



Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest
Naches Ranger District

Meeks Table Fire

Morning Update 9 a.m.
Friday, September 18, 2015



WIIMT #4
Brian Gales, Incident Commander
Larry Nickey, Deputy IC
Patrick Halford, IC Trainee

<http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/4609/>

Fire Information
(509) 658-1002 NEW! 8 am to 9 pm

<http://wa-imt4.ordvac.com/>

Burning out in the northwest portion of the fire today

Nile, Wash. – “The operational work on this incident has been fantastic,” said Operations Section Chief Dave Nalle, thanking firefighters and encouraging them to remain focused as they continue working to contain and mop up the 1,024-acre Meeks Table Fire.

There is a burn out operation planned for the northwest portion of the fire today, taking advantage of warming weather to use deliberate, controlled fire to bring the active fire’s edge to a road that’s been prepared to hold it. This will deal with a steep, snag-filled area that is unsafe for firefighters to construct direct fireline. Approximately 180 acres will be burned, so more smoke will be visible than has been observed in recent days.

The weather is warming, with temperatures climbing back into the 70’s over the next few days. This will enable more thorough consumption of fuels during the burn out operation and may help the crews doing mop up to identify additional residual hot spots. Although fuels remain very dry, especially under tree cover, winds are expected to be light (3-6 mph) and the fire is expected to stay on the ground.

Where safely accessible, fire crews are suppressing small spot fires between steep cliffs and Rattlesnake Creek on the south edge of the fire.

To protect firefighter and public safety, the Forest Road 1600 system and the Forest Road 1500 system from the eastern Forest boundary to Bethel Ridge (Cash Prairie, Road 199) remain closed. Only firefighters and law enforcement officers are allowed to use these roads at this time.

Recreationists who left their camps and equipment when instructed to evacuate from the Fire vicinity last weekend have the option to be escorted back into the fire area between 10 am and 4 pm to retrieve their belongings. The affected people can contact Fire Information 509 658-1002 for more detail or simply go to the access point nearest the campsite:

- the 1500 Road (Bethel Ridge Rd) at the 199 junction for access to camps on the 1500 road system (T14N, R14E, section 7);
- the 1600 Road (Clover Springs Rd) at the 1601 junction for access to camps up the 1600 road past that point (T16N, R15E, section 30);
- the 1600 Road (Clover Springs Rd) at the 1706 junction for access to camps down to and including access into the 1605 Road (T16N, R14E, Section 6).

Access will not be available from the 1500 Road (Bethel Ridge) at the eastern forest boundary near Nile. This is a limited plan for safe, orderly access. It does not enable extensive travel away from roads to obtain widely dispersed items.

Campfire restrictions on the Naches Ranger District have not changed.

Quick Facts:

Fire Size: 1,024 acres

Location: Thirty miles northwest of Yakima, Wash. Five miles west of Hwy 410 at Nile, Wash.

Fire Start Date: 9/12/15

Cause: Human. Investigation continues.

Hazards: Steep terrain, Dangerous snags, Helicopter operations, Poor access on narrow roads

Values at Risk: Community of Nile, Wash., recreational cabins, cultural resources, fish and wildlife habitat, timber resources

Containment: 25%

Resources:

9 Crews
1 Type I Helicopter
1 Type II Helicopter
1 Type III Helicopter
19 Engines
1 Dozer
1 Chipper
2 Water tenders

Personnel: 327

Closures: Forest Road 1600 system. Forest Road 1500 system from eastern National Forest Boundary to Bethel Ridge / Road 199. Roads are closed to vehicle and foot traffic.

A limited number of recreationists who evacuated from near the fire area are being escorted to retrieve their personal belongings. Contact the Fire Information 509 658-1002 for more information.