



Klamath National Forest
Butte Valley National Grassland

Forest Service News Release

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Klamath National Forest Fire Activity Morning Update – August 17, 2023

Type 1 Incident Management Team Assumes Command of Head Fire

Yreka, Calif., August 17, 2023— Type 1 California Interagency Incident Management Team 5 (Mueller) has assumed command of the Head Fire as of 6:00 a.m. today, and additional resources are incoming. Currently, the Head Fire is approximately 3,500 acres and is 0% contained.

Evacuations remain in place this morning and Highway 96 remains closed in the area of the fire. Fire behavior was moderated overnight by light rainfall and good humidity recovery. Ridge tops remain drier and the fire continues to back and flank down the drainage towards the Klamath River, especially in heavy dead and down fuels. The priority overnight was continued structure protection in the areas of Scott Bar, Hamburg, and Horse Creek. Those priorities will continue today.

A Red Flag Warning remains in effect for abundant lightning on dry fuels. The chance of lightning is expected to continue through the week, although predictions are for storms to trend wetter into the weekend.

“We appreciate the many interagency resources helping us, including the Siskiyou County Sheriff’s Office, Siskiyou County Office of Emergency Services, State OES, CAL FIRE and others. Our primary concerns remain public and firefighter safety as we work to prioritize how are firefighting resources are best utilized,” said Forest Supervisor Rachel Smith.

Please obey any evacuation Orders and Warnings that have been issued

Klamath National Forest Lightning Fire Update

Firefighters continue to respond to the Head Fire and to numerous fires that have been confirmed on the forest. Additional smokes continue to be reported; fires are being staffed based on priority and as additional resources become available. Multiple aircraft and other additional resources have been ordered for these fires.

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Happy Camp/Oak Knoll District:

- The Elliott Fire near Dillon Creek Campground (closed) is approximately 250 acres with zero containment. The fire is backing and flanking to Highway 96. Yesterday's inversion briefly lifted, leading to an uptick in fire behavior which decreased during the evening. A type 3 IC is committed along with engines and heavy equipment. Resources are working on structure prep.
- The Canyon and Three Creeks (formerly Aubrey) fires are in the vicinity of the Elliott Fire and are estimated to total 200 acres in size. Elliot Fire resources and the IC are including these fires in their suppression management.
- The Malone Fire up Elk Creek is 20 acres. An engine, hand crew, and dozer are committed and working to complete line around the fire.
- The Titus Fire is in the Marble Mountain Wilderness south of Norcross Campground. It was last reported at 15 acres. It received significant rain which moderated fire behavior. It is within the 2021 McCash Fire footprint with numerous snags in steep country. It will be monitored by air to evaluate suppression needs.
- The Berry Fire is .2 acres near Huckleberry Mountain.
- The Indy Fire is up Independence Creek near the border of the Marble Mountain Wilderness.
- The Ufish Fire is roughly 50 acres and located between Titus and Ufish creeks.
- The Devils Fire is about 5 acres and located near Seiad Low Gap. Crews worked to construct line around the fire yesterday.
- The Swillup Fire between Pony Peak and Bear Peak roads is .1 acres and contained.
- The Brown Fire is .1 acres and contained.
- The Dutch Fire is .1 acres and is contained.
- The Intersection Fire is .1 acres and is contained.

Salmon/Scott River Ranger District:

- The Scott Fire is roughly 40 acres and is located near the Scott Bar Lookout. A strike team of engines worked on the fire through the night. Fire behavior moderated a bit last night.
- The Gold Fire is approximately 20 acres across the drainage from the Scott Fire. Fire behavior moderated a bit last night.
- The Shadow Fire is about .5 acres in the Marble Mountain Wilderness near Sky High Lakes.
- The Lake Fire is near the Shadow Fire. Between Red Rock and Little Elk has grown to about 20 acres. Smokejumpers and a helitack crew are on scene.
- The Townsend Fire is roughly 15 acres with difficult access up Townsend Gulch off of the Lake Mountain Lookout Road. 3 engines and an additional squad of firefighters are committed.
- The Block Fire (formerly called the Middle Fire) is near the Townsend Fire. No size has been reported. Resources are assigned.
- The Boulder Fire is .1 acres near Indian Scotty Campground and is contained.
- The Hossick Fire is .1 acres up Hossick Gulch near Scott Bar and is contained.

More lightning was received yesterday and the Red Flag Warning for abundant lightning on dry fuels remains in effect. Thunderstorms also have the potential to emit strong down draft winds that can cause existing fires to increase fire behavior significantly.

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Evacuation Orders and Warnings remain in effect. Monitor CodeRed and the @SiskiyouCountySherriff for current information.

Closures:

Pacific Crest Trail is closed from Etna Summit to the Oregon Border. Hikers and all backpackers are asked to stay off the trail in that area.

Dillon Creek Campground is closed due to proximity to the Elliot Creek Fire.

Highway 96 and the Scott River Road have hard closures.

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The Klamath National Forest & Butte Valley National Grassland cover 1,700,000 acres located in Siskiyou County, California and Jackson County, Oregon. Butte Valley National Grassland is the newest National Grassland and the only one in California. The forest is headquartered in Yreka, CA, and maintains ranger stations in the California communities of Macdoel, Happy Camp, and Fort Jones.

More information is available at www.fs.usda.gov/klamath.

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