



Cowlitz Complex Fire Update

September 1, 2023

Rocky Mountain Area Complex Incident Management Team Two

Jared Hohn, Incident Commander

Current Situation: The wet conditions over the past few days have helped minimize fire behavior, with backing, creeping, and smoldering observed; however, the rain has not extinguished these fires. The dense forest canopy prevents most moisture from reaching the dry surface fuels, and a thick layer of organic material conceals fire burning at depth. It is expected that the Cowlitz Complex Fire will be a long-term event that will likely persist for the next couple of months until a change in seasonal conditions occurs.

As the days pass, the Rocky Mountain Area Complex Incident Management Team Two is gathering more information about the status of each fire, which will be shared as it becomes available. A total of 427 personnel are currently assigned to the Cowlitz Complex, which is 5% contained and encompasses a total of 589 acres. Crews are using hand tools and heavy equipment where necessary to establish access and construct containment line around the fires. Once containment line is established and heat sources are mopped up, fires will be placed in monitor and patrol status and crews will be shifted to other fires. Networks of hoses are being installed for use later if fire behavior becomes more volatile.

In Branch 1/Division C, the Carlton Ridge Fire, about 7.5 miles northwest of White Pass, is contained. Crews expect another three days mopping up before it will transition to monitor and patrol status. The Pothole Fire, located near the southwest corner of Mount Rainier National Park, is 50% contained. Crews are assessing access into the Deer Creek Fire, about 2.7 miles north of Forest Road 52, near Glacier View Trailhead. A dozer is improving firefighter access to the Berry Fire, located on Allen Mountain, about 8 miles north of Randle. The Skate and Silver fires, both located about 6.5 miles west-northwest of Packwood, are contained.

In Branch 1/Division F, the South Fork Fire, located 5.5 miles west-southwest of Packwood, is contained and in monitor and patrol status. On the Grassy Mountain Fire, 4.5 miles northeast of Randle, crews are working on gaining access over steep, difficult terrain. Grassy Mountain Fire remains unstaffed until a plan is developed for getting firefighters safely into and out of the fire area. The Yew Fire, located near the intersection of Forest Roads 47 and 4773 is 50% contained.

In Branch 2/Division L, crews have established containment line around the Jackpot Creek Fire and are mopping up heat sources within the fire perimeter. They are eyeing the Mission Fire, about 10 miles south of Packwood near Johnson Creek as their next target.

In Branch 2/Division W, crews repaired landslide damage on roads that provide access to the Snagtooth and Spencer Quartz Fires. Now that vehicle access is improved, crews will be better able to initiate fire suppression in that area.

Fire Restrictions: Fire Restrictions are in effect. Campfires are prohibited across the Gifford Pinchot National Forest – only propane-fueled fire pits, stoves and lanterns are allowed. Additional information is available on the forest's website at [Gifford Pinchot National Forest - Fire Management \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/land-management/gifford-pinchot-national-forest/fire-management).

Weather & Smoke Information: The forecast calls for increased sun and warmer conditions this afternoon. Temperatures in the valley will be in the 70s, cooler at higher elevations. Winds will be light and variable.

Closures: In anticipation of ongoing fire activity in the vicinity of the Snagtooth Fire the following roads and trails will be closed to the public to reduce exposure and help ensure public safety: Forest Roads 9300 and 9341 (currently off limits), Boundary Trail #1 (from Elk Pass to intersection with Summit Prairie), Summit Prairie #2, Craggy Peak #3, Snagtooth #4, Quartz #5, Stabler Camp #17, Wright Meadows #80, Basin Camp #3 A, Quartz #5 B, Quartz #5 C (French Creek), Snyder Pasture #80 A. Forest Road 8410 is closed for firefighter and public safety in the vicinity of the Pothole Fire.

Temporary Flight Restrictions: A temporary flight restriction (TFR) is in effect over the fire area between U.S. Highway 12 and Mount Rainier National Park. Fire aviation response is halted or delayed if an unauthorized aircraft enters the TFR. Temporary flight restrictions also apply to unmanned aircraft systems or drones. If you fly, we can't! Learn more about how to use drones safely and responsibly at [Home - Know Before You Fly](https://www.faa.gov/air-traffic/flight-restrictions).

Fire Information Phonenumber: (360) 208-8075 **Hours:** 7 a.m.–7 p.m.

Email: 2023.cowlitzcomplex@firenet.gov

InciWeb: [Cowlitz Complex Information | InciWeb \(wildfire.gov\)](https://www.firenet.gov/inciweb/)

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