



## Falls and Telephone Fires Update for Aug 4, 2024

### Telephone Fire Quick Facts:

**Size:** 50,863      **Start Date:** July 22, 2024      **Location:** 12 miles NE of Burns, OR  
**Containment:** 23%.    **Total Personnel:** 483 personnel      **Cause:** Lightning/Natural  
**Resources Assigned:** 14 hand crews, 37 engines, 6 bulldozers, 12 water tenders, 4 skidders

### Falls Fire Quick Facts:

**Size:** 146,000      **Start Date:** July 10, 2024      **Location:** 13 Miles NW of Burns, OR  
**Containment:** 73%    **Total Personnel:** 1,011      **Cause:** Human-caused, under investigation  
**Structures Triaged:** Residences: 386; Commercial: 119 Outbuildings: 760  
**Resources Assigned:** 30 hand crews, 48 engines, 15 bulldozers, 22 water tenders, 7 masticators, 7 skidders

### Sand Mountain Fire Quick Facts:

**Size:** 5,805      **Start Date:** July 25, 2024      **Location:** 17 miles SW of Seneca, OR  
**Containment:** 0%    **Total Personnel:** Staffed by Falls Fire personnel    **Cause:** Lightning/Natural

### Other Fires Quick Facts:

Whiskey Mountain: 4,345 acres; Cow Creek: 86 acres; Parasol: 485 acres; Poison: 1,047 acres; Ritter: 461  
**Total Personnel:** Staffed by Falls Fire personnel.

**Aerial resources assigned:** 2 Type 1 helicopters and One Type 1 Uncrewed Aircraft System (UAS) assigned and available to all fires in the area.

### Community Meetings Scheduled:

**Sunday, August 4 at 3 pm, at the Izee Schoolhouse, 45477 Izee Paulina Lane, Izee, OR**

Leaders of the Alaska Incident Management Team will be in Izee for a community meeting to provide an update on the Telephone Fire, Falls Fire and several other fires we are working to suppress in the area. The meeting will also be shared on the Malheur National Forest Facebook page, as well as the Falls and Telephone Fires Facebook page.

### Priorities for Sunday, August 4:

- 1) Initial Attack (IA): The potential for new fire starts in the area remains significant, and firefighters remain vigilant and focused on IA, ready to respond to any new threats
- 2) Installation of sprinkler kits to structures near the fire perimeter.
- 3) West side of the Telephone Fire
- 4) Gilbert Ridge area
- 5) Northwest side of the Falls/Sand Fires

### Fire Summaries:

#### Telephone Fire:

Despite a weather system that came in yesterday with dry lightning and down drafts, no overall growth was detected on the Telephone Fire. The fire area received 0.1 to 0.2 inch of rain last night, which helped to moderate fuels, slow fire progression, and help firefighters get a foot hold. There is containment line around most of the east side of the fire, and crews have completed tying into Pine Creek on the northeast corner of the fire. Crews are continuing to work on areas of potential threat in the Poujade area. Today, along the eastern side of the fire, crews will continue

mopping up to additional depth and taking care of any heat areas detected. On the west side of Telephone, which has had the most significant growth over the last few days, there was a slopover several shifts ago which came up the south side of King Mountain moving toward the south end of Silvies Valley and Purdy Ranch. Crews continue to work that slopover area. There was also some spotting last night near the Rattlesnake area; night shift crews were able to do small-scale ignition operations to address issues, continuing to secure their anchor as they work north, which is extremely important for safety, efficiency, and progress. Crews are scouting this area for opportunities to tie into road systems to go direct where available. Crews will also continue to address the slopover across the 2820 road today. With hot and dry weather conditions, we do expect some growth on the Telephone Fire, and crews are working hard to get containment on some of these features.

Yesterday, structural crews with the Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM) successfully defended a home and nearby structures along Roach Creek by utilizing wrap, removing nearby fuels, and holding containment lines around the home and multiple structures on the property. Structural task forces also worked in the northeast and northwest portions of the fire to put out hotspots and prep homes along the 3935 and Purdy Road.

Overnight and through today, task forces will work to complete their structure prep objectives and install sprinkler kits. Sprinkler kits can be a valuable tool to help fire crews protect homes with a smaller number of firefighting resources. Sprinkler systems are tied into nearby water sources or portable tanks and then activated if the fire moves towards structures. Based on progress made in structural protection, the task force from Clatsop County is returning home today, and OSFM will continue to monitor fire progress and conditions to determine if more task forces may be sent back to their home agencies in the coming days.

As fire crews work in the western area of the Telephone Fire, Resource Advisors (READs) and Agency Administrators are in communication with local Tribal representatives to ensure that cultural resources in the area are identified and safeguarded to every extent possible. In addition, resources are also being utilized to address and mitigate environmental impacts on the land as a result of fire suppression efforts. READs work closely with area archeologists, range technicians, and other local experts to coordinate restoration and support the success of the operation.

### **Falls/Sand Fires:**

The Falls and Sand fires are now merged and will be summarized together here going forward. Over the last few shifts, there was some growth on the Sands and Falls Fires with the two merging, and crews are dealing with a few slopovers and spots, and otherwise going direct. "Direct attack" is when firefighters work right on the fire's edge and do their best to put in dozer line or handline and use fire hose to stop the fire's spread. On the west side, crews are mopping up further into containment line, and beginning to backhaul equipment. A recent slopover in the Myrtle Creek area was addressed and is holding well, and crews on this side of the fire continue to mop up farther into the containment area. A lot of resources are being used on the northwest edge of the Sand Fire and the most northerly portion of the Falls Fire to protect the community of Izee and other associated values at risk. These fires do have the potential for more growth, in particular going east toward the 31 road and west towards the Gilbert Ridge area. Crews continue working hard to implement contingency plans for this possibility, including creating an anchor point to do small-scale firing ignitions to remove fuel in this area when conditions allow. Night shift crews completed hose lay in the area and are addressing a recent slopover. Work on a large fuel break on the 31 road is nearing completion. This is in preparation for small-scale firing operations which will eliminate fuel using fire between the fire edge and the 31 road. The northeast corner of the Falls Fire area is looking very good. Fire behavior in the area moderated somewhat overnight, and crews are working to attain 100% mop up, which means there are no heats or smokes for a number of shifts, so that this area is secure.

**Poison Fire:** There was no movement on the Poison Fire despite yesterday's weather. Crews are continuing to clean up pockets of fuel to more deeply secure the control line.

\*Note: The **Ritter** and **Parasol** Fires have not had any significant growth outside of containment lines for some time. They are being continuously monitored to check for any heat. Going forward, we will include acreage for these fires

in the “Other Fires Quick Facts” section on page, 1, and they will not be summarized here unless there are any changes.

**Weather:** Today winds will be west/northwesterly, 8-12 mph, with gusts up to 20 mph. Temps will be up to 90 degrees, with relative humidity of 18-25%. Low relative humidity, winds, and column establishment from instability are primary drivers of the fire, and conditions remain supportive for fire growth.

**Evacuations:** 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](#) Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100068819321423>.

**Closures:** A closure is in effect for the two portions of the Malheur National Forest that run west of 395B, north of Mt. Vernon and south of Long Creek, in the Fox Valley area, including all roads, trails, and camping locations within the fire closure area. A detailed map of the closure is included and available on the Malheur National Forest website (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/malheur/>) and offices.

**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](mailto: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](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](mailto: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>