



Pacific Northwest Region

Umatilla National Forest
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NEWS RELEASE

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Umatilla National Forest to further reduce area closure

PENDLETON, Ore. (August 12, 2021) — With continued reduced initial attack on new fires across the Forest, Umatilla National Forest officials will further reduce the area closure on Friday, Aug. 13, reopening access to most of the Umatilla National Forest lands in Oregon. National Forest lands within proximity to active large wildfires (the Lick Creek, Green Ridge and Elbow Creek fires) will remain closed to public entry.

The modified closure prohibits access to all Umatilla National Forest lands in Washington state (on both the Pomeroy and Walla Walla Ranger Districts) and closes lands surrounding the Elbow Creek Fire on the Walla Walla Ranger District in Oregon, which encompasses lands south and east of where Alder Creek intersects with Forest Service Road 62 to the Forest boundary, as displayed on the enclosed map. Public entry is prohibited in the areas identified in the closure, which includes lands, roads, trails and recreational facilities.

Visitors planning a trip to areas within the closure should cancel any plans for the next several weeks. These areas remain closed to protect public and firefighter safety as the Forest continues to actively suppress wildfires, while also responding to new smoke reports.

A detailed map describing the updated closure area is available at the end of this news release, on the Forest website and at any Forest office. Closure barriers and signs will be posted on the ground.

Fire danger on the Umatilla National Forest is still **EXTREME**. **For areas that will re-open to the public, Phase C Public Use Restrictions will be in effect.** Under these restrictions:

- Campfires are prohibited on the Forest. Use liquid and bottle (propane) gas stoves only.
- No internal combustion engine operation (including chainsaws), except for motorized vehicles.
 - Electrical generators operated under the following conditions are allowed:

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- in the center of an area at least 10 feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable material, or;
 - when fully contained within a pickup truck bed that is empty of all flammable material, or;
 - when factory installed in a recreational vehicle and the generator exhaust discharge is located in the center of an area at least 10 feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable material.
- No off-road/off-trail vehicle travel or travel on roads not cleared of standing grass or other flammable material. Vehicle travel is never permitted on currently closed forest service roads where access has been impeded or blocked by earthen berms, logs, boulders, barriers, barricades or gates, or as otherwise identified in a closure order.
 - Smoking is allowed only in enclosed vehicles and buildings, developed recreation sites, or in cleared areas.

Violating closures and fire restrictions is a violation that carries a mandatory appearance in federal court, punishable as a Class B misdemeanor with a fine of up to \$5,000 for an individual or \$10,000 for an organization, or up to six months in prison, or both.

Additional information on the Lick Creek, Green Ridge, and Elbow Creek Fires is available at:

- **Lick Creek Fire:** <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7615/>
- **Green Ridge Fire:** <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7628/>
- **Elbow Creek Fire:** <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7672/>

For more information regarding Restrictions, please contact the Information Hotline at (877) 958-9663.

The latest fire information will be posted on the Blue Mountains Fire Information Blog. To receive updates on fires in the Blue Mountains, follow our blog at <http://bluemountainfireinfo.blogspot.com/>.

Additional information about the Umatilla National Forest is available at: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/umatilla>.

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