

# Norse Peak Fires Update

## Thursday, August 24, 2017 – 9:00 a.m.

<https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/5509/>

CONTACT: Fire Information 509-658-2475

NorsePeakFireINFO@gmail.com

[www.facebook.com/NorsePeakFire/](http://www.facebook.com/NorsePeakFire/)



Afternoon cloud cover and high relative humidity, supplemented with water dropped by helicopters, kept growth of the **Norse Peak Fire** (2,040 acres), **American Fire** (193 acres) and **three nearby fires (Union Creek – 366: 156 acres; fire 367: 52 acres; and fire 351: 4 acres)** to a minimum yesterday. The fires are moving slowly across the landscape, creeping and backing, burning accumulations of fuels, and occasionally burning groups of trees or running upslope. This can have desirable ecological effects in Wilderness Areas, but the fires are being kept away from developed sites and river habitats.

**Wednesday Accomplishments:** Crews continued removing fuels and slash from containment lines extending from Hells Crossing, along the north side of Hwy 410 and trail 999 to Morse Creek, and up Morse Creek towards Bear Gap. This is intended to prevent south and westward movement of the **Norse Peak Fire**, which remains east and north of Union Creek. Two spots across Union Creek late Tuesday evening were suppressed with water, and tied back into the main fire area with direct fireline. The eastern edge of the **Norse Peak Fire** did not pass Survey Creek. An unnamed ridge between Fife's Peak and Hwy 410 is where the next contingency lines will be constructed, if needed.

The **Union Creek Fire**, also known as **366**, west of the main **Norse Peak Fire**, on the north side of Union Creek, burned actively, grew to 156 acres, and was quieted with bucket drops of water.

South of Hwy 410, crews installed sprinklers along a minor trail, above the American River, to provide containment as the **American Fire** slowly approaches down the hill. The fire is expected to reach this barrier Saturday or Sunday.

"The operational tempo is on track with the resources we have," said Eric Reiner, Operations Section Chief, Trainee, with Northwest Incident Management Team #13. There are currently 341 personnel (1 Type 1 crew, 8 Type 2 crews, 18 engines, 4 felling teams, 2 dozers, 2 water tenders, heavy equipment, and 2 helicopters) working on these fires. "They make excellent progress holding the fires in check, constructing containment line, and monitoring fire behavior each day." Other tasks include identifying structure protection needs for recreational residences along Hwy 410 and at Goose Prairie and Bumping Lake. A night shift of five engines patrols Hwy 410 to ensure safe passage for the public.

**Hwy 410:** The nighttime opening of Hwy 410 has been going well. Cars are able to move through the fire area from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. Maximum speed is 45 mph. Drivers should be cautious for potential fire activity, firefighters, equipment and debris along the road. Fifteen miles of Hwy 410 remain closed during daytime (6 a.m. to 8 p.m.) to allow firefighters to work safely along the roadway where trees have been felled and debris will be chipped. Check Department of Transportation travel alerts at <http://www.wsdot.com/traffic/trafficalerts/>.

**Weather Forecast:** The temperatures will be lower today, in the low 70's, but the skies will be clear, air will be dry, and winds will be gusty from the NW. Although fire behavior is expected to be subdued and minimal where the fire is protected from strong winds, gusts across local ridges will reach 25 mph. On this 67<sup>th</sup> consecutive day without rain, dry fuels are available to burn readily where winds push flames into them. Over the next few days, as temperatures climb and humidity continues to drop, fire behavior is likely to increase.

**All Closures, Restrictions and evacuations remain in effect:** For more details and maps visit <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/5509/>. Recreational cabins at Union Creek and Pleasant Valley, and the Lodgepole and Pleasant Valley campgrounds remain closed under **Level 3 Evacuation Notification**. A broad area of the National Forest around the fire area, including many trails, is closed. Other recreational facilities including campgrounds and businesses at Goose Prairie and Bumping Lake, under **Level 1 Notification**, remain open.

For people sensitive to smoke impacts, [www.wasmoke.blogspot.com](http://www.wasmoke.blogspot.com) is an excellent resource to learn about recorded air conditions and appropriate safety steps to reduce exposure when smoke is heavier.