USDA Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Mt. Hood National Forest | October 2026

# GRASSHOPPER FIRE: OVERVIEW

**WILDFIRE**
suppression & recovery



The Grasshopper Fire was first reported the evening of July 23, north of Forest Road 4812 on the Barlow Ranger District, following multiple lightning storms in the preceding two weeks. Despite an immediate response from fire resources, the fire grew dramatically over multiple days with high winds and hot, dry conditions. Firefighters' top priority was protecting surrounding communities and firefighter safety.

## FIRE STATS

**Start date:** July 23, 2026

**Cause:** Lightning

**Final size:** ~93,971 acres

**$126.1 million** (cost as of 9/29)

**1,901 people assigned** to fire on 8/20 (peak number)

**150 miles** of dozer-created containment lines

**20 miles** of hand line

**150 miles** of road prepared as containment lines

Burned Area Emergency Response team assigned 9/14/26

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**54 wildfires on Mt. Hood in 2026**

**Grasshopper Fire:** 93,971 acres

**Austin Fire:** 12,888 acres

**The Narrows:** 305 acres

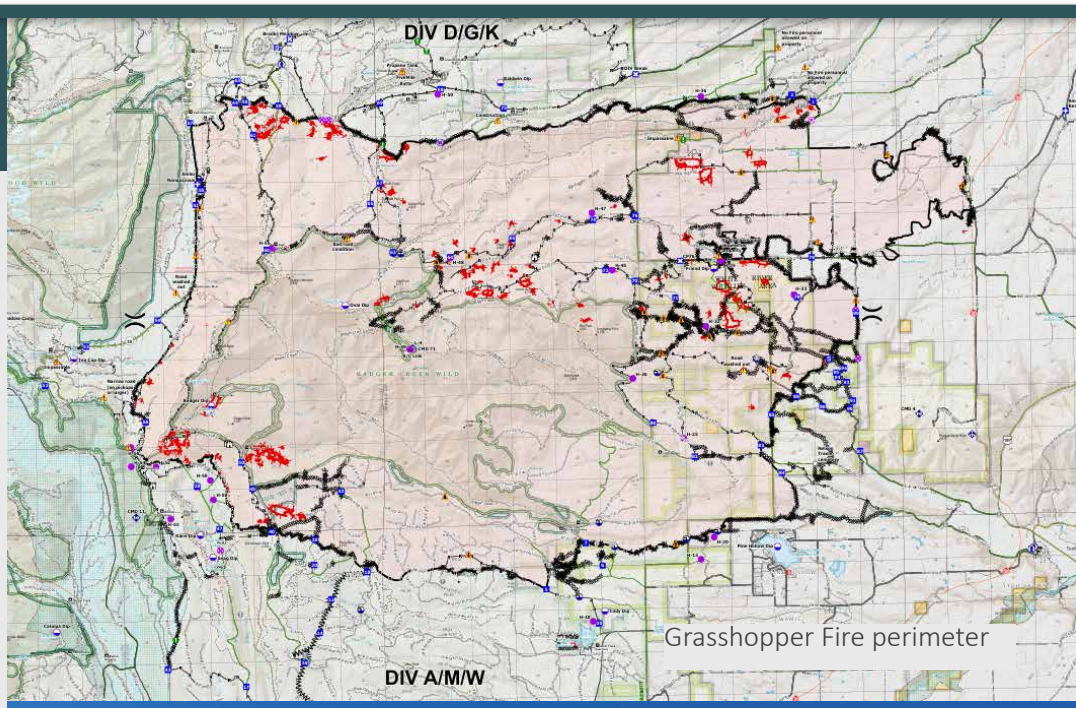
**Mitchell Fire:** 16 acres

**Remaining 50 fires:** 15 acres total

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**44 days** at Fire Preparedness Level 5 in NW

**2.53+ million acres burned** in 2026 across Oregon




Grasshopper Fire perimeter



Grasshopper Fire from Dufur Valley Rd. 7/26/26

# GRASSHOPPER FIRE INITIAL TIMELINE

## Thursday, July 23

- **8:00 pm**: Fire reported; Forest Service & Wamic RFPD engines respond. Forest Service Incident Commander (IC) assigned.

## Friday, July 24: Night Shift

- **12:00 am:** Fire located; IC ordered engines, hand crews, and aviation for the next morning, given anticipated high winds and active fire behavior. OR Dept of Forestry (ODF) and Mt. Hood National Forest were automatically in Joint Delegation per a pre-season joint delegation letter for initial attack on all Type 3/4/5 incidents.
- **1:00 am:** IC asked loggers near the fire to move their equipment to safety. Operators offered to help fight the fire. IC contacted Duty Officer and Forest's timber Contracting Officer (CO) to see if this was a possibility. Contractor noted they had a VIPR contract. Dispatch was unable to locate equipment in either VIPR (federal system) or IRA (state system). IC continued to place equipment orders using established protocols. ***Note***: Once FS firefighters assume command of a fire on FS lands, all resources needed must be hired through fire and aviation contracting methods (including VIPR and IRA).
- **2:00 am:** CO contacted logging contractor regarding equipment removal.
  ***Note:*** This year the first major overhaul of the VIPR contracting system in 15 years, "VIPR Next Generation," occurred. Implementation ran behind schedule and impacted some vendors - especially vendors that did not have an active 2025 VIPR agreement with identical resources.

## Friday, July 24: Day Shift

With active fire weather, Grasshopper Fire grew significantly. Firefighters worked to suppress the fire throughout the day using ground resources (2 hotshot crews, 2 engines, a hand crew, a dozer, and a water tender). A type 1 helicopter dropped water and air tankers dropped retardant.

IC advises Agency Administrators that a Complex Incident Management Team (CIMT) was needed. Order was placed. With many large fires already burning in the PNW, no CIMTs were available that day, but the National Interagency Coordination Center continued to process the order to ensure a CIMT get assigned as soon as possible.

- **1:00 pm:** 4 scooper planes assigned to Grasshopper but quickly reassigned to nearby 8 Mile Fire and Akawa Butte Fire near Sisters due to primary residences and other high value resources at risk.
- **3:00 pm:** ODF dozer diverted to nearby 8 Mile Fire. Wamic RFPD responds to 8 Mile Fire through Wasco Co. Mutual aid.
- **3:30 pm:** Fire estimated at 5-7 acres. After leaving to refuel, helicopter was unable to return due to mechanical issues.
- **7:00 pm:** Fire estimated at 100 acres.

## Saturday, July 25

The 24-hour mutual aid response period with Wamic RFPD through ODF expired. Without an additional agreement in place, there was no mechanism for ODF or FS to pay personnel or cover liability for Wamic RFPD; they departed the fire at 12:15 pm. A Nevada Type 3 team was ordered to support the fire, arriving July 26.

On the fire's southeast corner on and near ODF-protected land, firefighters continued to build fireline. Wamic RFPD provided 3,000-gallon portable pond at 8:00 am. Fixed-wing scoopers and type 1 helicopter supported firefighters until winds gusting to 30 mph shut down all aviation. Wind combined with dry fuel conditions resulted in extreme fire behavior such as spotting and crowning. The fire made a run and reached Badger Creek.

- **8:00 am:** Fire estimated at 1,000 acres. Level 2 evacuations issued for Pine Hollow, Sportsmans Park, and Rock Creek.
- **3:30 pm:** Fire estimated at 3,500 acres. Level 2 evacuations were increased to Level 3 "Go Now."
- **9:00 pm:** Fire estimated at 4,500 acres.