

# Smith River Complex North Daily Update

## September 23, 2023



**Size:** 94,508 acres (12,460 ac. in Oregon); **Location:** Grants Pass, OR; **Cause:** Lightning  
**Containment:** 84%; **Start date:** August 15, 2023; **Total personnel:** 1,394

**Resources:** 31 crews 6 helicopters 37 engines 8 dozers 29 water tenders 6 masticators 1 Skid Steer

**Yesterday:** The operational focus shifted to fire suppression repair along with continued ground and aerial backhaul operations. Firefighters began preparing to manage for possible impacts from significant amounts of rain on the efforts to complete the secondary control line along the FS 1106 road.

**Today's Activities:** Operational focus remains on fire suppression repair and equipment backhauling operations. Weather models suggest the possibility of significant rainfall on Sunday night, Monday and into Tuesday. Dry forest fuels may have less chance of ignition this weekend due to forecasted heavy rains. Possible debris flows and flooding with increased rain and winds may occur. One helicopter will remain assigned to the Smith River Complex North this weekend while others are reassigned to other parts of the fire area. Fire personnel assigned to the fire will be downsizing this weekend into early next week as suppression objectives are completed.

**Evacuations:** The Josephine County Sheriff has set the evacuation status to Level 1-BE READY. Levels will be reevaluated on a recurring basis. 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:** Winds became offshore yesterday and will continue into next week. Most impacted communities will be the US-101 corridor from Port Orford to Gold Beach, and the Elk and Sixes River drainages. Some smoke as well may drift south to Brookings. 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 Emily Road) until October 31, 2023 or until rescinded.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](https://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/>.