



# Rail Ridge Fire Update

October 9, 2024

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

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**Social Media, Evacuation and Closure Information:** <https://linktr.ee/RailRidgeFire>

**Acres: 171,087 – Containment: 89% – Detection: 09/02/24 – Cause: Lightning – Personnel: 555**

An increase in fire activity was seen yesterday across the entire Pacific Northwest. Poor humidity recovery over night, low daytime relative humidity, high temperatures, and increased winds caused many fires to become more active than days past. Due to fire activity on the northwest side of the Rail Ridge Fire, evacuation levels in Wheeler County were elevated.

**Operational Update** - Yesterday, the 89% of contained fire edge on the Rail Ridge fire were tested by the weather and held in place. There was an increase in fire activity in the interior portion of the northwest section of the fire in the Black Canyon Wilderness. Multiple spot fires, which occurred from the main fire in Black Canyon, were detected to the northwest of the wilderness, and with the intense fire weather yesterday, there was a spot detected on Cougar Ridge in the afternoon. Firefighters called for assistance from air resources but due to heavy smoke in the area aircraft were unable to drop retardant to stop forward progression on the ridge. On the southern edge of the Black Canyon Wilderness, crews used the winds to their advantage to strengthen the containment line moving to the west.

Today, crews will continue to work on containing the spot fire on Cougar Ridge. Three helicopters are available to support the firefighters on the ground with bucket drops as needed. If deemed necessary and conditions allow, fire retardant will be used to slow the fire growth on Cougar Ridge. Winds are expected to shift today, coming from the west/northwest which will push active fire back towards the interior of the containment lines. Higher humidity and lower temperatures are expected to slow down fire growth and decrease the overall fire activity. Firefighters will evaluate weather conditions to determine if they can continue planned tactical burning operations around Bear Skull.

**Weather** - Cooler and more moist conditions will finally take hold today. A weak cold front will cross the area, and winds will turn to come from the northwest for this afternoon. Winds may gust as high as 20 mph on ridges and exposed aligned drainages. Relative humidity will moderate today and through the remainder of the week, with minimum relative humidity of 30-35% this afternoon, but strong recovery at over 60% is forecast overnight.

**Closures** - Forest closures are in place around the Rail Ridge and Crazy Creek Fires. For your safety and the firefighters, please respect closure areas. A map with the ODFW hunting management unit areas overlayed with the closure area and fire footprint can be found at: <https://linktr.ee/RailRidgeFire>.

**For Current Evacuation Levels for all affected counties, please visit:** <https://linktr.ee/RailRidgeFire>.

You can help our firefighters by doing your part, and remember it only takes one spark! The majority of human starts are accidental, know the current fire regulations in your area, be prepared with a fire extinguisher, water and a shovel when out recreating.

