

Cougar Creek Fire Daily Update

August 4, 2024



Quick Facts

Size: 20,657 Acres

Start Date: July 15, 2024

Cause: Under investigation

Location: SW of Clarkston, 1 mile west of Hwy 129 and Grand Ronde River intersection

Containment: 35%

Personnel: 466

Fire Strategy: Full suppression

Resources Assigned: 8 crews, 3 helicopters, 31 engines, 12 water tenders, 28 heavy equipment

The Cougar Creek Fire is burning within a mountainous and remote area on the Umatilla National Forest bordering the Wenaha-Tucannon Wilderness.

Operations: Yesterday heavy and medium helicopters dropped 22,000 gallons of water on two spot fires near the fire's northwest corner. Firefighters on the ground were unable to engage these spot fires due to the danger of rolling logs and falling debris in the steep terrain. A break in the weather with light rain moderating conditions this morning will allow firefighters to work on securing a spot fire west of FSR 40.

The cooler weather helped to moderate fire behavior, leading fire managers to assess the viability of constructing an indirect fire control line starting at Saddle Butte and extending north. Firefighters have been holding and improving the area burned out Friday night on the western fire edge near Saddle Butte. Firefighters are working to slow the fire's spread into the wilderness, and fire crews will continue preparing and initiating tactical firing operations as needed in areas where they can safely engage.

Firefighters conducted a firing operation late yesterday along FSR 4304 to tie the fire perimeter to the road. The two spot fires in the George Creek drainage are showing no heat and continue to be closely monitored by firefighters. Fire crews are mopping up and gridding near Medicine Creek on the eastern fire perimeter, with firefighters extinguishing remaining pockets of heat. Firefighters are taking advantage of moderating weather while remaining vigilant for a potential uptick in fire activity accompanying outflow winds from passing thunderstorms today.

Evacuations and Closures: Forest closure descriptions and maps are available online on the [Umatilla National Forest closure website](#). In Washington, evacuation notices are posted on the [Asotin County Sheriff website](#) and [Asotin County Emergency Management Facebook website](#). Grande Ronde Road is closed from Troy, Oregon, to the Highway 129 junction in Washington. A level 2 evacuation remains in effect for all of Grouse Flat from Bear Creek Road north to the State boundary and the Garfield County line to Grande Ronde River. The TFR remains in effect: <https://bit.ly/4duptei>. Drone activity is prohibited under the TFR as firefighting aircraft cannot fly with unauthorized drones present. Please respect road and area closure orders and use extra caution while driving for your safety as well as our firefighters.

Weather and Smoke: Light rain was observed at fire camp this morning, and partially cloudy weather will moderate fire behavior. Fire managers are prepared for gusty outflow winds from thunderstorms that may lead to increased fire behavior, especially in the afternoon. Air quality in the region remains at Moderate quality. Learn more about smoke at <http://wasmoke.blogspot.com/>.

InciWeb: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/wases-cougar-creek-fire>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CougarCreekFire2024>

Fire Information Line: 509-210-2928, 8 AM to 6 PM

Email: 2024.cougarcreek@firenet.gov