



Okanogan Complex Fire Update

September 15, 2015, 9:00 AM

Fire Information: 877-568-0458 or 877-574-5148, 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM



Size: 133,142 acres
Containment: 90 percent
Total Personnel: 564

Estimated Cost to Date: \$42.5 million
Injuries: 7
Residences Damaged or Destroyed: 120
Committed Resources: 10 crews, 35 engines, 3 helicopters, 8 dozers, 19 water tenders, 5 masticators

CURRENT FIRE SITUATION

Yesterday, firefighters did not conduct burnout operations off Forest Road (FR) 42. They are letting the fire burn downslope to the road on its own. To maintain access along FR 42, felling crews continue to cut fire-weakened trees. The remaining areas that need mopping up are mainly north of Buck Mountain and scattered elsewhere along the western perimeter of the fire. The rest of the fire is largely in patrol status, and firefighters are hauling hose, pumps and other equipment, and trash off the firelines. While some crews during the past several days have been repairing areas damaged by fire-suppression activity, others are still identifying and mapping dozer lines, hand lines, and roads that need to be repaired. In the early days of the fire, hand crews were in short supply and fire managers relied more heavily on dozers as a suppression tool than they normally would. As a result, more than 60 miles of dozer lines need to be repaired.

WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR

Unseasonably cool weather will continue today with temperatures in the 50s and 60s. Relatively light winds will be from the north this morning, shifting to the south this afternoon. Minimum relative humidity will be 20-30 percent below 4,000 feet and 30-40 percent above. Precipitation—0.10 to 0.20 inches—is likely late tomorrow into Thursday. Above 5,000 feet, snow is possible. Drier, warmer weather will return by the end of the week.

The moisture content of all fuels—from trees to grass—in the fire area remains below 10 percent (kiln-dried lumber is 16-19 percent). Although interior islands of trees continue to smolder and burn, the weather's moderating effect on fire behavior will allow firefighters to make significant progress mopping up remaining hot spots, mainly on the western side.

SAFETY

Forest Service roads on the west side of the fire within the area closure (see below) are closed to the public. Law-enforcement personnel are enforcing road closures, which are identified with a sign or barricade. Although not every closed road is staffed, fire managers ask the public to respect the closures for firefighter and public safety.

EVACUATIONS AND ROAD CLOSURES

- Call the Okanogan County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at 509-422-7348 to report primary residences that were damaged or destroyed in this year's wildfires. The EOC also provides information on evacuations and road closures <https://www.facebook.com/Okanogan.County.Emergency.Management>
- The Okanogan Wenatchee National Forest issued an area closure, effective September 4, 2015, for federal lands in the fire area: <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/article/4534/29367/> or <http://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/okawen/alerts-notice>

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