

Smith River Complex North Daily Update

September 22, 2023



Size: 93,559 acres (12,460 ac. in Oregon); **Location:** Grants Pass, OR; **Cause:** Lightning
Containment: 79%; **Start date:** August 15, 2023; **Total personnel:** 1,441

Resources: 33 crews 6 helicopters 41 engines 8 dozers 29 water tenders 7 masticators 2 Skid Steer

Yesterday: The last section of control line in the northwest corner of the fire in Division Golf (G) was completed. This means the entire fire perimeter managed by the Smith River Complex North Zone has control lines in place. For the two consecutive days, strong northeast winds kept helicopters on the ground which in turn prevented completion of remote area backhaul operations in Division G. However, ground-based backhaul operations and suppression repairs continued. Work continued with the construction of the secondary control line located northwest of the fire along the FS 1106 road.

Today's Activities: Now that the objective of establishing control lines around the fire perimeter has been met, the operational focus will shift fully to fire suppression repair and continuing with backhaul operations. Rain showers are forecasted to arrive on the fire around Saturday afternoon, with very heavy rain possible Sunday and Monday. Firefighters are preparing to manage the possible impacts from this significant rain event on their efforts to complete construction of the secondary control line along the FS 1106 road. Rain or shine, crews will continue to patrol and secure control lines along the entire perimeter of the fire.

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: North component winds will usher smoke south along the coast, and to some degree inland, through Thursday. Winds will diminish Friday, then become more onshore to southerly this weekend. Most impacted communities will be the Highway 101 corridor from south to Port Orford to Brookings, and communities along the Rogue and inland Sixes River drainages. 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/>.