



Brian Gales, Incident Commander, NWIMT13

Fire Start date: July 15, 2024	Location: 1 mile west of Hwy 129 and Grand Ronde river intersection – SW of Clarkston	Cause: Under Investigation
Fire size: 4895 Acres	Air Assets Assigned: 2	Total personnel: 228

Cougar Creek Fire Update for Friday July 19, 2024

Clarkston, WA – The Cougar Creek Fire is burning in Southeast Washington along the Washington – Oregon boarder, approximately 40 miles SW of Clarkston, WA near Hwy 129. The fire is in rugged rangeland with isolated pockets of timber in a mixed topography of ridgelines, benches, plateaus and secondary drainages.

Complex Incident Management Team Northwest 13 assumed command of the fire yesterday. There has been active fire growth since first reported with moderate fire behavior. The fire is expected to primarily spread north and northwest today. Additional air and ground resources are being ordered and will arrive on incident to support current crews building containment lines. Multiple agencies from County, District, State and Federal agencies are fully engaged in suppression activities.

Incident objectives include protecting adjacent communities, structures, and assets such as timber, rangeland, and livestock through minimizing fire growth. Crews have been directly fighting the fire near Wenatchee Creek and have been aided by an increased amount of green vegetation in the drainage, minimizing acres burned. Night operations are in place, and spike camps are being developed to keep personnel closer to this full suppression fire. To the southwest, crews have been scouting alternative line placement in the Grouse Flats road system and providing structure protection. To the south, crews are controlling and monitoring fire spread along the river system. To the north, retardant is being dropped along ridges to protect from further fire spread.

WEATHER: High pressure will return to the fire on Friday with sunny, hot, and dry weather conditions anticipated. Wind will generally remain light under the expected pattern. Daytime temps will remain in the upper 90s, and additional warming is expected through the weekend and into next week before minor cooling. Minimum humidity is expected to be 10% to 15% today.

The hot and dry weather conditions will support active fire spread. Predicted light winds and smoke cover will keep fire activity from becoming extreme.

SAFETY: There are evacuations levels in effect, please see the evacuation notice from Asotin County Sheriff and Asotin County Emergency Management.

SMOKE: Smoke will continue to be moderate across the area near Troy, Anatone, and Clarkston for the next few days. If you are “unusually sensitive” to particle pollution, consider reducing your activity level or shorten the amount of time you are active outdoors. Smoke levels can change rapidly depending on weather. Check current conditions on AirNow.gov.

CLOSURES: The Grande Ronde Road is closed from Troy, Oregon to the Highway 129 junction. Forest officials are temporarily closing the southeastern portion of the Pomeroy Ranger District located in Asotin County and small portions of Garfield County and Wallowa County on Umatilla National Forest Lands to ensure public safety. This temporary closure will also ensure the safety of firefighters engaged in operations to suppress the Cougar Creek Fire. Fire managers are continually assessing resource needs based on fire spread and behavior. The cause of the fire is currently under investigation.

<p>Public information: Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61562674513551 or search for “Cougar Creek Fire 2024” E-mail: 2024.cougarcreek@firenet.gov</p>	<p>Inciweb: https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/waumf-cougar-creek-fire Smoke : https://www.airnow.gov Phone: 509-210-2928 0800 to 1800 (8am to 6pm)</p>
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