



FOREST SERVICE NEWS

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Scott Mountain Fire in the Mt Washington Wilderness – Update for Tuesday, August 24 McKenzie River Ranger District, Willamette National Forest

(McKenzie Bridge, OR) The Scott Mountain Fire grew to an estimated 600 acres today as winds pushed the fire slightly north. The fire, which is relatively long and narrow in shape, is near the edge of the Mt Washington Wilderness. An incident management team has arrived to help the Forest manage the fire. The team, led by Incident Commander Jeff Pendleton, is highly experienced and is able to handle fires at all complexity levels. “Given the projected weather over today and tomorrow we decided to bring in IC Pendleton here on Forest to manage the Scott Mountain Fire” commented Meg Mitchell, Willamette National Forest Supervisor, “He and his team bring lots experience in managing larger wildfires and increases our current capacity to manage the incidents from last week’s lightning event which resulted in over 150 fires across the Forest. Our firefighters have done a great job. Most of these fires are contained or controlled at this point, but with this many fires, one or two are bound to get bigger.”

The public can continue to get updated information at inciweb.org, Scott Mountain Fire or inciweb.org/incident/2082. “We’ve been keeping people informed by visiting businesses in the McKenzie Bridge area, using the inciweb.org website, sending tweets from [willametteNF](https://twitter.com/willametteNF) and through the media.” according to Public Affairs Officer Judith McHugh. Folks can call the McKenzie River Ranger District at 541.822.3381 during normal business hours.

The Scott Mountain fire was ignited by lightning during last week’s storm and had been visible only intermittently since then. Tuesday afternoon, hotter temperatures and dry winds resulted in rapid fire growth; that same pattern continues today. Embers from the fire are being carried westward by the wind; the fire is bordered by lava fields to the East.

An emergency closure is in place for the area bounded by Oregon State Highway 126 on the west, bounded by Oregon State Highway 242 on the south and described by the Deschutes/Linn County Line on the east. The northern boundary of the closure is defined by the section line separating sections 25 and 36 in T 14 S, R 7 ½ E and east from there to the intersection of the section line separating sections 29 and 32 in T 14 S, R 7 E with Highway 126.

The closure includes all roads east of Highway 126, many of which access trailheads into the Mt Washington wilderness. The primary roads are: 2664 (Robinson Lake), 2657 (Olallie), 2653 (Boulder Creek), 2649 (Scott Creek), and 2647 (Cupola). Additionally, Scott Lake and Alder Springs campgrounds are closed and visitors have been required to leave. Trails 3508 Robinson Lake, 3513 (Hand Lake) and 3502 (Benson Lake) are also closed.

State Highways 126 and 242, the Pacific Crest Trail, Belknap Crater trail and Limberlost Campground are open. The public is encouraged to avoid using Highway 242 as that is the route that fire crews are using and there is a lot of traffic on the road.