



Buck Creek Fire

Daily Update for September 22, 2024

Fire Information Line: 541-208-7112 (8 a.m. – 8 p.m.)

Email: 2024.buckcreek@firenet.gov

Inciweb: inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/orfwf-buck-creek-fire

Facebook: www.facebook.com/SCOFMPFIREINFO



Size: 5,682 acres | Reported Date: September 7 | Cause: Lightning | Personnel: 571 | Containment: 84%

(Silver Lake, Ore.) – The Buck Creek Fire started in heavy timber within the Yamsay Mountain Semi-Primitive Area on the Fremont-Winema National Forest, about 13 miles southwest of Silver Lake, Ore. The fire spread north and east into managed timber stands on National Forest lands with brush and grass understory and remains about 11 miles from the community of Silver Lake. Increased smoke has been visible as warm and dry conditions produce more active fire behavior well inside the fire’s perimeter. Containment has reached 84% and while fire line reinforcement continues, crews are also engaging in suppression repair.

As more areas reach containment, suppression repair begins on lines no longer needed to hold the fire. This is critical to minimizing the impact of soil erosion when rains arrive. Over 44 miles of line has been built using dozers and hand crews, and about 16 miles of road prepared to serve as fire line. Some of this line did not hold approaching fire during initial firefighting efforts and some was built as contingency line. Most of this line became containment features that have effectively limited fire spread. Where dozers were used to build fire line by clearing 10-foot-wide swaths down to mineral soil, repair efforts include using excavators to pull the berm of dirt and vegetation back into the line. Excavators also build water bars (dirt ridges used to divert water and minimize soil erosion) across constructed surfaces. Repair of hand line is similar, but crews use hand tools to build water bars and other mitigations. Along roadways, adjacent brush and trees are often cut and moved to the side when these features are prepared as fire line. At these locations, suppression repair includes chipping the cut vegetation and sometimes grading of the road surface. These repair efforts are designed to restore resilience to the landscape and mitigate damage that could result from future weather events.

Yesterday, a UAS (an Unstaffed Aerial System or drone) with infrared technology found no new hot spots. Chipping occurred on the west edge of the fire. The challenging mop up efforts in dense pockets of unburned fuels along the southern fire edge continued. Falling crews took down hazardous trees in several areas and road grading continued within the fire perimeter on Forest Roads 036 and 7645. Equipment backhaul was ongoing. Overnight, a crew patrolled the perimeter to ensure fire did not cross constructed fire lines.

Today, most activities will continue from the previous day. UAS missions will search for hot spots near the established fire line; crews will mop up and patrol to ensure the line remains secure. Equipment operators will work on restoring roads, completing suppression repair on dozer lines and chipping along roads used as fire line. Firefighters will continue backhauling. Helicopters are available to assist on-the-ground crews as needed.

Weather: The warming and drying trend is expected to continue through Tuesday. Light winds will be terrain driven with ridgetop gusts up to 15 mph.

Safety: Firefighting equipment and personnel are present on local roads. For the safety of firefighters and the public, fire managers ask the public to drive carefully and remain clear of the fire areas. The public also plays an important role in preventing the next wildfire by using caution with all ignition sources. For fire prevention tips, visit:

<https://keeporegongreen.org>.

Closures and Restrictions: Fire danger remains high. Campfire and other restrictions are in place within the Fremont-Winema National Forest. A forest closure order is in effect for the area around the Buck Creek Fire. For the complete order and map as well as more detail on fire restrictions, go to: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/fremont-winema>. Christmas Valley Airport is being used as the helibase for fire operations and is temporarily closed to general aviation. A temporary flight restriction is in place over the Buck Creek Fire.

Smoke: Smoke from fires around the region may affect air quality. For more information on conditions and strategies on limiting exposure, go to: www.oregonSmoke.org or www.AirNow.gov.