

Cougar Creek Fire Daily Update

August 11, 2024



Quick Facts

Size: 22,376 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: 45%

Personnel: 384

Fire Strategy: Full suppression

Resources Assigned: 5 crews, 3 helicopters, 30 engines, 12 water tenders, 12 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 firefighters conducted firing operations south from FSR 020 and north from Mount Horrible to the Cabin Saddle Campground, closing the gap and completing the final section of containment line around the fire perimeter. There were a few small spot fires across lines as fire activity increased later in the day, but firefighters were able to control these small spot fires successfully. A light helicopter utilized a PSD (plastic sphere dispenser) to drop over 1,200 "fireballs" to ignite areas on the interior of the fire to add depth and make control lines more secure. Sparse and scabby fuels in some areas made burnout operations challenging. Heavy and medium helicopters again supported firing operations with water buckets, dropping a total of 35,000 gallons of water yesterday. A helicopter used water bucket drops in the Indian Tom drainage to cool hot spots and firefighters will continue work to secure that area. On Saturday, resource advisors on the fire's south side worked with a masticator and grader on FSR 4039 to reduce woody debris and repair road damage. Firefighters mopped up and patrolled the Saddle Butte area.

Winds and weather permitting, firefighters will continue firing operations today to increase fire depth on the northwestern and northern fire perimeter. The light helicopter and UAS platform will both be utilized for PSD firing operations today on interior areas of the fire. Crews will continue to secure and hold fire control lines in areas of recent burnout operations. Firefighters are also "gridding" in these areas, systematically identifying and extinguishing remaining pockets of heat near control lines.

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. 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: Isolated showers and thunderstorms today into Monday. Lightning from thunderstorms could cause new fire starts. Look for periodic breezy conditions and daytime temperatures dropping to near normal for Monday through much of next week. 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

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