

NEWS RELEASE

Pacific Northwest Region - Malheur NF
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Air Resources Aid in John Day/Canyon City Wildfires

JOHN DAY, OR- As several wildfires sparked by lightning erupted in John Day, air resources that were responding to a fire located on the Malheur National Forest, were reprioritized and routed to John Day. Due to the values at risk, including life, personal property and persons livelihoods; multiple air resources responded and assisted with the efforts in John Day and Canyon City. Resources included two heavy air tankers and two SEATS dropping retardant to establish firelines; a helicopter also assisted ground crews by doing water drops.

Malheur National Forest (MNF) and Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) fire crews responded to many smoke and fire reports throughout the afternoon and evening after a very active lightning storm passed over the area Wednesday afternoon.

The Grouse Mountain Fire (ODF) estimated to be 75 plus acres, located about 6 miles north of John Day, put up a large column that was visible for miles around well into the evening. The Starvation Fire, burning on the Malheur National Forest is located about 16 miles southeast of Prairie City near Sheep Mountain and is estimated to be 80 plus acres.

With the extreme fire danger and current weather conditions in the area, officials have been repositioning crews and resources in anticipation of increased fire starts and rapid growth potential. Initial Attack Crews are expected to remain very active throughout the week, as holdover fires come to life and new starts are reported; more lightning storms are predicted for the area over the next several days.

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

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for the greatest good