



Rail Ridge Fire Update

October 15, 2024

Central Oregon Wildfire Information: centraloregonfire.org

Email: 2024.railridge@firenet.gov – Phone: 541-208-7111

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

Acres: 175,060 – Containment: 89% – Detection: 09/02/24 – Cause: Lightning – Personnel: 609

Forest visitors near the Rail Ridge Fire should be aware that Forest and BLM closures as well as fire restrictions around the Rail Ridge Fire remain in place.

NWCIMT8 will be transitioning with NWCIMT2 today at 8pm. Team 8 has appreciated the support of the local landowners, community and agency administrators during their two week assignment on the Rail Ridge Fire. Team 2 personnel arrived yesterday to begin the transition process.

Operational Update: Yesterday, winds and dry conditions caused the fire near Cougar Ridge to increase in activity, causing significant increase of smoke throughout the day. Strong winds with gusts up to 20mph were flowing from the southwest, before shifting from the northwest in the late afternoon. Cloud coverage over the area shaded the fire until about noon, causing temperatures to increase, humidity to drop, and overall fire activity to increase in the northwest. An IR flight over night shows the fire increased by 900 acres. Air resources included four Type 1 helicopters, three air tankers, and an air attack. These resources were utilized to protect the values at risk north of Cougar Ridge where an increase of fire activity was observed by dropping water buckets and retardant. Heavy machinery and crews continued to establish containment line on the northwest section of the fire. Crews continued to patrol the contained perimeter of the fire to locate hot spots, remove debris, and take down hazard trees. While some crews have been moved to the northwest of the fire to assist in containment, fire personnel continued to diligently work on repairing roads throughout the burn area, including FS Road 2150 and 24.

Today, expect to see similar fire activity as yesterday. Fire behavior is expected to increase once the smoke inversion lifts early in the day. Winds will flow in from the southwest in the morning and shift to come from the northwest by this evening. Firefighters are expecting to see an increase of torching and spotting in the heat of the day in the northwest. A change of weather, meteorologists are expecting a 70% chance of wetting rain tonight after midnight. In the highest elevations, this precipitation may appear as snow! Heavy machinery is still being used on the northwest perimeter to establish containment line along FS Road 3850. Fire managers are evaluating the terrain and infrastructure north of the containment lines on the active piece of the fire to install contingency lines. Crews will continue mop and suppression repair along contained edges of the fire. Air resources will continue to be used as needed.

Weather: High pressure will push east later today as low pressure pushed in from the west. Expect increasing clouds by later this afternoon through this evening and a chance of rain after midnight. There will be a few hours of dry conditions this afternoon with min RH down to 25%, and then quickly rise this evening. Winds will be out of the southwest this afternoon and turn west-northwest this evening and tonight with gusts of 12-15 mph. Temperatures will likely dip below freezing Wednesday night into Thursday and light snow will be possible above 4,500 ft elevation.

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