

Olympic National Park News Release

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For Immediate Release

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Olympic National Park Fire Update - September 29

Port Angeles, Wash. – Heavy precipitation fell across the fire area this week, reducing fire activity. Fires are expected to remain within their current footprint through the coming days.

As threats to structures diminished, fire crews removed protective equipment and shifted locations. No structural damage has been recorded at this time.

Fire management is preparing to welcome the Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) team on Monday. Starting Tuesday, the team will assess damages to natural and cultural resources.

They also evaluate the potential for future risks such as debris flows.

Heavy clouds have prevented flight crews from collecting acreage data. The next opportunity for an infrared flight is tomorrow, September 30.

Fire Name	Initial Report	Estimated Size as of 9/25	Location
Hurricane	8/28/23	4 acres	2,000 ft below Hurricane Ridge parking area
Eagle Point	8/28/23	123 acres	~5 miles out Obstruction Point Road
Diamond Mountain	9/1/23	30 acres	3.3 miles NE of Anderson Pass
Low Divide	9/1/23	340 acres	2 miles SW of Low Divide
Delabarre	9/1/23	4165 acres	3 miles SE of Mount Christie
Martins Lake	9/2/23	122 acres	2 miles NE of Mount Christie
Mount Queets	9/14/23	7 acres	Summit of Mount Queets

Fires in the wilderness are a natural part of the ecosystems on the Olympic Peninsula; these plants and animals have evolved with fire for thousands of years. Fire can increase favorable habitat for the wildlife. When appropriate, allowing this natural process to continue lowers the risk of catastrophic fires in the future. Naturally occurring fires thin forests, open the canopy, and reduce competition for resources for plant and tree growth. Fire returns nutrients to the soil while reducing the amount of dead, woody debris. It only takes a short time after a fire for the forest to regenerate.

Background Information

All seven active fires in Olympic National Park ignited when a series of lightning strikes occurred on the Olympic Peninsula in the afternoon on August 28.

Closures

Due to wildfire activity the following closures are in effect until further notice:

- Elwha River Trail from Dodger Point Trail junction to Low Divide
- Hayden Pass Trail
- Dosewallips River Trail from Dose Meadows to Hayden Pass
- North Fork Quinault Trail from Elip Creek trail junction to Low Divide
- Skyline Trail from Elip Creek Trail junction to Low Divide
- Martin Park Trail
- Obstruction Point Road and Trailhead

Olympic National Park Wilderness Information Center (WIC) will be notifying backcountry permit holders who may be impacted by these closures. Any permit holders who plan to backpack in the above impacted areas should contact the WIC at 360-565-2992 or by emailing OLYM_WIC@nps.gov.

Weather and Fire Behavior

Sunny and dry conditions will build over the fire area as a high-pressure system moves in this weekend. High relative humidity recovery rates should prevent the fire area from drying out. A weak disturbance on Monday will likely bring high humidities and rain to the fire area.

Information for the 2023 Olympic National Park Lightning Fires can be found at: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/waolp-2023-olympic-national-park-lightning-fires>

Olympic National Park information: www.nps.gov/olym

Olympic National Forest information: www.fs.usda.gov/olympic

State and county area burn bans: <https://ecology.wa.gov/Air-Climate/Air-quality/Smoke-fire/Burn-bans>

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