

# Cougar Creek Fire Daily Update

August 5, 2024



## Quick Facts

**Size:** 20,712 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:** 488

**Fire Strategy:** Full suppression

**Resources Assigned:** 8 crews, 3 helicopters, 32 engines, 13 water tenders, 29 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:** Precipitation and cooler temperatures moderated fire activity, allowing firefighters to begin constructing an indirect fireline north from Saddle Butte. Heavy equipment cleared vegetation and debris along FSR 40 while firefighters removed hazardous trees on the east side of the road. Fire crews continued to strengthen and deepen firelines north of Saddle Butte and just west of FSR 40 to prevent the fire's entry into the wilderness. Firefighters are scouting the ridgeline to the east of FSR 40 to assess the viability of stopping the fire on the ridge above the road. Heavy and medium helicopters dropped 20,000 gallons of water yesterday on spot fires on the western fire flank, while firefighters continued working to secure these spot fires below FSR 40. Firefighters will continue securing the spot fires and hope to finish that work today.

Firefighters on the northern portion of the fire continued to hold and secure the area that was burned out Saturday night, while chippers grind activity fuels along FSR 43 to clear roadside debris. Due to the milder weather, fire activity will decrease over the next two to three days, allowing a window of opportunity for firefighters to make progress with more favorable conditions. Risks to structures in the Grouse Flat area continue to decrease as the south flank holds firm. Due to completing their work on the southern fire flank, some heavy equipment in this area will be transferred to higher-priority assignments.

**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:** The forecast calls for isolated showers and thunderstorms with dry lightning in the fire vicinity throughout the day. Temperatures this week will rebound to at or below seasonal averages, with relative humidity and overnight recoveries both remaining low. 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](mailto:2024.cougarcreek@firenet.gov)