



Pacific Northwest Region

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NEWS RELEASE

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Ben Harrison Fire Update

PENDLETON, Ore. (August 14, 2023 – 9 a.m.) — Firefighters made progress on the 95-acre **Ben Harrison Fire**, which is burning approximately 20 miles west of Sumpter, Oregon on the North Fork John Day Ranger District. The fire remains at 0% contained.

Fire behavior was minimal yesterday, primarily consisting of creeping and smoldering with larger fuels burning on the interior. The reduced fire behavior allowed firefighters to continue to establish control lines line along the flanks of the fire. Despite being tested by high daytime temperatures and increased afternoon winds, the current fire footprint held overnight.

Today firefighters will continue to build and strengthen control lines around the perimeter of the fire. Crews will also prepare to install hose lays, which will be used to cool areas along the perimeter of the fire once control lines are complete. Current resources assigned to the fire include 20 smoke jumpers, 3 handcrews, 4 rappellers, and local district personnel. Aircraft are available as needed.

Based on the moderated fire behavior and suppression progress completed yesterday, the North Fork John Day Ranger District will retain command of the Ben Harrison Fire to manage under a Type 3 organization using local fire management personnel.

Hot and dry conditions are expected to persist throughout the weekend. Fire officials want to remind everyone that the current fire danger rating remains at **HIGH** and public use restrictions involving chainsaw use, smoking and off-road travel are in effect.

For more information regarding Restrictions, please contact:

Umatilla National Forest:
Information Hotline: Toll-Free (877) 958-9663

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The latest fire information will be posted on the Blue Mountains Fire Information Blog. To receive updates on fires in the Blue Mountains, follow our blog at <http://bluemountainfireinfo.blogspot.com/>.

Additional information about the Umatilla National Forest is available at: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/umatilla>.

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