



Durkee, Cow Valley, and Bonita Fires Update for Saturday, July 20, 2024

541-208-4371, staffed 7AM to 7PM PDT

2024.cowvalley@firenet.gov

DURKEE FIRE: Start date: July 17, 2024 | Location: 5 miles southwest of Durkee, OR | Personnel: 191 | Fire size: 24,269 acres | Cause: Lightning | Containment: 0%

Yesterday, the Durkee Fire was extremely active progressing south/southeast past Huntington Road and paralleling a ridgeline adjacent to HWY 26. Southern progression of the advancing fire front reached east of Brogan. To the north, the fire crossed Burnt River. Fourteen aircraft dropped retardant and water to reinforce the efforts of firefighters on the ground. Overnight, 20-25 mph winds with gusts reaching 45 mph combined with cured grasses and other dry fuels to drive fire growth. Grasslands containing juniper saw six-foot flame lengths.

Today, given conditions associated with extreme fire behavior, fire fighters will continue to engage and make progress were and when it is safe to do so. Today, structure protection is a top priority. Resources, including Oregon State Fire Marshal have been dispatched to aid with structure preparations. Ariel tactics will continue, especially in areas that are not safe for ground support.

Durkee fire is burning in complex terrain with fuels comprised of juniper and sage. Fire behavior in this fuel type is characterized as spreading quickly. With increasing temperatures forecasted, 20-25 mph winds continuing through the day and compounding cumulative drying conditions below seasonal averages, the fire is likely to continue active progressing.

COW VALLEY FIRE: Start date: July 11, 2024 | Location: 9 miles east of Ironside, OR | Personnel: 303 | Fire size: 133,490 acres | Cause: Human caused | Containment: 77%

Firefighters working on the Cow Valley are patrolling to find any pockets of heat to extinguish. No fire spread is expected, and fire behavior is characterized as smoldering.

BONITA FIRE: Start date: July 11, 2024 | Location: 9 miles south east of Ironside, OR | Personnel: 0 | Fire size: 2,727 acres | Cause: Human caused | Containment: 90%

Minimal fire behavior has been observed due to suppression efforts, containment features and fuel consumption.



NEWS RELEASE

*Oregon/Washington BLM Vale District
Media Contact: Larisa Bogardus, 541-523-1407
July 18, 2024*

*Reward offered for information relating to wildfires in Malheur Reservoir area
VALE, Ore. – Fire investigators and law enforcement officials are requesting the public's assistance in the investigation of the Cow Valley, Bonita and other small wildfires in the Malheur Reservoir area. These fires all began in the early morning hours of July 11, between approximately 1 and 5 a.m. They are believed to be human caused and of a suspicious nature. A monetary reward is being offered for information leading to the identification of individual(s) responsible.*

Anyone with information about any of these incidents should call We Tip Anonymous at 1-800-47-ARSON, online at wetip.com or at the QR code shown.



This is a multi-agency investigation by the Bureau of Land Management Vale District, Oregon State Fire Marshal, Malheur County Sheriff's Office, and Oregon State Police

WEATHER AND SMOKE: It will be hot and dry today with temperatures ranging in the 100s and low humidities. Winds will be north, 20-25 mph. The inversion will lift over the Durkee fire this morning that will cause gusts to reach up to 30 MPH this afternoon. For current smoke information and air quality index, visit airnow.gov.

EVACUATIONS AND CLOSURES: The Malheur County Sheriff's has issued evacuations for the area around Durkee Fire. check for updates on the [Malheur County Sheriff's Office Facebook page](#). The Baker County Sheriff's Office has issued evacuations for the area around Durkee Fire. Visit the [Baker County Sheriff's Office Facebook page](#) for more information. Baker County Sheriff's Office has closed Burnt River Canyon Road to non-local, non-emergency traffic due to the Durkee Fire.

BURN BAN: A burn ban is currently in effect for all of Malheur County, including all BLM lands. For more information, visit <https://www.malheurco.org/category/public-notice/>.

TEMPORARY FLIGHT RESTRICTION: There is a temporary flight restriction over the Durkee Fire, please remember if you fly we cant.

[Cow Valley Fire Incident Website](#)
[Durkee Fire Incident Website](#)
[Cow Valley and Durkee Fire Facebook](#)

