



Rail Ridge Fire Update

October 11, 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: 174,081 – Containment: 89% – Detection: 09/02/24 – Cause: Lightning – Personnel: 620

Visitors looking to hunt or recreate on public lands over the holiday weekend should be aware that Forest and BLM closures around the Rail Ridge Fire remain in place. These closures are in place to protect members of the public from hazards such as damaged roads, hazard trees, burning stumpholes and unstable ground as well as fire crews and equipment working around the fire. Although the weather forecast is more favorable for fire suppression than it has been in several days, the area has not had any measurable precipitation and the potential for fire activity to increase remains a factor.

Operational Update: Yesterday, fire personnel continued the use of the Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) with Plastic Sphere Dispensers (PSD) for aerial ignition operations to help build depth in the Black Canyon Wilderness. The UAS was also used to fly the smaller uncontained lines on the northern side of the fire, using IR to look for hot spots close to the fires edge. Moderated weather allowed crews to regain focus on the suppression repair of dozer lines, and removal of hazard trees within the fire area.

Today, we will see favorable weather conditions again which will allow fire personnel to continue to focus on suppression repairs and mopup, including removing hazardous trees and locating hot spots like stumpholes that are still smoldering. Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) are being used to mopup and manage the fire in the Black Canyon Wilderness. On the northwest side of the fire due to the difficult to access terrain, firefighters will be utilizing roadways and natural barriers to create fire breaks as much as possible. The fire team and private landowners are working together to better assess the terrain and access points on the northern side of the uncontained fire area. Opportunities are being explored that would allow firefighters to minimize the growth of this active fire area on Cougar Ridge. Helicopters will be used today to assess helispots and put in radio repeater sites. Air resources will continue to be available to firefighters to utilize as needed to minimize fire spread and severity.

The fire team and local agencies continue to work with local landowners, businesses and affiliates who need access into 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: Favorable fire weather conditions will continue today, however minimum RH values will be a bit drier during the peak heating hours this afternoon, in the 20-30% range. Winds will remain mostly terrain driven and fairly light, with gusts up to 10-12 mph possible in the late afternoon. High pressure will remain positioned over the area through the weekend and into the first half of next week, with dry conditions expected.

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