



Falls and Telephone Fires Update for Aug 1, 2024

Telephone Fire Quick Facts:

Size: 38,726 **Start Date:** July 22, 2024 **Location:** 12 miles NE of Burns, OR
Containment: 23%. **Total Personnel:** 236 personnel **Cause:** Lightning/Natural
Resources Assigned: 8 hand crews, 15 engines, 6 bulldozers, 6 water tenders, 2 skidders

Falls Fire Quick Facts:

Size: 143,236 **Start Date:** July 10, 2024 **Location:** 13 Miles NW of Burns, OR
Containment: 73% **Total Personnel:** 1,058 **Cause:** Human-caused, under investigation
Structures Triaged: Residences: 386; Commercial: 119 Outbuildings: 760
Resources Assigned: 30 hand crews, 48 engines, 13 bulldozers, 24 water tenders, 7 masticators, 8 skidders

Sand Mountain Fire Quick Facts:

Size: 4,974 **Start Date:** July 25, 2024 **Location:** 17 miles SW of Seneca, OR
Containment: 0% **Total Personnel:** Staffed by Falls Fire personnel **Cause:** Lightning/Natural

Ritter Fire Quick Facts:

Size: 459 **Start Date:** July 23, 2024 **Location:** Stinking Water Mountain NE of Crane, OR
Containment: 100%. **Total Personnel:** 17 personnel **Cause:** Lightning/Natural

Other Fires Quick Facts:

Whiskey Mountain: 4,292 acres; Cow Creek: 86 acres; Parasol: 485 acres; Poison: 1,000 acres.
Total Personnel: Staffed by Falls Fire personnel.

4 Oregon National Guard hand crews arrived to assist with the firefighting effort on these fires. Learn more at: <https://odffire.com/2024/07/29/oregon-department-of-forestry-orders-resources-from-the-oregon-national-guard/>

Aerial resources assigned: 2 Type 1 helicopters assigned and available to all fires in the area. One Type 1 Uncrewed Aircraft System (UAS) is available to all fires in the area. This UAS can fly over fires and livestream imagery back to operations personnel. UAS uses infrared sensors to detect spot fires, even in smoky conditions, during the day when other aircraft can't fly. At night they are also used to assist firefighters by providing surveillance and scanning for spot fires outside the fire line, then guiding crews to those fires to extinguish them.

An Incident RAWS (IRAWS), a remote, autonomous, portable weather station, has been deployed to Pine Creek Meadow. RAWS are weather stations, strategically placed in remote locations, which measure wind speed and direction, air temperature, precipitation, relative humidity, solar radiation and fuel moisture to keep fire personnel informed of the latest conditions.

Priorities for Thursday, August 1:

- 1) Initial Attack: The potential for new fire starts in the area remains significant at this time, and firefighters remain vigilant and focused on initial attack (IA) and are ready to respond to any new threats.
- 2) Continue tying into the Pine Creek Fire footprint to secure the northeast portion of the Telephone Fire.
- 3) Continue to hold and improve existing line on the southwest side of Telephone Fire.
- 4) Continue to secure line on the Poison Fire.
- 5) Hold and conduct mop up on the northwest side of Falls Fire.

Fire Summaries:

Hotter and drier weather occurring over the next several days could lead to increased fire behavior and will test existing firelines. Critical areas will be reinforced with additional resources throughout the fire footprint.

Telephone Fire: Overall, very good progress is being made on the Telephone Fire. The southwest side is in hold and patrol status with no fire growth, and some resources from this area will begin transferring to the east side of the fire. Crews are working to hold and secure the Rattlesnake area. On Wednesday, small-scale firing operations were completed around Poujade, and crews will continue to secure this area today. There has been huge success in continued work from both the north and the south to create line to tie into the Upper Pine Fire footprint and secure the area. Today, crews will monitor and patrol ignition areas along the eastern side, continue to secure the area into Pine Creek, and use aggressive direct and indirect tactics to keep the fire footprint as small as possible. A task force of engines from the BLM Burns District as well as reinforcement from Oregon National Guard crews will be working on the east side of the Telephone Fire today.

Falls Fire:

The southern portion of the fire continues to look good, as well as the north portion in the direction of Izee, which hasn't moved in the last 2 days. Large machinery is in use on the north side of the fire, to improve line. As of Wednesday, crews had now done mop up 25 feet into the containment line of the Whiskey Mountain Fire and will work on increasing depth on Thursday to move towards monitor status for the area. Crews are making fast progress on a fuel break along the 31 road and are aiming to connect into the Sand Fire footprint in this area. South of Myrtle Creek, crews are doing mop up and working on contingency lines; and line constructed around a recent slopover is holding well. Line is fully complete around the northeast corner of the Falls fire, designed to protect Seneca, Silvies Ranch, and the 395 corridor.

Sand Mountain Fire:

Firefighters continued to improve line around Smokey Creek on the northwest side of the fire; work also continued to build dozer line around the 31 road to use as indirect line. Crews continued to secure this line on Wednesday. Today, crews will strengthen and improve fire line along the north and west flanks of the fire, patrol, and mop up.

Parasol and Poison Fires: The Parasol is completely surrounded with line, and is now in monitor status, with light engine presence. Crews have been doing mop up and reinforcing, and this fire is gradually being de-staffed so resources can work on other areas. On the Poison Fire, crews conducted small-scale firing operations along the northeast corner and completed tying line into the road system. Today they will continue secure line, mopping and gridding.

Ritter Fire: 100% containment has been reached on the fire. Crews are doing final gridding and anticipate the Ritter Fire will go into monitor status today.

Weather: High pressure is building over the region which will bring a warming and drying trend. Further strengthening of the high pressure will cause dangerous heat to impact the region Thursday through Saturday, with a fire weather watch for Friday. Smoke from the Park Fire in northern California is expected to sit over our area today.

Evacuations: Widespread "Go Now" Evacuations Lifted, One Area Entirely Removed from Evacuation Orders

Several areas in northern fire zones dropped from Level 3 to Level 2 evacuation status, while evacuation orders were totally lifted in one area of southern Grant County previously at Level 1.

Due to the continued growth east of the Telephone Fire, evacuations have expanded. 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](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100068819321423) Facebook page: <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 have temporarily closed lands within the Malheur National Forest.

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.

Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR): TFRs in the area have been changing; pilots should check the latest information on the Federal Aviation Administration TFR website prior to flying: https://tfr.faa.gov/tfr_map_ims/html/index.html

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

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

Air quality questions: 541-573-2271. Air quality information, searchable by zip code: <https://fire.airnow.gov/>

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