



Whisky Creek and Sandstone Fires

Daily Update

August 20, 2024 – 9:30 a.m.



Whisky Creek Size: 2,057 acres | Reported Date: July 20 | Cause: Human, Under Investigation | Containment: 9%

Sandstone Size: 702 acres | Reported Date: August 5 | Cause: Lightning | Containment: 29%

Total Resources: 761 | Hand Crews: 19 | Engines: 10 | Dozers: 4 | Other Heavy Equipment: 25 | Helicopters: 4

(Odell, Ore.) -- Fire suppression efforts continue on the Whisky Creek Fire, 6 miles southeast of Cascade Locks, Ore. and the Sandstone and Blister Creek Fires, 9 miles southwest of Ripplebrook, Ore. The fires are burning in steep and rugged terrain on the Mt. Hood National Forest where rolling debris and fire-weakened trees challenge firefighting efforts. Firefighter and public safety remain the top priority. Fire managers are taking advantage of favorable weather conditions to assess and develop plans for more direct fire suppression efforts. Despite considerable rainfall, the landscape remains receptive to fire. Over 3,400 lightning strikes occurred in Oregon on Saturday night, igniting new fires across the region. Whisky Creek and Sandstone aerial resources swiftly responded to requests for reconnaissance missions across the area to help prevent new incidents from escalating into large, uncontained wildfires. During these missions, three new fires on the Mt. Hood National Forest were located and are being addressed by local crews.

Whisky Creek: Yesterday, crews focused on the northeast edge of the fire, where suppression activities were delayed by hazard tree removal. Significant progress was made on containment lines around spot fires near Black Lake, further increasing the confidence these areas will hold. On Forest Roads 630 and 650, mastication (the grinding of removed debris and vegetation into finer, more manageable material) was completed. Mastication of woody debris progressed along Forest Road 2810. Firefighters scouted the terrain near Wahtum Lake for possible contingency lines.

Today, crews will patrol the northeast edge of the fire, looking for hot spots near containment lines. Mop up and strengthening containment lines on the east side of the fire is ongoing. South of the fire near Wahtum Lake, mastication operations along roads will continue.

Sandstone & Blister Creek: Yesterday, targeted bucket drops delivered approximately 800 gallons of water to fire burning near steep cliffs on the south side of the Blister Creek Fire, where access by ground crews is not possible. Containment line construction continued off Thunder Mountain to the south.

Today, firefighters on the Blister Creek Fire will closely monitor the uncontained, inaccessible cliff portion of the fire with helicopter assistance. Chipping operations will proceed along Forest Road 7015 and non-essential equipment is being backhauled from secured fire line to be redeployed where needed most. Heavy equipment operators will grade Forest Road 4620 to repair any road damage caused by suppression activities. Crews will improve containment lines around the spots north of Forest Road 4620 while scouting for safe opportunities to engage directly at the fire's edge.

Weather and Fire Behavior: Cooler temperatures, higher humidity and partly cloudy skies will continue to moderate fire behavior. An increased chance of scattered showers is in the forecast for Wednesday evening into Friday.

Safety: The public plays an important role in preventing the next wildfire; use caution with all ignition sources. For prevention tips visit, <https://keeporegongreen.org>. Fire restrictions are in place within the Mt. Hood National Forest. More information can be found at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/mthood/fire>. A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) is in place over both fire areas.

Smoke: Air quality is expected to be good for both fire areas. For more information on smoke conditions in your area, go to www.AirNow.gov.

Closures: The Mt. Hood National Forest, the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area and Hood River County closure information can be found by scanning the QR code or following the link below. Closures are in place for the safety of the public and fire crews.

For further information about the Whisky Creek and Sandstone Fires, see the following resources:

Email: 2024.whiskycreek@firenet.gov or 2024.sandstone.or@firenet.gov Phone: 541-208-1743, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Web: Scan the QR code or go to https://linktr.ee/whisky_creek.2024

