

Fire Update

Wednesday, August 19, 2015, PM

Collier Butte Fire – Gold Beach, Oregon

Location: Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest

Incident Commander: Doug Johnson

Information Center: 541-247-4447

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

Email: collierbuttefire@gmail.com

Facebook: [U.S. Forest Service-Rogue River - Siskiyou National Forest](https://www.facebook.com/U.S.Forest.Service-Rogue.River-Siskiyou.National.Forest)

Oregon Smoke Information: <http://oregonsmoke.blogspot.com/>



The Curry County Fairgrounds in Gold Beach will host the Fair August 27-30 as planned. Residents could see reduced visibility as smoky conditions settle into valleys overnight.

Current Situation:

The Collier Butte Fire is estimated at 8,300 acres, 25 percent contained and staffed with 397 personnel. The fire is burning in the northwest region of the Kalmiopsis Wilderness and remote Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest System lands on the Gold Beach Ranger District. Fire managers have implemented direct and indirect containment lines to protect values at risk located to the south, west, and north of the fire. Rugged, steep terrain and abundant snags present a multitude of challenges to firefighter safety. Management of this fire is likely to endure for an extended period due to the shortage of firefighting resources and the limited access in the Kalmiopsis Wilderness.

Burnout operations of prepared containment lines along Forest Road 3680 and 1378, on the west perimeter, continued today after the smoky inversion lifted. Firefighters used hand-carried drip torches to ignite fuels to create a black buffer where fuels are consumed against containment lines. A helicopter was used with an aerial ignition device to burn an island of fuels and further add depth to secure containment lines. Helicopters also assisted burnout operations with water drops to cool hotspots. Crews will mop-up and hold the west containment line burned out from the previous two days of operations to create the desired cold, black buffer. The north contingency containment line along Forest Road 3318 and a ridge down to private property on the Illinois River has been completed. Firefighters will improve this line by chipping brush, and falling trees. Crews continue to monitor the south flank fire activity and evaluate opportunities for burn out. Masticators have another day of work remaining to clean-up the contingency line from Mineral Hill down to the Tolman Ranch.

There are approximately 100 uncontained large fires in the nation resulting in a scarcity of resources. Crews, aircraft and qualified support personnel are in high demand and short supply. High-priority values at risk on other fires are in need of vast numbers of resources to protect lives, homes and infrastructure. Firefighting resources are being reassigned and moved to protect these values. Collier Butte Fire managers are strategically positioning available resources to focus on holding and securing primary and alternate containment lines. Additionally, aviation managers are coordinating the sharing of aircraft with other fires in southwest Oregon.

Closures:

Businesses along the south coast and Rogue River remain open and welcome visitors. Residents and visitors to Gold Beach, Brookings and nearby communities are encouraged to drive carefully as smoke could potentially settle into lower elevations and valleys.

For information on closures on the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest, please see the Facebook page or the Inciweb page listed above.

