



August 29, 2009 North Fork Complex - 3,780 acres FIRE UPDATE

Current Update: These fires are burning in steep terrain with heavy dead and down timber. The occasional single and group tree torching is taking place as the fire moves through the heavy fuels. Active fire spread late last week prompted forest managers to expand the area closure south to the Cold Springs Trail. The expanded area closure will force a few archery hunters to shift hunting plans for the mean time.

Saturday showed very little fire activity due to cloud cover, cooler temperatures and high humidities. Fire managers expect to see very little fire spread.

Incident 136 (Raspberry Creek): Cooler temperatures gave firefighters the opportunity to build line along the northwest edge of the fire. Crews will continue to strengthen and secure that edge of the fire. The fire is beginning to clean itself up on the north end as it backs down to the North Fork John Day River. Crews are monitoring the river's edge, watching for spot fires and putting out hot spots. Most of the fire activity today is located along the south edge of the fire.

Incident 129 (Cougar/Basin Creek): This fire by far saw the most activity late last week. The fire pushed south into the head waters of Basin Creek and is also backing down into Cougar Creek. Today's weather is slowing the fire's progression though fire managers estimate that 75% of the fire's edge is still actively burning. On Friday, crews extended the fire containment line south along Forest Road 1010 about ½ mile past Glade Creek.

UPDATED Closures and Restrictions: The Umatilla National Forest has expanded the temporary forest closure in the area surrounding the North Fork Complex fires to include several roads and trails.

Area Closure Description: Area contained within the following roads, trails, and streams:
From the confluence of Otter Creek with the North Fork (NF) of the North Fork John Day River following Otter Creek south to the Junction of Forest Rd (FR) 5505. From that junction follow FR 5505, follow FR 5505 southeast to the junction of FR 1010, then easterly along FR 1010 to Forest Trail #3008. Then follow Forest Trail #3008 to the east along the ridgeline between Oregon Gulch and Backout Creek and then easterly down the ridge to the confluence of the North Fork John Day River. At that confluence head westerly along the NF John Day River to the junction of Otter Creek.

Trails:

- Trail # 3006
- Trail # 3007 Kelsay/Cougar Creek Trail
- Trail # 3008 Cold Spring Trail
- Trail # 3014 Glade Creek Trail
- Trail # 3043 (between FR 5507 and FR 5506)

Roads:

- FR 5506 from the Gold Dredge Campground east to the junction of the trailhead for Forest Trail # 3022
- FR 5506130 from junction of FR 5506 to junction of FR 5507

Maps are available at www.inciweb.org or at any Umatilla National Forest Office. Public Use Restrictions on the Umatilla National Forest have been temporarily lifted. It is possible that the restrictions will be reinstated if temperatures increase humidity drops.

Plans for Today: Looking for opportunities to secure the fireline using natural land features and topography.

Long Term Suppression Strategy: Fire managers are monitoring the fires closely, watching for "trigger points" such as increased fire behavior, fire spread, and hot, dry weather conditions. Trigger points allow fire managers to adjust firefighting actions and resources accordingly. Managing wilderness fires in this manner provides for firefighter safety and reduces fire costs.

Location: The fires are located 15 miles southeast of Ukiah, OR in the North Fork John Day Wilderness. Lat: 44o55'29" Long: 118o39'5"

Estimated Acreage: 3,780

Cause and Date Started: Lightning, Saturday, August 1, 2009

Resources on the Fire:

20-person fire crews: 4

Engines: 7

Water Tender: 1

Dozers: 1

Overhead: 8

Total Personnel: 120

Management: On August 28, 2009, Mike Johnson's Type 3 organization took command of the North Fork Complex Fires.

Cooperators: US Forest Service; Oregon Department of Forestry

Fire Weather:

Sunday: A chance of showers, with thunderstorms also possible after 11am. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 67. North northwest wind between 3 and 9 mph. Chance of precipitation is 40%.

Sunday Night: A chance of rain and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 49. North wind between 5 and 9 mph. Chance of precipitation is 40%.

Monday: A slight chance of showers, with thunderstorms also possible. Partly cloudy, with a high near 75. West wind around 6 mph becoming southeast. Chance of precipitation is 20%.

Monday Night: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms before 11pm. Partly cloudy, with a low around 48.