



## Rail Ridge Fire Update

October 19, 2024

Central Oregon Wildfire Information: [centraloregonfire.org](https://centraloregonfire.org)

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**Acres: 176,601 ~ Containment: 90% ~ Start Date: 09/02/24 ~ Cause: Lightning ~ Personnel: 516**

**Special Notes:** USFS and BLM fire area closures are still in effect. To stay informed on any changes to closures and Wheeler County and Grant County evacuation levels, visit <https://linktr.ee/RailRidgeFire>. Please remain out of closed areas for your safety and the safety of the firefighters. Fire managers are meeting daily to assess the closure areas and to discuss the upcoming hunting seasons.

Firefighting and suppression repair is a very dangerous job with many hazards. Some of those hazards on the Rail Ridge Fire recently include slick roads and adverse driving conditions due to cold weather and precipitation, fire-weakened hazard trees, heavy equipment operations, long drive times to the fireline and operating chainsaws. NW Team 2 has successfully mitigated the risks of these hazards and has experienced zero accidents and only one illness.

**Fire Behavior & Weather:** After a chilly start, Friday afternoon temperatures ranged from low to mid-40s at high elevations, to upper 50s in the warmer valleys. Minimum humidity dropped to 30-40 percent in the driest locations. Winds from the south-southwest 5-10 mph with a few gusts to 15 mph turned out of the west-northwest late in the afternoon. Fire behavior will be minimal until sufficient drying occurs. Primary fire behavior characteristics include smoldering ground fuels with very limited creeping and possibly some flare-ups when there is alignment between an ignition source, sunshine, aspect, wind, and elevation. A warming, drying trend is anticipated over the next few days.

**Operations Yesterday:** Between the Incident Command Post and the Rager Forward Operating Base there are more than 500 personnel assigned to assist with the Rail Ridge Fire. Today, the Situation Unit Leader along with Geographic Information System (GIS) professionals created a computer application called the Rail Ridge Fire Suppression Repair Dashboard so the team can track the work being done on the ground. To date, firefighters have built 22 miles of handline, 85 miles of dozer line, 48 miles of other fireline, and have used 99 miles of road as containment line to protect the values at risk.

**Operations Today:** The shaded fuel break at FS Road 3850 is expected to be complete by end of shift today. The main objective there is to ensure that the community of Dayville and other unincorporated areas are protected now and in the event of future fires. A shaded fuel break is a strip of land where the vegetation is altered to reduce the amount of fuel available for a fire. This is done by removing or modifying the understory vegetation while keeping the canopy intact. Shaded fuel breaks help to improve fire safety, enhance forest health, and reduce the intensity and severity of wildfires.

**USFS & BLM Closures / Evacuation Information / Fire Restrictions / Social Media**  
for the Rail Ridge Fire area can be found at: <https://linktr.ee/RailRidgeFire>.