



**Pacific Northwest Region
Malheur National Forest
541-575-3000
www.fs.usda.gov/malheur**

FIRE UPDATE

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August 13, 2015
12:00 p.m.

Local Type 3 Team activated for Berry Creek Fire

JOHN DAY, OR – Crews have been busy responding to numerous new fire starts after concentrated thunderstorms crossed the area early Tuesday morning.

John Day Interagency Dispatch Center (JDIDC) reports 11 confirmed staffed fires on the northern half of the forest yesterday. All of which are currently held at less than 1 acre. One additional, Incident 270, located east of Starr Ridge Campground, was successfully contained and controlled at about 9.6 acres.

Incident 271, now called the **Berry Creek Fire**, is burning seven miles south of John Day in the Strawberry Mountain Wilderness near private lands. Active fire behavior was reported overnight, increasing acreage to 52 acres. The fire is wind and terrain driven, consuming heavy fuels and slash.

Crews face steep, rugged, remote terrain with limited access, as well as hot and dry weather with a chance of additional thunderstorms by Friday and winds expected to reach 15 mph. Weather is expected to become calmer and cooler over the weekend.

Due to proximity to various homes in the area the local Type 3 Team, led by Incident Commander Kevin Brock, will assume command of the fire at noon today. Additional crews and resources have been ordered. At this time, a Level 2 evacuation notice has been issued to homes in the area.

While updates will be provided as conditions warrant, information on the Berry Creek Fire can also be found on Inciweb at: <http://inciweb.nwccg.gov/incident/4489/>.

Fire officials anticipate additional fires to be reported as expected weather conditions continue. Additional resources are available and ready to respond to new fire and smoke reports as they are called in.

Fire officials would like to remind everyone that the forest is currently at Industrial Fire Precaution Level (IFPL) III, with Phase B of Public Use Restrictions in effect. Fire Danger Rating for the south half of the forest is VERY HIGH, and the north half is at EXTREME. With this, no firewood cutting is allowed. Campfires are allowed only in a designated recreation sites.

The National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) is increasing the National Fire Preparedness Level (PL) to its highest point, PL-5, effective at 5:30 a.m. Mountain Daylight Time on Thursday, August 13th. The last time that the National Preparedness Level was raised to 5 was on August 20, 2013. The National Preparedness Level remained at 5 for 7 days until it was dropped to 4 on August 26, 2013. This is the fifth time that PL-5 has been reached in the last ten years.



for the greatest good

NEWS RELEASE

(continued)

Additional fire information can be found at JDIDC - BICC sites online at: <http://bicc-jdidc.org/index.shtml>.

To report a fire, contact the John Day Interagency Dispatch Center at 541-575-1321 or the Burns Interagency Communication Center at 541-573-1000.

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