

FIRE UPDATE

Sunday, Sept. 11 9 a.m.

Incident Commanders Jay Winfield



Fire size: 21,347 acres	Structures lost: 2 homes, 6 others	Containment: 69%
Resources assigned: 977	Fire information: 541-625-0849	https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8348/
Evacuations: https://tinyurl.com/JOCOEvacMap		https://www.facebook.com/rumcreekfire2022

Rum Creek Fire passes the weather test

MERLIN, Ore. – The Rum Creek Fire has now been tested by several days of critically low relative humidity, high temperatures, and periods of gusty winds. Few flare-ups were reported and no spot fires were found outside the containment lines. Acreage has not changed for two days, and containment has increased to 69% despite the adverse weather.

Operations Section Chief Manny Mendoza summarized the Rum Creek Fire’s status as: “We are cautiously optimistic that things are going our way.”

Last night, an air mass moved into the area bringing clouds, cooler temperatures and higher humidity. Tonight and tomorrow, remnants of Tropical Storm Kay will pass over the fire vicinity, possibly bringing showers.

Any moisture will quickly infiltrate fine fuels like grasses and dead twigs, making them less likely to burn. These are the fuels which usually catch fire first and cause fires to spread and grow rapidly. Increased moisture in fine fuels is akin to using damp paper to start a campfire. Relative humidity usually drops during the day, but rises at night.

Larger fuels like stumps and logs take much longer to absorb moisture from the air and rain. In the interior of the fire, these larger fuels may continue to smolder or burn until they are extinguished by heavy winter rain and snow. Most of the fine fuels near them have burned or will have a higher moisture content, making fire spread unlikely.

Near the fire’s edges, firefighters continue to search for and extinguish burning logs, stump holes, and other hot spots. They are also pulling out surplus equipment, no longer needed for fire suppression. The firefighters camped near the northwest edge of the fire will complete their mission today and return to the main camp near Merlin tonight. Firefighters will continue to monitor and suppress this part of the fire.

As suppression work is completed on a section of the fire, resources will begin repair work to fix damage done by the firefighting efforts. A major part of repair is erosion control, mainly stabilizing exposed soils on fire lines by constructing waterbars.

Waterbars are a series of dips and mounds placed at an angle across the fire line. Runoff from rain and melting snow flows down the fire line until it is intercepted by a waterbar. Water is directed off of the erodible soil onto more stable ground. Some waterbars are constructed using heavy equipment such as dozers and excavators; others are dug by hand. This erosion control keeps soil on slopes and out of streams and rivers, where it can harm water quality and spawning habitat for salmon.

Evacuations: Evacuation orders and notifications have not changed. 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://JosephineCountyIncidentInformation(rvem.org)).

Road control: Josephine County Sheriff’s Office has established traffic access points around the fire zone. Road blocks are located at 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. 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.