

August 4, 2023
Flat Fire Morning Update



Size: 31,921 acres
Start Date: July 15, 2023

Point of origin: 2 miles southeast of Agness, OR
Containment: 28%

Cause: Human caused
Total personnel: 1,092

Resources: 38 engines | 16 crews | 1 bulldozer | 31 water tenders | 4 masticators | 9 helicopters

Current Situation: In the southwest corner of the fire in Lawson Creek drainage and in the Game Lake area, helicopters had excellent success with continued aerial ignition achieving additional depth from the containment line further into the unburned interior. A helitorch was also utilized near the headwaters of Lawson Creek to improve fuels consumption in the brush and shrub vegetation. A 10-person helitack crew (a firefighting crew flown in by helicopter) returned to the Fantz Ranch area along the eastern edge of the fire to cool areas of heat identified through infrared photography/imaging and eliminate dangerous hazard trees. This is helping to slow movement further east.

Firefighters used helicopter water bucket drops on areas of heat in the north fork of Indigo Creek to secure the containment line. Crews mopped up areas of heat close to the containment line in the NE corner of the fire (at the end of Forest System Road 150). Firefighters worked to improve alternate containment lines (re-routed a stretch of fireline by constructing a handline) and prepared a firing plan in the northeast corner of the fire, should a future need arise to burn this area due to changes in weather conditions or fire activity.

Structure protection resources focused on inventory of structures and fuels reduction at the Agness Guard Station. An overall structure protection plan to aid firefighters in protecting structures in the area if there is a future need is nearing completion. The alternate control lines on Forest System Roads (FSR) 1376 (to the south) and 1503, 3313, and 3680 (to the west) continue to be improved. Night-shift resources held and patrolled fireline.

Today's activities: Aerial ignition efforts over the past several days to gain additional fireline depth between the western and eastern portions of FSR 3680 in the Lawson Creek drainage (southwestern corner of the fire) is largely complete. Fuels are still drying and discontinuous in some locations and the fire will continue to move through islands of vegetation in the coming days. Additional aerial burning will be used to fill in non-contiguous areas of unburned fuel and provide additional depth. Firefighters will work today to hold, secure, improve and mop up the containment line along FSR 3680. Aerial interior burning will also continue in the Game Lake area. The western and northern containment lines, from the junction of FSR 3680 and 3318 to Wildhorse Lookout east to FSR 3577, is being actively mopped up and patrolled.

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With fire traffic on Bear Camp Road, all motorists on Bear Camp Road are asked to slow down, use headlights and proceed with caution.

Leadership provided by the Pacific Northwest (Type 1) Incident Management Team 3 is nearing the end of its 14-day rotation and will be replaced by Northern Rockies (Type 1) Incident Management Team 2 effective at 6:00 a.m. on Saturday, August 5. Today is a day of “shadowing” and transferring intelligence to the new incident management team. Fire personnel and resources will remain in place during the transfer of command.

Evacuations: All remaining evacuation levels are now at Level 1 “Get Ready” evacuation status for all areas in the vicinity of the Flat Fire.

The Curry County Sheriff’s Office will continue to coordinate with the Fire Incident Management Team and will notify all residents affected by the fire of any reasons to change evacuation levels.

Curry County is using Everbridge to send evacuation notices. You can sign up for notifications here: https://www.co.curry.or.us/departments/emergency_management/index.php.

Weather: With a drier air mass moving over the area, temperatures will continue to increase and relative humidity will decrease through the weekend. The period of daily low humidity is increasing with this predicted weather resulting in drier fuels and possible increased fire behavior.

Smoke: The Smoke Outlook is available at: <https://outlooks.airfire.org/outlook/b74901f7>

Closures: The Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest (RRSNF) has issued a closure order for the fire area including trails, roads and a portion of the Illinois River. Oak Flat Campground, Game Lake and Wild Horse Campgrounds and Snow Camp Lookout Recreation Rentals are all closed as part of the area closure. The Chetco River Road (FSR 1376) and Chetco/Pistol River Road (FSR 1407) are now closed. The updated closure allows for public access to the Big Rock swimming hole on the Illinois River.

Restrictions: Fire danger is currently extreme; the RRSNF is implementing Level 2 Public Use Restrictions beginning today, August 4. More information can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ueuznr6e>

Please follow all fire restrictions to prevent wildfires. Know before you go. Check on whether there are any campfire restrictions at your recreation destination.