 Light Logging Slash
- 12 Medium Logging Slash
- 13 Heavy Logging Slash

Additional information pertinent to fuels/materials involved can be described in the text block for any incident or event kind, including additional detail on the types of fuels involved (e.g., while the primary fuel on a wildfire may be light logging slash, a number of other fuel types may be involved such as grass and chaparral).

Fire Growth Potential

Provide an estimate of the direction in which the incident is expected to spread, migrate, or expand in 12-, 24-, 48-, and 72- hour timeframes based on observed fire behavior.

Include an estimate of the acreage or area that will be affected. Emphasize the predicted movement of the fire, not the predicted fire behavior. Include the “why” (conditions affecting fire behavior such as low RH or high winds) and the “where” of the prediction (location, direction and amount of spread). The predicted movement of the fire should be consistent with the timeframes reported for values threatened in Section 2 and expressed as low, medium and high.

Montana DNRC - Incident Situation Assessment

Fire Growth Potential

Energy Release Component (ERC): **Very High** [Link to WE Safe - Requires Login](#)

Primary Fuel Model: [Link to Fuel Model Descriptions](#)

Secondary Fuel Model:

Topography: [Interactive Fire Map](#)

Weather:

Growth Potential (Acres) from observed fire behavior

	Confidence Level
12 hours Moderate	<input type="text" value="High"/>
24 hours Low	<input type="text" value="High"/>
48 hours Low	<input type="text" value="High"/>
72 hours Low	<input type="text" value="High"/>

Fire is expected to grow in high winds, cooler wet weather in the forecast after the passing front.

PROCEED TO #4 - Impacts to Other Agencies/Juris.

When you have completed the Fire Growth Potential Portion, proceed the Impact to other agencies or Jurisdictions tab.

Other Jurisdictions or Protection Agencies Impacted

Describe significant threats to other jurisdictions in terms of 12, 24, 48, and 72-hour time frames.

Comments: For example, the fire is predicted to be on Fallon County in 24 hours and Carter County in 72. It will move from DNRC Direct Protection to county protection in 48 hours.

Montana DNRC - Incident Situation Assessment

Impact to other Jurisdictions/Protection Agencies

12 hours

24 hours

48 hours

72 hours

Fire has potential to affect private and federal lands. County has protection of some of the private lands in the area, Lolo NF has protection of USFS lands.

You should have enough information to complete the Risk Assessment

Once this section is completed, you should have enough information to complete the risk assessment process. Continue to the Risk Assessment tab. There is a link to the USFS Operation Risk Management Guide. This document is for some guidance only.

Risk Assessment Process

Probability

Probability refers to the probability of fire growth that may affect factors that you have identified earlier in the ISA process.

Time of season – How long is this fire expected to be on the landscape.

Barriers to fire spread – Are there any natural or human made barriers to fire spread that already exist on the landscape.

Seasonal Severity – How severe is the either the fire season, or this time of year.

Evaluate Hazards

Fuel conditions – What are the current fuel conditions both within and ahead of the incident.

Fire behavior – Current or expected fire behavior

Potential for Fire Growth - Given the conditions what is the potential for this incident to grow.

Values – This may differ from what you may see in the WFDSS version of this risk assessment process, keep this in mind if you are completing a WFDSS version.

Structures/Infrastructure/Other concern – Based on the structure values at risk you complete earlier, what is the risk to the structures, infrastructure, etc.

Proximity and threat of incident to values – How close is the incident to values at risk.

Social/Economic Concerns – any social or economic concerns.

Final Risk Rating

Based on your input, the system will calculate a final risk rating of the incident. This will help guide your strategic assessment of the incident and help determine preferred options and rational for those options.

Strategic Assessment

Use the dropdown boxes to assess your incident. The Relative Risk Assessment is included as an attachment. Document any conversations or contact with the affected stakeholders.

Describe safety concerns and control problems such as heavy fuels, steep terrain, difficult access, adverse weather conditions, and extreme fire behavior anticipated in the next two to three operational periods. Include social/political/economic concerns or impacts. Relate critical resource needs to the planned actions if given the critical resource and how the resource is going to be utilized to mitigate the situation (e.g., T1 engines critical for structure protection).

Preferred Options & Rationale

Values at risk section from the risk assessment will be brought into this form. If you did not put any comments in those field in the risk assessment, but need it here, you can back track to that tab and fill in the narratives there.

Develop Priorities, Objectives and Strategies for at least one Option. Option B is to describe actions to be taken if Option A fails.

The fire control objectives and strategies detail how you are going to accomplish your objectives, and provides decision-making documentation.

Objective: what you are aiming at achieving, what is your goal?

To prevent the fire from moving from xxxx Cr. into the adjacent commercial timbered areas.

To prevent fire from reaching 20 yr old regenerated unit, or use of a geographic landmark, keep fire south of USFS Road # XXX

Strategy: how do you plan to achieve your objective?

Full response methods, direct or indirect attack.

Modified response methods, contingency line, helispot construction

Tactics: what are you going to do to achieve your strategy, and you may have several options, however:

Full suppression (direct or indirect attack)

Use of two unit crews to anchor base of fire; use two excavators to complete fuel break from A to B on east and west flanks for complete containment
R/W support from a mix of heavy/medium/intermediate/light for bucketing, moving of equipment, fill relay tanks, personnel moves.

Modified suppression

Use of two unit crews to anchor base, let fire burn out to natural barriers

No other action anticipated.

No action until specific boundaries/trigger point are crossed

All the objectives, strategies and tactics are thought through and based on the values at risk with an estimated cost of suppression. The cost of the action, in relation to the values at risk, in combination with the tactics etc. must lead to a logical conclusion of which and why a particular option is chosen; i.e. building a fire line at the bottom of a slope as opposed to mid slope.

Finish our with any final remarks.

Approval Tab

This will create the printed fields in the final printed document. Sign the printed out document at the end.

Printed Report Tab

The printed report table will collect all the data entered earlier in the process and provide a printable report of the ISA.

The risk assessment will be included in the final printed document.

You may need an incident map, large fire briefing package and a delegation of authority as additional documentation with this ISA.