



## Falls and Telephone Fires Update for July 24, 2024

### Falls Fire Quick Facts:

**Size:** 140,422      **Start Date:** July 10, 2024      **Location:** 13 Miles NW of Burns, OR  
**Containment:** 50%      **Total Personnel:** 1,621      **Cause:** Human-caused, under investigation  
**Structures Triaged:** Residences: 347; Commercial: 104; Outbuildings: 605  
**Resources Assigned:** 49 hand crews, 94 engines, 23 bulldozers, 29 water tenders  
**Aerial resources available to the fire:** two helicopters, and single-engine air tankers (SEATS)

### Telephone Fire Quick Facts:

**Size:** 9,000      **Start Date:** July 22, 2024      **Location:** 12 miles NE of Burns, OR  
**Containment:** 0%      **Total Personnel:** Staffed by Falls Fire personnel      **Cause:** Lightning/Natural

\*See Falls Fire Quick Facts for additional information on total resources assigned and structures triaged combined.

**Telephone Fire:** The Telephone Fire started Monday, July 22, south of King Mountain on the Emigrant Creek Ranger District on the Malheur National Forest. The fire perimeter is approximately five miles east of Highway (Hwy) 395 and fourteen miles north of Hwy 20. Yesterday's operations focused on establishing control lines around the fire and conducting tactical burnout operations intended to harden and secure control lines around the fire. Control lines included using FSR 28 on the eastern flank and tying a system of roads to the north and west, including FSR 480 and FSR 2020, over to FRS 28. Crews and dozers also worked in coordination to establish control lines along the southern perimeter of the fire. Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM) resources have pivoted to assist with the Telephone Fire. These crews continue to identify and complete surface prep on homes north of Hwy 20 and along the drainages including Reed, Harney, King Mountain, Rattlesnake Road/FSR 28, and surrounding areas.

Today, crews will continue to construct control lines around the fire and then strengthen and hold them. Aerial resources will be available to help with suppression operations.

**Falls Fire:** Containment lines continued to hold along southern portions of the fire perimeter. Increased containment along the southern flank has allowed resources to be re-directed to more active areas of the fire. These areas include the upper northeast corner, near FSR 68 and FS 47, the areas in and adjacent to the community of Izee; the northern flank near the Gilbert Ridge area; and the upper southeast corner near the Myrtle Park Meadows and Gold Hill area.

In the northwest corner of the fire, firefighters continued to hold and mop-up line below the western slopes of Burnt Mountain along FSR 4785 near Coral Creek south and east to FSR 47 near the junction with FSR 3150. Construction of secondary contingency (backup) dozer line has been completed to the northwest near Snow Mountain along FSR 4781 and also north and south off FSR 4781 in the Snow Mountain area. Crews continued to connect fireline back into FSR 3150 in the northeast corner of the fire. The road will be used as an anchor for conducting tactical burnouts. In the northeast corner, crews continue to hold and mop-up established control lines. Work will also continue further east on the 3150 preparing it to use as a control line, including using it as an anchor for conducting tactical burnouts. Firefighters will scout for additional opportunities to establish a continuous secondary control line running east to west, north of the fire. In the northwest corner, crews will continue to hold and mop-up established control lines. Yesterday, the majority of OSFM Task Forces remained in patrol status for a second day in the Izee and Red Hill areas. Reports from these crews are positive, noting a reduced threat to structures in these areas. Two OSFM engines will remain assigned to these areas to patrol and monitor fire line near structures.

The northeast corner of the fire remains active. Firefighters will continue to hold and mop up areas adjacent to the FSR 31 south of Myrtle Park Meadows, and work on tying the fire back into the FSR 31. In the northwest corner of the fire, firefighters continued to hold and mop-up line below the western slopes of Burnt Mountain along FSR 4785 near Coral Creek south and east to FSR 47 near the junction with FSR 3150. Structural and wildland crews are coordinating to protect structures and mitigate risk to the Gold Hill and Silvies Valley areas. There are structural crews in placed along the Hwy 395 corridor, providing protection to structures on both the east and west sides of the highway

Patrol and mop-up operations will continue along the south half of the fire perimeter – the area spanning from the southwest perimeter of the fire to near the upper northwest perimeter. One structure engine will patrol the Red Hill area. 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.

Thanks to the combined efforts of OSFM and wildland resources, the structural threat has gradually declined in stable areas of the Falls Fire. However, the threat remains present in portions of both the Falls and Telephone Fires. Structural protection needs will continue to be evaluated daily and resources will be shifted in alignment with the incident needs.

**Weather:** Extreme fire weather is predicted for today. A cold front will move over the fire today which will bring gusty westerly winds, thunder and rain. General winds will be the strongest that the fire has seen so far. Winds will peak after 3 PM. Thunderstorm chances are highest between 2-4 PM. Outflow winds from thunderstorms could reach 50 mph. These thunderstorms appear to be wet enough to cause debris flow-style flash flooding. There is a 30% chance of wetting rain. Temperatures will range between 85-92 degrees.

**Evacuations:** Evacuations remain in place in both Grant and Harney Counties due to the Falls and Telephone Fires. 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>.

**Closures:** Due to active wildfires compounded by extremely unfavorable weather conditions, limited firefighting resources and County Resources, Malheur National Forest officials are temporarily closing lands within the Malheur National Forest. This closure means that the public is prohibited from entering lands, roads, trails and recreation areas, and facilities on the Malheur National Forest. A detailed map and description of the closure area is available on the Forest website and at any Forest office. Closure signs will be posted on the ground.

**Investigation:** 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](mailto:SM.FS.R6TipHotLine@usda.gov).

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

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

**Telephone Fire InciWeb:** <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/ormaf-telephone-fire>

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

**Email:** [2024.Falls@firenet.gov](mailto: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>