



Durkee Fire Update for Tuesday, July 30, 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/DurkeeFire/>

DURKEE FIRE

Size: 293,390 acres

Containment: 51%

Location: 1 mile west of Durkee, OR

Start Date: July 17, 2024

Personnel: 491

Cause: Lightning

The Gold Team thanks everyone who attended the public meeting yesterday in Baker City. A recording is available on the Durkee Fire Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/DurkeeFire>.

Current Situation

The reported increase in acres on the fire is due to more accurate mapping.

Although yesterday's rain was beneficial, it was not enough to extinguish heat on the fire. On the fire's north side, firefighters patrolled and mopped up areas where strategic firing operations took place the previous day. They received support from helicopters that performed bucket drops and an uncrewed aircraft system (UAS or drone) to identify heat sources. Strategic firing operations in Dark Canyon proved difficult due to the weather; however, those same conditions allowed firefighters to engage directly with the fire in this area. Firefighters mopped up hot spots near Deep Canyon, Bridgeport, Lime and the I-84 corridor and in other areas of the fire. They patrolled control lines in the Shirrtail area to ensure they were cold and removed some structure protection equipment there. Crews started a mastication project along Road 11 to create a secondary fuel break on the north side of the fire based on local specifications and engagement with resource advisors and archaeologists.

Today, firefighters will seek out opportunities to resume strategic firing operations on the fire's north side if weather permits. If not, they will work to finish direct line there and continue cleaning up lines, especially near steep hillsides where rolling logs could threaten containment.

Near Bridgeport firefighters will finish ground truthing the line to ensure it will hold. They will also repair the dozer line. Crews will continue patrolling and mopping up remaining heat throughout the fire area to strengthen containment lines.

Weather and Fire Behavior

Yesterday's weak cold front produced about 0.02-0.04 inches of rain across the fire which should reduce fire behavior today. Relative humidity is 80-90% this morning and clouds will remain until early afternoon. Minimum relative humidity is expected to be about 30-35% today. Northwest winds in the morning will turn southwest in the afternoon before returning to the northwest this evening. Highs will reach the mid-80s to lower 90s with triple digit temperatures expected to return Thursday through the weekend.



Evacuations

The Baker County Sheriff's Office reduced evacuation levels to Level 2 (BE SET) for Rye Valley Lane and Mormon Basin Road south to the Baker County line. All other evacuation levels remain the same.

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 evacuation orders for multiple areas during the Durkee Fire. Please stay tuned to their Facebook pages for the latest information.

Residents in Level 3 Evacuations "GO NOW" should leave immediately and not return to their property until evacuation levels are lowered. 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.
- A **temporary flight restriction** remains in effect over the Durkee Fire. More information is available at 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 air quality information, visit fire.airnow.gov.
- Weather and fire behavior could impact transportation, power transmission, cell service and other utilities. Monitor IdahoPower.com for information.