

Fire Update

Friday, August 7, 2015, PM

Collier Butte Fire – Gold Beach, Oregon

Fire Location: Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest

Incident Commander: Doug Johnson

Information Center – 541-670-0812

Inciweb: <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/4461>

Email: Collierbuttefire@gmail.com

Facebook: [U.S. Forest Service- Rogue River - Siskiyou National Forest](#)



Firefighters began opening existing roads and constructing containment line in an effort to fully suppress the 900-acre Collier Butte Fire while minimizing personnel exposure to hazards. The wildfire is burning in the northwest portion of the Kalmiopsis Wilderness in the burn scar of the 2002 Biscuit Fire on the Gold Beach Ranger District, Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest. In the full-suppression strategy of this wildfire, managers plan to take advantage of natural barriers, existing roads, and re-open previously used control lines.

Limited road access, steep terrain, tall brush and large standing dead trees (snags) pose challenges to firefighter safety. Safety zones, escape routes and medevac sites are also being identified to facilitate safe operations in a hazardous environment.

Today, crews and heavy equipment began improving existing forest roads and cutting brush to remove fuels along the west flank. On the northwest flank, the fire became active this afternoon and pushed upslope between Jacoby and Collier Buttes. The fire burned up to a vegetation change with a heavy brush component and slowed considerably with the assistance from helicopter water drops. A hand crew was able to successfully construct direct containment line (against the active fire edge) between the Forest Roads 1376 and Forest Road 3680 cutting off the forward movement. A dozer began to improve the surface of Forest Road 3680 northward toward the Saddle Mountain area to create a containment line on the northern flank. A dozer worked to improve Forest Road 1376 southward towards the Green Craggies. Structures in the area, including the Snow Camp Lookout currently wrapped in fire-resistant, protective foil, will receive point protection.

Fire management officials will continue scouting for areas to implement control lines on the fire's east flank in the Kalmiopsis Wilderness. The objective in the wilderness is to keep the fire west of the Illinois River while minimizing fire suppression impacts to wilderness qualities, habitat, watersheds, and threatened and endangered species.

Natural resources at risk from the Collier Butte Fire include: critical Coho Salmon habitat, Northern Spotted Owl habitat, Marbled Murrelet habitat, and wilderness values. Local Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest resource advisors are readily available to identify areas with sensitive plant and animal species in order to help protect these valuable natural resources during the fire suppression effort.



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Also at risk is the spread of Port Orford Cedar root rot disease that is present on the Forest. Resource advisors are providing specific measures to mitigate the spread of this disease by treating water drawn from creeks and other water sources with bleach for the firefighting effort. Additional measures to reduce the spread of the root rot disease and invasive plant species to lands in and around the fire include implementing a “weed wash station” to clean vehicles going to and from the Forest.

Communities and businesses along the south coast and the Rogue River remain open to the public. Residents and visitors are encouraged to drive carefully as firefighter traffic in the area has increased. Residents along Hunter Creek Road, the main access route to the fire, will also see an increase in fire traffic. Driving sight distance on roads in the fire area access is very limited with sharp corners and few turnouts on narrow roads. Helicopter operations are based in Agness.

Smoke from the Collier Butte Fire and northern California wildfires may be visible along the south coast. Detailed air quality information can be found on Oregon Smoke at <http://OregonSmoke.BlogSpot.com>.

Closures:

The Curry County Fairgrounds and the Day Use Area behind the fairgrounds are temporarily closed to public access. The facilities are currently being used as an Incident Command Post for the Collier Butte Fire.

The Rogue River – Siskiyou National Forest is in the planning stages of implementing a trail and road closure for the health and safety to the public. Specific details will be released in the next few days.

For information on other fires and closures on the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest please see the Facebook page listed above.

Start Date - August 2, 2015

Location - 18 miles east of Gold Beach on the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest.

Size – 900 acres

Cause - Lightning

Resources - Crews – 8; Helicopters – 3, Engines – 2, Dozers – 5, Heavy Equipment – 4, Water Tenders – 1;

Total Personnel - 340

Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR): A TFR is in place over the Collier Butte Fire. Please check the NOTAMs for current information.

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