

September 18, 2023 Smith River Complex North Update



Size: 92,180 total/ 12,460 in Oregon **Location:** Grants Pass, OR

Total personnel: 1,473 for Complex

Start Date: August 15, 2023

Containment: 65%

Cause: Lightning

Resources: 37 crews • 11 helicopters • 66 engines • 8 bulldozers • 26 water tenders • 14 masticators • 1 Skid Steer

Yesterday: Containment line was increased on the northern edge of the fire to bring containment to 65%. Fire managers are confident the fire will not cross that line, even when challenged by changing weather conditions. Minimal fire activity remains in the interior of the fire area. Crews cleaned up pockets of unburned vegetation on the northwest edge of the fire. Fire activity increased slightly in the powerline corridor and containment lines held.

Today's Activities: Crews will continue to monitor, mop up, and secure control of the north and northwest portions of the fire boundary and continue to protect the powerline corridor along the 316 road. On the east side of the fire, crews are removing hose, temporary water tanks, and other fire suppression infrastructure around private property, since fire spread is no longer a risk in that area.

Smoke: Expect decreasing smoke throughout the area today with reduced local fire activity. GOOD air quality in Grants Pass, Medford, and Ashland; O'Brien and Cave Junction will experience smoke impacts through afternoon. 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: 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: 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/>.