



Falls Fire Update for July 22, 2024

Size: 132,751 **Start Date:** July 10, 2024 **Location:** 13 Miles NW of Burns, Oregon
Containment: 40% **Total Personnel:** 1,655 **Cause:** Human-caused, under investigation
Structures Triaged: Residences: 284; Commercial: 85; Outbuildings: 460
Resources Assigned: 46 hand crews, 108 engines, 25 bulldozers, 32 water tenders
Aerial resources available to the fire: two helicopters, and single-engine air tankers (SEATS)

Yesterday, the fire became significantly more active in the afternoon compared to the previous three days. The Falls Fire was hit by a series of thunderstorms and strong southwesterly winds; outflows from these storms were reported at 25 miles per hour within the fire area and up to 50 miles per hour for surrounding areas. The many days of structure preparation work put into private property was tested and a success. The fire remains approximately 13 miles north of Burns, 11 miles southwest of Seneca, 7.5 miles south of Izee, and 2.5 miles west of Highway (Hwy) 395.

The fire protection plan was implemented at a ranch at the southernmost section of Forest Service Road (FSR) 63 near FSR 68. Structure and wildland crews worked together, building on the multiple days of surface prep, dozer line, fuel reduction, and other fire hardening preparations. Fire was used as a tool to stop forward progression of the fire. Crews were shifted from less impacted areas along the fire line to areas of critical need. Tactical firing operations were successfully used to secure previously constructed control lines around the ranch's structures.

In the northwest corner of the fire, firefighters worked on securing line and mopping up spots over FSR 47. A tactical burnout operation was conducted last night near FSR 4785 (Coral Creek) to secure line near private properties. Resources continued constructing direct line with dozers and hand crews on FSR 4785 toward Burnt Mountain. Construction of secondary contingency (backup) dozer line was completed to the northwest near Snow Mountain along FSR 4781. Additional secondary dozer line going both north and south off FSR 4781 is now under construction. Along the eastern end of the northern flank, crews and dozers continued to establish control line to tie off fire east of FSR 47 back into FSR 3750. Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM) Task Forces were stationed near structures in the area of FSR 47, where fire was very active during the weather event on Sunday. Night crews patrolled the fire line, extinguishing hot spots and monitoring fire activity to ensure these structures remained unharmed. Firefighters scouted additional contingency dozer lines along FSR 3150 and FSR 3160 to connect to a series of roads near FSR 37 and FSR 31 into a continuous secondary control line running east-west north of the fire. In the northeast corner of the fire, a small tactical burnout operation was conducted in the evening east of FSR 31 and south of Myrtle Park Meadows to clean up a slop-over and strengthen control lines. Crews lined and controlled some additional spots in the area with support from helicopter bucket drops. Control lines along much of the southern portions of FSR 31 and west to FSR 43, continued to hold firm, despite windier conditions, as mop-up operations are ongoing.

Today, in the northwest corner, crews will look for opportunities to construct direct control lines to tie in slop-overs back into FSR 3750. Construction of secondary contingency dozer lines will continue along roads going north and south off of FSR 4781 from Snow Mountain. Near FSR 3750 and FSR 47, structure and wildland firefighters will continue to mop-up sources of heat along control lines and prepare for a small tactical burnout operation to secure a previous slop-over in that area. Firefighters will continue scouting for additional contingency dozer lines on the FSR 3150 and FSR 3160 to connect into the FSR 37 and FSR 31 road systems to establish a continuous secondary control line running east-west north of the fire. On the northeastern corner of the fire, just south of Myrtle Park Meadows, mop-up work will continue on a 200 acre slop-over along the FSR 31 Road. OSFM crews will support burnout operations and continue hardening surface prep at cabins and homes off FSR 37. In the southern and western sections of the fire, much of the established control line that extends from the southeast corner, over to the western flank of the fire, firefighters will continue to

hold, improve, and mop-up control lines. Efforts to secure the Red Hill area will continue as well, with crews noting significant progress made in the past several days. Structures in this area are being hardened by OSFM crews ahead of an anticipated wind shift mid-week that will test control measures along the southern edge.

Further north, away from the fire perimeter, construction will continue on a planned secondary contingency line along FSR 37 just west of Hwy 395 in the Fisk Gulch area. This secondary contingency line is part of an alternate plan and will run east to west using portions of FSR 37 and FSR 31.

Fire weather includes a Heat Advisory for Monday with temperatures approaching 100 degrees. East winds will become variable around 11 AM, becoming southwesterly after 5 PM. Dry and unstable conditions will persist over the fire. Winds will become increasingly northwesterly after 10 PM. Due to the progress made in structural preparations over the past week; the Yamhill County Task Force is being reassigned to the Lone Peak fire this morning.

Evacuation notices remain in effect in Grant and Harney Counties. For the most accurate evacuation information, please visit the Harney County Sheriff's evacuation map here: <https://tinyurl.com/3zst4sjy>, or the Grant County Emergency Management Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100068819321423>.

The Malheur National Forest issued a fire area closure. A detailed map and additional information about the fire area closure are available at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/malheur/news-events/?cid=FSEPRD1189259>. A temporary flight restriction (TFR) remains in place over the fire area.

U.S. Forest Service fire investigators are seeking the public's assistance with any tips or information pertinent to the start of the Falls Fire on the Malheur National Forest. Please submit any information that could assist fire investigation efforts to SM.FS.R6TipHotLine@usda.gov.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/p/Falls-Fire-2024-61562126623985/>

InciWeb: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/ormaf-falls-fire>

Fire Information Line: 541-208-4370, staffed 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Email: 2024.Falls@firenet.gov

Harney County non-emergency evacuation questions: 541-589-5579

Air quality questions: 541-573-2271

Smoke Outlooks: <https://outlooks.airfire.org/outlook>



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