

Horse Creek Complex and Rebel Fire

Update for Saturday, September 23, 2017, 9 a.m.

Fire Information: (541) 719-8371

Online: inciweb.nwcg.gov/unit/3860

<https://facebook.com/WillametteWildfires2017>

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Rebel Fire: 8,703 acres

Horse Creek Complex: Olallie Lookout Fire, 1,572 acres; Roney Fire, 3,548 acres; Avenue Fire, 3,370 acres; Separation Fire, 17,914 acres; Nash Fire, 6,738 acres.

Total all fires: 41,871 acres (An infrared flight was conducted on 9/23; the footprints for the Avenue Fire, Separation Fire, and Rebel Fire increased by 408,167 and 77 acres, respectively.)

Resources: Personnel, 374; Crews, 6; Helicopters, 1; Engines, 24; Water Tenders, 3; Skidgen, 1.

Weather: Today's forecast, unlike the past six days, promises to be rain and snow free with sunny skies and temperatures rising into the low 50s; light and variable winds will dominate the valleys and ridges. This trend in temperature rise will continue into next week with daytime highs in the mid to upper 60s. Relative humidity levels will fall into the 20 to 40 percent range as a drier air mass moves into the region. This warming and drying trend will do little to markedly increase fire behavior given forest fuel moisture levels have substantially increased from this week's rain and snow events.

Next Steps: Suppression repair will kick into high gear this weekend with Friday's arrival of six chippers and more on order. Chipping safety training was completed early Friday and crews were initially provided assignments on the Avenue Fire. Two excavators were also obtained and assigned to suppression repair east and north of the Avenue Fire. Chippers are needed and used to process the trees and understory removed to establish fire control lines. Spreading chips on exposed mineral soils prevents soil erosion and sediment runoff, speeds up nutrient recycling and eliminates large piles of fuel that present a fuel hazard over time.

Current Situation: Two crews started working east of the Avenue Fire on Friday and will continue chipping operations today. On the northern side of this fire, all chipping was completed Friday. Chipping operations on the north side of the Separation Fire will be completed once forest roads have a chance to dry enough to support heavy trucks and equipment. On the closed portion of Highway 242, saw crews were removing hazardous trees adjacent to the road. These trees pose a danger to travelers should they fall, particularly at night when driver visibility is reduced. About a dozen hazard trees were removed on Friday and more saw work is planned for this weekend. On the western side of the Rebel Fire, the clean-up of merchantable timber is ongoing. Area motorists should be aware of logging trucks traveling on roads to and from this side of the fire.

National Forest Closure Orders: Closures are still in place on both National Forests. Current information about closures on the Willamette and Deschutes National Forests is available at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/willamette/fire/?cid=fseprd552029> <http://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/Deschutes/alerts-notice>. Fire restrictions have been lifted in Willamette and Deschutes National Forests, and campfires are now allowed.

Flight Restrictions: A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) remains in place over the fires to provide a safe environment for firefighting aircraft operations. It is not legal to operate any aircraft (including drones) within a TFR. More information on the TFR is available at <http://tfr.faa.gov/tfr2/list.html>.