



Brian Gales, Incident Commander, NWIMT13

Fire Start date: July 15, 2024	Location: 1 mile west of Hwy 129 and Grande Ronde River intersection – SW of Clarkston	Cause: Under Investigation
Fire size: 12,498 acres	Percent Contained: 23	Total Retardant: 218,093 Gallons
Hand Crews: 9	41 Engines and 6 Dozers	Total personnel: 382

Cougar Creek Fire Update for Wednesday July 24, 2024

KEY MESSAGES:

A significant change in weather arrives today. There is a red flag warning, with strong winds and thunderstorms expected. Wind may become erratic due to a directional wind shift where fire behavior may increase. A Remote Automatic Weather Station (RAWS) was installed near the Wenatchee Guard Station in order to receive site specific weather data. Residents are encouraged to be aware of weather alerts and changing conditions.

A community meeting took place at Bartlett Lane-Union Park in the Grouse Flats area yesterday evening where local residents discussed the current fire environment with incident officials.

CURRENT STATUS:

Crews continue to engage the fire directly and indirectly, day and night. To the southwest, crews are focusing on the Grouse Flats area and have been working south of 4039 road system along the Forest Service and private boundary, adding new dozer and hand lines. Successful tactical ignition operations were accomplished last night near the primitive 050 road near Hansen Ridge in order to limit eastern expansion of the fire perimeter. Moving the incident helibase from Lewiston to Anatone is complete. This move puts air assets closer to the fire and reduces flight time.

FIRE BEHAVIOR AND WEATHER:

A red flag warning is in effect, with possible lightning starting in the afternoon and lasting into the evening. Localized wind gusts may reach speeds of 40 to 50 mph. Temperatures will be in the mid 90s with relative humidity in the mid teens. A cold front will begin to move in during the next few days, dropping the temperature and increasing humidity levels tomorrow.

EVACUATIONS AND CLOSURES:

Forest officials are expanding the temporary closure area related to the Cougar Creek Fire. Closure descriptions and maps are available online [on the Umatilla National Forest Closure page](#). In Washington, evacuation notices are posted on the [Asotin County Sheriff](#) webpage and [Asotin County Emergency Management](#) Facebook. Grande Ronde Road is closed from Troy, Oregon to Highway 129 junction in Washington. In Oregon, a level 2 evacuation is in effect for [Wallowa County](#), including all of Grouse Flat from Bear Creek Rd north to the State boundary and the Garfield County line to Grande Ronde River.

Public information:	Inciweb: https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/wases-cougar-creek-fire
E-mail: 2024.cougarcreek@firenet.gov	Smoke: https://www.airnow.gov
Social: facebook.com/CougarCreekFire2024	Phone: 509-210-2928 8am to 6pm