

September 16, 2023 Smith River Complex North Update



Size: 90,294 total/ 12,342 in Oregon **Location:** Grants Pass, OR

Total personnel: 1,677 for Complex

Start Date: August 15, 2023

Containment: 51%

Cause: Lightning

Resources: 45 crews • 11 helicopters • 65 engines • 11 bulldozers • 25 water tenders • 14 masticators • 1 Skid Steer

Yesterday: Helitack modules have been spiked out on the northwestern edge of the fire to hold the perimeter during critical fire weather days. Crews on the northern edge of the fire turned their focus to mop up as well as adding depth to control line with interior firing. Oregon Department of Environmental Quality issued a smoke advisory yesterday morning for Curry and Josephine counties that is in effect through Sunday night.

Today's Activities: The smoke layer and return to northwesterly winds will moderate fire behavior over the next few days. As the weather moderates, crews on the northern edge of the fire will continue to mop up and burnout interior pockets of vegetation. On the northwest edge of the fire perimeter, crews will monitor conditions and continue to work toward containment with air support as visibility permits. On the eastern edge of the fire, crews will start removing structure protection (pumps, hoses, and sprinklers) from some properties in evacuation zones.

Smoke: An air quality advisory is in effect for Curry and Josephine counties through Sunday evening, September 17 due to smoke from the Anvil and Smith River Complex fires. VERY UNHEALTHY to HAZARDOUS smoke impacts will persist most of the day with the potential for some improvement this evening. Smoke levels can change rapidly depending on weather; check current conditions at: <https://bit.ly/SWORsmoke>

Closures: The Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest issued an area and road closure for a 400-yard-wide corridor centered on Forest Road 1106 (South Elk Mountain Road), Forest Road 1205 (Lower Wheeler Road), and Forest Road 1983 (Mt. Emily Road) beginning yesterday, September 14 through October 31, 2023. 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: Starting Thursday, September 14, 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.**

Evacuations: The area east of US-199 from mile post 39 to the Oregon/California border in southwest Josephine County is at Level 1-BE READY; west of US-199 remains in Level 2-GET SET until fire conditions and hazards are further mitigated. Monitor the Rogue Valley Emergency Management site and sign up for evacuation alerts and updates at <https://rvem.org/>. An interactive Fire First Response Map with evacuation areas can also be found there.

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/>.