



Clearwater-Municipal-Motorway North Complex Update

Update: 18

Thursday, September 3, 2015

9:00 AM

Incident size: 83.243 acres

Current Situation: 75% contained

Number of personnel: 444

With the Clearwater-Municipal-Motorway North Complex at 75 percent containment, air operations personnel on Wednesday flew over individual fires within the complex using infrared cameras and visual observation to identify persistent hot spots and other potential problems.

Air ops fly every day that weather permits during a fire, according to Bob Yeager, air support group supervisor for the Southern Area Blue Team Incident Management Team. While aloft, the pilot and another crew member can get a complete picture of the fire landscape and learn which parts of the complex need attention most urgently.

Aerial crews coordinate their reconnaissance with ground crews to direct firefighters to heat sources firefighters might not be able to see. Likewise, they can give ground resources detailed information about smoke and flames that are visible but hard to pinpoint.

At this phase of an incident, the bird's-eye perspective helps managers know how close they are to full containment.

"At one time, the whole thing was a hot spot," Yeager said of the many fires that comprise the complex. Meanwhile, suppression-repair work continues on the Municipal and Fisher fires. This work involves restoring roads and properties damaged by firefighting activities to their original condition. It includes the installation of erosion-control features, such as water bars and turnouts.

On the Clearwater Fire, firefighters mopped up along firelines, especially where castoff needles formed thick layers and presented a risk of reburning. This work will continue today.

Protection of important structures was completed on the fires that make up Motorway North. Yesterday's showers and overnight rain give firefighters an opportunity to make more headway today in all parts of the complex. The prospect of more widespread rain over Labor Day weekend should have a moderating effect on fire behavior.

"I don't expect the fire to misbehave today," fire behavior analyst Ben Rowland said this morning. But he cautioned that large fuels are still dry and capable of burning under the right conditions.

For information about trail, road and campground closures on the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest, visit <http://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/nezperceclearwater/alerts-notice>. Details about how this affects hunting and fishing access can be found at the Idaho Fish and Game site: <https://fishandgame.idaho.gov/content/fire>.

The Southern Area Blue Team continues to manage the complex, and fire updates are issued under the team's name. Visit www.facebook.com/centralidahofires, or search for the fire by name at <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov>.

For more information contact the Public Information Office
Clearwater-Municipal-Motorway North Complex
208-476-5110 or 406-309-0371
<http://inciweb.nwcg.gov>
Municipalfire.blueteam@gmail.com