



Durkee Fire Update for Sunday, July 28, 2024

Email: 2024.durkee@firenet.gov Phone: 541-208-4371 (7 a.m. to 7 p.m. PDT)

InciWeb: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/orvad-durkee-fire>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61562017027302>

DURKEE FIRE

Size: 288,690 acres

Start Date: July 17, 2024

Containment: 49%

Personnel: 608

Location: 1 mile west of Durkee, OR

Cause: Lightning

DURKEE FIRE PUBLIC MEETING – MONDAY JULY 29, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. PDT

A public meeting on the Durkee Fire will be held at the Churchill School, 3451 Broadway St., Baker City, OR at 6:30 p.m. PDT on Monday July 29, 2024.

Change in Incident Management Team

Today at 6 a.m. the Southern Area Gold Complex Incident Management Team assumed management of the fires under the leadership of Incident Commander Debbie Beard. The Gold Team expresses its appreciation to NW Team 6, Oregon State Fire Marshals, cooperators, collaborators and the community for their support to the firefighters.

Current Situation

Yesterday’s weather helped firefighters make good progress, increasing containment on the Durkee Fire to 49%. Crews engaged on the active area of the fire that is backing slowly down towards I-84, continuing to check its progress and mop up where possible. On the north side of the fire, conditions allowed firefighters to engage in direct attack, setting up control lines and mopping up along the edge. Crews constructed a key dozer line in Dark Canyon. Along the east and south sides of the fire, crews patrolled and mopped up. In the Bridgeport area, firefighters have been working to complete dozer lines east of the 245 Road system, tying together some of the roads and putting in contingency lines. Crews have also begun mopping up along those lines. On the northwest edge of the fire, firefighters are scouting out potential lines and securing the edges of primary dozer lines to prepare for strategic firing operations if needed.

Firefighters sometimes use strategic firing operations to bring uncontrolled fire to a more manageable location within fire control lines. Strategic firing operations are also used to bring fire to a specific control feature (road, trail, handline, dozer line) where firefighters can safely and effectively manage and monitor the fire. They also can be conducted by helicopter or drone when conditions are too dangerous to place firefighters in the area.

Today firefighters will continue working on spot fires near I-84 and on a pocket of active fire in Shirttail Creek. They also will continue to connect and secure containment lines on the fire’s north side and finish prepping line on the 11 Road. On the fire’s west side, firefighters will continue to hold, mop up and patrol containment lines.

Two helicopters are assigned to the fire. Other aircraft in the area are available if needed. Firefighters will be flying a reconnaissance mission and using the heavy helicopter for bucket work on the north side of the fire.

OSFM is demobilizing all task forces today as the structural threat from the Durkee Fire has diminished.



Weather and Fire Behavior

Today northwesterly winds will continue until early afternoon when southwest winds begin gusting 25-35 mph creating difficult firefighting conditions on the uncontained northern edge of the fire. Northwesterly winds will resume in the evening. There is a 5% chance of rain. Humidity recovery continues to be poor with minimum relative humidity in the teens creating dangerous burning conditions. Possible thunderstorms on Monday and Tuesday are unlikely to bring much rain. However, lightning could threaten very dry fuels.

Evacuations

The Malheur County Sheriff's Office (<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100069245917855>) and the Baker County Sheriff's Office (<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064434892363>) have issued evacuations for multiple areas during the Durkee Fire. Some evacuation levels have lessened.

Residents in Level 3 Evacuations "GO NOW" should leave immediately and not return to their property until evacuation levels are removed. Carry enough supplies to support you and your family for multiple days. A real-time map of fire evacuations is available on the State of Oregon Fire Dashboard (<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/instant/portfolio/index.html?appid=22d04c007866419c91ccf00d097526c8>).

Closures:

- The Baker County Sheriff's Office has closed **Burnt River Canyon Road** to non-local, non-emergency traffic.
- **I-84 and other highways:** Please go to tripcheck.com for current road closures as the situation is dynamic and subject to change.
- A Burn Ban is currently in effect for all of Malheur County (<https://www.malheurco.org/category/public-notices>), and all Bureau of Land Management lands in Malheur and Baker counties. For more information, visit.
- A **Temporary Flight Restriction** remains in effect over the Durkee Fire (https://tfr.faa.gov/save_pages/detail_4_6061.html). Please remember, if you fly we can't! If a drone or other aircraft enters the air space, all firefighting aircraft will be grounded.

Additional Resources:

- For current smoke information, visit airfire.org.
- Weather and fire behavior could impact transportation, power transmission, cell service and other utilities. Monitor IdahoPower.com for information.