

Middle Fork Complex Fire Update – September 27, 2021

Incident Commander Jimmer Hunt

Size: 30,928 acres

Start Date: July 29, 2021 2:00 pm

Location: North of Oakridge, OR

Containment: 55%

Cause: Lightning

Number of Personnel: 209

Significant rainfall this week further dampens fire activity

Westfir, OR – The Middle Fork Complex is 55% contained, and no significant growth is expected. Repair operations continue on both the Kwis and Gales Fires, mitigating damage to the surrounding area and protecting exposed soil from autumn rains. This involves chipping debris, rehabilitating dozer and hand line by placing vegetation and water bars to protect bare soil from erosion, and seeding to prevent encroaching noxious weeds. Some of the projects delayed by fire operations are beginning to resume on the forest—helicopters will be flying as weather conditions allow to place logs in Hehe Creek and tributaries near Winberry Creek for salmonid spawning habitat improvement.

Smaller closure areas are in development for both the Kwis and Gales Fires. These are expected to be released and implemented in the near future. It is important to respect posted closure areas as they have been put in place to protect public and firefighter safety. Areas close to and affected by the fires will remain closed to the public until they can be assessed and deemed safe for re-entry. Disregarding a closure could not only result in a fine, but also exposes individuals to post wildfire area dangers such as fire weakened and down trees, unstable slopes, hot spots, smoldering materials, compromised culverts, and heavy equipment operations.

Future updates will be provided if significant changes or activity occurs. Check the Willamette National Forest's alerts page for the latest information: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/willamette/alerts-notice>.

Weather and Smoke: Fall weather patterns are here, which will further limit fire activity. Significant rainfall may make steeper areas less accessible. With moderated fire behavior and precipitation, smoke impacts are low, and air quality continues to be good.

Safety: Campfires are once again allowed on the Willamette National Forest. Human-caused fires are still a threat, so always practice good fire safety and never leave a fire unattended until it is completely out. If it's too hot to touch, it's too hot to leave. Dump water on the fire, use a shovel to stir the ashes, and dump more water. Always have a shovel and extra water nearby.

Closures: Some National Forest System lands near the Middle Fork Complex fires are temporarily closed to provide for public and firefighter safety. Please be sure to check current conditions before planning a trip to the Willamette National Forest.



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Inciweb <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7745>

Closures: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/willamette/alerts-notice>

Smoke and Air Quality: <https://oregonsmoke.blogspot.com/>