

Smith River Complex North Daily Update September 21, 2023



Size: 93,559 acres (12,460 ac. in Oregon); **Location:** Grants Pass, OR; **Cause:** Lightning
Containment: 76%; **Start date:** August 15, 2023; **Total personnel:** 1,475

Resources: 34 crews 6 helicopters 47 engines 7 dozers 28 water tenders 9 masticators 1 Skid Steer

Yesterday: Strong northeast winds were experienced over the fire area and the perimeter containment lines held the fire in place. The interior island of unburned ground, located in the Utility division, experienced two small spot fires that crews quickly extinguished and will continue to monitor. The high winds prevented the use of helicopters to assist with remote-area backhaul operations. However, ground-based backhaul operations and suppression repairs continued. Fire crews worked diligently to gain more containment along the north perimeter.

Today's Activities: Crews will continue to patrol and secure the north and northwest edges of the fire perimeter. Heavy equipment crews will continue working the secondary containment line to the west along Forest Road 1106. Suppression repair will be ongoing near Monkey Ridge and Sanger Peak and backhaul operations continue. Strong northeast winds are expected again today that are forecast to bring 30 to 40 mph gusts on the ridge tops. Fire managers and firefighters are prepared to hold the fire line wherever these impacts will be experienced.

Evacuations: The Josephine County Sheriff has set the evacuation status to Level 1-BE READY. This level will remain until significant rainfall is received. This includes the area west of US-199 in Josephine County, including the community of O'Brien and to the Oregon-California border. If you have internet access, you can monitor the Rogue Valley Emergency Management site. You can also sign up for evacuation alerts, updates and see an interactive Fire First Response Map with evacuation areas here: <https://rvem.org/>.

Smoke: NE winds will continue to transport smoke from the Smith River fire toward Crescent City. Gold Beach and Brookings will experience smoke impacts from Anvil fire to the north. Smoke at Gold Beach will result in UNHEALTHY conditions. Brookings will experience moderate smoke impacts along the coast with cleaner air inland. This pattern will continue through Friday afternoon when the arrival of SW winds may bring smoke back into the area, especially at O'Brien and Cave Junction. Smoke levels can change rapidly depending on weather; check current conditions at: <https://bit.ly/SWORsmoke>

Area Closures: A closure is in place on the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest for Forest Road 1106 (South Elk Mountain Road), Forest Road 1205 (Lower Wheeler Road), and Forest Road 1983 (Mt. Emily Road) until October 31, 2023 or until rescinded. The closure allows for safe operations related to the Smith River Complex North. Closures on BLM land are in place as well. Visit bit.ly/RRSNFAlerts or <https://www.blm.gov/orwafire> for additional information.

Road Closures and Delays: Caltrans in Del Norte County issued a schedule of road closures and lane restrictions on US-199. Weekdays will have a combination of road closure and lane restrictions. Over the weekend, the road will remain open, but with lane restrictions and pilot cars. Expect delays. For specific information on road access, please see the Caltrans QuickMap site <https://quickmap.dot.ca.gov/> and Oregon Department of Transportation's <https://www.tripcheck.com/>. Local law enforcement cautions against any non-essential traffic along this route. Navigation apps and mapping programs have been routing travelers into active fire areas. **Do not use forest roads as alternate routes.**

Restrictions: Please respect the temporary flight restriction (TFR) established for the Smith River Complex. Keep drones away from firefighting operations and the TFR. **If you fly, we can't.** Don't be the reason a firefighting air mission has to divert! For more information on the TFR, visit <https://tfr.faa.gov/>.