



Durkee Fire Update for Friday, August 2, 2024

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InciWeb: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/orvad-durkee-fire>

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

DURKEE FIRE

Size: 293,882 acres

Containment: 63%

Location: 1 mile west of Durkee, OR

Start Date: July 17, 2024

Personnel: 439

Cause: Lightning

DURKEE FIRE PUBLIC MEETING – FRIDAY AUGUST 2, 2024, at 6 p.m. PDT

On Friday August 2 at 6 p.m. PDT a public meeting on the Durkee Fire will be held at the Churchill School, 3451 Broadway St., Baker City, OR.

Current Situation

For everyone's safety, please slow down when driving near firefighters and equipment in the fire area.

Firefighters have continued to steadily increase containment this week. Despite the hotter and drier conditions, there were no concerns about the containment lines holding. There is heat in the interior of the fire on hillsides and riparian areas, some of which flared up yesterday, but the edges of the fire area are cold. On the south and east sides of the fire, firefighters are in full patrol mode using a technique called gridding. They search an area by systematically traveling on parallel courses or gridlines to make sure there is no heat. Crews also mopped up on the fire's edges on the north and northwest sides. East of Bridgeport, firefighters mopped up heat in interior drainages.

Today, firefighters will inspect and work to eliminate heat sources identified on last night's infrared flight. They will also patrol parts of the interior fire area and check to make sure there is no heat that was not captured in the infrared data in riparian areas and around structures and roads. Crews also will check the edge of the fire area to make sure containment lines are secure and will continue removing excess equipment where it is no longer needed. Firefighters will continue mopping up riparian areas between Bridgeport and Burnt Cabin Road. An Uncrewed Aircraft System (UAS or drone) may be used on the northwest side of the fire to help pinpoint remaining heat so firefighters can target those areas for mop up. A reconnaissance flight is planned for this afternoon.

The night shift will end early tonight so they can start work earlier on Saturday in response to the drier weather expected over the weekend. This will increase staffing on the fire during peak burning conditions and provide additional support for any potential initial attack if there are new starts.

Weather and Fire Behavior

The National Weather Service has issued an excessive heat warning. Temperatures of 105-110 degrees are possible today. Relative humidity will be critically low with minimums of 10-15% expected and single digit relative humidities in isolated exposed pockets. During the day winds will be light but may increase after sunset with northwesterly winds in the northwest part of the fire and down the I-84 corridor gusting 20-25 mph. Smoke, smoldering and flareups are likely today in the fire area. Additionally, an increase in smoke from other fires in the region is expected to affect this fire area today due to air flow aloft coming from the south to southwest. Overnight lows will be in the range of 70-75 degrees. Saturday has a potential for dry lighting and gusty outflow winds.



Evacuations

The Malheur County Sheriff's Office (<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100069245917855>) and the Baker County Sheriff's Office (<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064434892363>) have issued evacuation orders for multiple areas during the Durkee Fire. Please continue to be vigilant and stay tuned to their Facebook pages for the latest information. Weather patterns and fire activity may lead to an increase in evacuation levels.

Residents in Level 3 Evacuations "GO NOW" should leave immediately and not return to their property until evacuation levels are lowered. Carry enough supplies to support you and your family for multiple days. A real-time map of fire evacuations is available on the State of Oregon Fire Dashboard (<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/instant/portfolio/index.html?appid=22d04c007866419c91ccf00d097526c8>).

Closures

- The Baker County Sheriff's Office has closed **Burnt River Canyon Road** to non-local, non-emergency traffic.
- **I-84 and other highways:** Please go to tripcheck.com for current road closures as the situation is dynamic and subject to change.
- A **burn ban** is currently in effect for all of Malheur County (<https://www.malheurco.org/category/public-notices>), and all Bureau of Land Management lands in Malheur and Baker counties.
- **The temporary flight restriction has been adjusted** over the Durkee Fire. More information is available at https://tfr.faa.gov/save_pages/detail_4_2107.html. Remember, if you fly we can't! If a drone or other aircraft enters the air space, all firefighting aircraft will be grounded.

Additional Resources

- For current air quality information, visit fire.airnow.gov.
- Weather and fire behavior could impact transportation, power transmission, cell service and other utilities. Monitor IdahoPower.com for information.
- Post-fire resources for eastern Oregon livestock and agricultural producers are available. For immediate assistance associated with livestock, forage, and crop losses contact your county's USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) office. Learn more about these and other disaster relief programs at www.farmers.gov/protection-recovery/wildfire and contact your FSA Service Center.
- For technical expertise regarding livestock, post-fire rehabilitation and land management, call Eastern Oregon Agricultural Research Center at (541) 573-8900.
- Questions related to agriculture and natural resources, family and community health, and more may be directed to the OSU Extension Service office in your county (<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/find-us>).
- If you don't have access to a computer and/or internet connection, Extension offices house Ag Disaster Relief Resource Computers, which are available to producers to access federal/state relief programs.
- Oregon Wildfire Response & Recovery website (wildfire.oregon.gov/recovery) provides guidance on topics including wildfire insurance, filing a homeowners claim after the fire, returning to a home that survived a fire, replacing lost or missing documents and next steps for people whose homes or businesses burned.
- For longer term management needs, contact the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) field office in your county to explore current funding/technical support available and inform future program offerings in your county. Go to www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/conservation-by-state/oregon/whats-available-in-my-county.