



Rail Ridge Fire Update

October 12, 2024

Central Oregon Wildfire Information: centraloregonfire.org

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

Acres: 174,438 – Containment: 89% – Detection: 09/02/24 – Cause: Lightning – Personnel: 616

Operational Update: Yesterday, cool and humid weather, combined with cloud cover led to another day of minimal fire behavior. Suppression repairs continued, including removal of hazard trees and road grading. The firefighters are prioritizing patrolling contained lines while monitoring mop-up of stump holes and hot spots that are still smoldering. UAS checked for heat over the uncontained pieces of line on the northern fire edge and confirmed that the perimeter is secure, and these areas are now considered contained. Helicopters assisted in giving fire behavior analysts a flight to assess the current fire behavior activity as well as flights to assist in communication tower support.

The uncontained fire within Cottonwood Creek and Cougar Mountain continues to spread at slow rates with minimal fire behavior. An indirect strategy continues to be the primary plan, due to significant hazards to firefighters if they attempted direct actions. These hazards include steep, remote, rugged terrain, a high density of snags and heavy fuel loading making travel on foot difficult. The indirect strategy provides firefighters the ability to use road systems and heavy equipment in more favorable terrain and fuels.

Today, weather is expected to be similar to yesterday with lower relative humidity in the afternoon. Primary fire behavior at this time is backing, flanking, and isolated torching. Fuels remain dry and active fire behavior is possible. Widely scattered interior heat sources continue to smolder due to long-term drying. These interior flare-ups will continue to produce smoke for days to come. Heavy equipment and fire crews will begin to prepare FS Road 3850 into containment line along the western edge of the active fire area. To the north, dozers and crews are preparing containment line to the east through BLM and private lands. Crews are setting up sprinklers and preparing around cabins and other values at risk that are within the new planned containment lines. Firefighters continue to use MIST mop-up tactics around the Black Canyon Wilderness. Air resources will continue to assist firefighter needs with bucket drops and other support as needed. Suppression repair work continues.

The fire team and local agencies continue to work with local landowners, businesses, and affiliates who need access within the fire area closures. Due to the multitude of hazards within the fire area, these requests are being prioritized and official escorts are being provided as safety and availability of escorts are feasible.

Weather: Expecting mostly cloudy skies today with min RH values in the low 30s. Clouds will move out of the region late this afternoon and evening with high pressure building overhead. Expect dry and mostly sunny skies for the first part of next week. Winds will be mainly terrain driven through the weekend.

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