



# Cowlitz Complex Fire Update

September 8, 2023

## Rocky Mountain Area Complex Incident Management Team Two

Jared Hohn, Incident Commander

**Community Meeting:** There will be a community meeting at 6:00 this evening at the Randle Fire and EMS, located at 9978 US-12 in Randle. The CIMT will provide an update on the Cowlitz Complex, followed by question and answer.

**Current Situation:** The Cowlitz Complex is 12% contained, and with improved mapping, acres have been adjusted down to 657 acres. A total of 439 personnel are currently assigned. With warming, drying weather conditions, increased fire behavior is expected over the next couple of days.

Crews on the fires continue to check for residual heat on each fire, using a variety of heat detection resources, including thermal and other imaging by manned and unmanned aircraft, as well as by ground resources. We are applying the right tool for the job depending on access, slope, and other considerations. An unmanned aerial system will be flying over less accessible fires in Branch I today to assist with monitoring and checking for any increased fire behavior or changed conditions. Private drone use is prohibited within the fire area under temporary flight restrictions (TFR) north and south of US-12. Crews are able to utilize UAS within the TFR due to contact and coordination with other air resources.

In Branch I/Division C/F, firefighters revisited the Allen Mountain, Cougar Gap, and Berry fires, finding no smokes or other evidence of heat. A dozer operator and fire crews are repairing old logging roads west of Grassy Mountain Fire to improve access and cutting back brush for potential use as future control features. Crews continue working the Pothole, Willame, and Yew fires, mopping up hot spots. An engine remains assigned to keep eyes on the Carlton Ridge Fire.

In Branch II/Division L, crews are mopping up hot spots on the Adams Fork, Jackpot, and Mission fires, where heat has been hidden within deep duff and peat moss layers. While crews continue to find smokes, they continue working those fires.

In Branch II/Division W, crews are working in the vicinity of Spencer Quartz and Snagtooth fires, cutting back and brush along old logging roads, followed by a masticator to further widen access for fire trucks and crews, and a dozer to improve road surfaces. Extreme terrain and a high density of falling tree hazards create unacceptable risk to firefighters for direct attack along those fires' perimeters.

**Fire Restrictions:** Fire Restrictions are in effect. Campfires are prohibited across the Gifford Pinchot National Forest – only propane-fueled fire pits, stoves and lanterns are allowed. Additional information is available on the forest's website at [Gifford Pinchot National Forest - Fire Management \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/gifford-pinchot-national-forest-fire-management). The decision to lift or maintain fire restrictions depends on factors such as current and expected weather conditions, fuel moisture, the level of fire activity, and the availability of firefighting resources to respond to additional ignitions.

**Weather & Smoke Information:** Cloud cover is expected to break up by mid-morning, bringing sun and clear skies. Temperatures will be 5 to 10 degrees warmer than yesterday, with increased upslope and upvalley winds. Minimum relative humidity will be lower, in the 40 to 45% range. Very little smoke has been visible from these fires over the past week; however, warming and drying trend, increased fire behavior and increased smoke production can be expected over the coming days or weeks.

**Closures:** In anticipation of ongoing fire activity in the vicinity of the Snagtooth Fire the following roads and trails are closed to the public to reduce exposure and help ensure public safety: Forest Roads 9300 and 9341, Boundary Trail #1 (from Elk Pass to intersection with Summit Prairie), Summit Prairie #2, Craggy Peak #3, Snagtooth #4, Quartz #5, Stabler Camp #17, Wright Meadows #80, Basin Camp #3A, Quartz #5B, Quartz #5C (French Creek), Snyder Pasture #80A. Forest Road 8410 is closed for firefighter and public safety in the vicinity of the Pothole Fire, and Forest Road 78 is temporarily closed between the 7802 junction and the 2278 junction due to hazardous debris rolling out onto the roadway.

**Temporary Flight Restrictions:** Two TFRs are in effect, one located north of US-12 to Mount Rainier National Park, and a new TFR south of US-12 to include Snagtooth and Spencer Quartz fires. Fire aviation response is halted or delayed if an unauthorized aircraft enters the TFR. Temporary flight restrictions also apply to unmanned aircraft systems or drones. If you fly, we can't! Learn more about how to use drones safely and responsibly at [Home - Know Before You Fly](https://www.flyright.org/).

**Fire Information Phonenumber:** (360) 208-8075      **Hours:** 7 a.m.–7 p.m.      **Email:** [2023.cowlitzcomplex@firenet.gov](mailto:2023.cowlitzcomplex@firenet.gov)

**InciWeb:** [Cowlitz Complex Information | InciWeb \(wildfire.gov\)](https://www.wildfire.gov/)

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