

FIRE UPDATE

Sunday, Sept. 4, 8 p.m.



Incident Commanders: Brian Gales, NW13 · Joe Hessel, ODF Team 1 · Scott Magers, OFSM Blue Team

Fire size: 18,966 acres	Structures lost: 1 home, 2 other	Containment: 27%
Resources assigned: 2,098	Fire information: 541-414-3278	https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8348/
Evacuations: https://tinyurl.com/JOCOEvacMap		https://www.facebook.com/rumcreekfire2022

Firefighters protecting resources while suppressing fire

MERLIN, Ore. – Suppressing the Rum Creek Fire remains the teams’ primary objective, but firefighters are also mindful of protecting and preserving the resources that make the Rogue River and surrounding lands special.

The Rogue River was among the first eight rivers to be listed under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 for its outstanding scenery and natural resources. Several strategies are being utilized to protect those values.

While its thick bark provides resistance to wildfires, Port Orford cedar is vulnerable to a pathogen carried by water and wet soils that causes root rot. To prevent its spread, a disinfectant is added to engines and water tenders working the fire lines.

Salmonids are being protected in several ways: screening over pump hoses to prevent them from being pulled from the stream, not obstructing more than half of stream flow when creating pools to draw water from, and fine gravels are being preserved so they can be redistributed for spawning habitat.

Tactical firing operations not only strengthen and reinforce primary and contingency control line, they also blend seamlessly with natural fire on the ground.

“If you compare the natural burn and the strategic burn, you won’t be able to tell the difference,” said Jesse Stone, operations trainee for NW 13. “The canopy is intact and it looks great.”

In the coming days, work on the west and east sides of the fire will shift to mop-up along containment and contingency lines, clearing hazard trees and removing slash in many areas. Structural task forces are maintaining a presence in residential areas and conducting tactical patrols.

Weather: Monday will be much like today, with highs in the 90s and relative humidity in the teens and 20s. Another heat wave will move into the area Tuesday, however, with a potential high of 105F in Merlin. A critical fire weather watch and heat advisory have been issued for midweek.

Evacuations: Existing evacuation orders and notifications remain in place and are assessed daily. An interactive map showing evacuation levels according to address can be found at [//JosephineCounty.gov/FireMap](http://JosephineCounty.gov/FireMap). For the most current evacuation information and resources, go to [Josephine County Incident Information \(rvem.org\)](http://Josephine County Incident Information (rvem.org)).

Road control: Josephine County Sheriff’s Office has established traffic access points around the fire zone. Roadblocks are located at Galice Road near Crow Road; Galice Store; Bear Camp Road at Peavine (top intersection); Lower Grave Creek Road at Angora Creek (Grays Ranch); Quartz Creek Road about 3 miles up (end of County maintenance); Dutch Henry Road near Kelsey Creek (42 44'56.2/123 40'35.4); and Hog Creek at Galice Road. The National Guard is staffing the roadblocks. Only residents (must show proof of residency) and permitted users will be allowed through.

River status: The Wild section of the Rogue River below Grave Creek will remain open unless fire conditions warrant closure. River status is determined on a day-to-day basis. Please call 541-471-6535 for more information regarding Rogue River permits. No new boating permits will be issued at this time.

Closures: A Bureau of Land Management Grants Pass Field Office fire closure includes the area west of Interstate 5 and north of Taylor Creek Gorge west of Stratton Creek. southwest to the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest boundary and west to East Fork Big Windy Creek and Bunker Creek. The northern boundary is the Rogue River from Grave Creek Boat Ramp. The full closure order and a map can be viewed at: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8348/>