



OREGON

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Oregon State Police
Office of State Fire Marshal
4760 Portland Road NE
Salem, OR 97305-1760
(503) 378-3473
Fax (503) 373-1825 fax
TTY (503) 390-4661
E-mail: Oregon.sfm@state.or.us
www.sfm.state.or.us

September 18, 2008

For Immediate Release

Contact: Rich Hoover 503-934-8217 voice; 503-370-0033 pager
Colleen Olson 503-934-8228 voice; 503-316-4934 pager

Royce Butte fire evacuees allowed to return home as structural task forces begin demobilizing

With the immediate threat to homes reduced, evacuated residents near the Royce Butte conflagration in Klamath County are cautiously being allowed to return to their homes. Residents remain under a 'Level 2' evacuation advisory. A Level 2 advisory means residents must be prepared to leave at a moments notice. Highway 58 is also now open in both directions

The reduced threat to homes and other structures is allowing deployed structural task forces and the OSFM Red Incident Management Team (IMT) to begin demobilizing. The state fire marshal's IMT had sent 67 personnel, 12 fire engines and three water tenders to help protect structures in and around the communities of Crescent Lake Junction. No structures were lost and there are no injuries to date.

The Oregon Department of Transportation has opened Hwy. 58 for travel in both directions. There is a reduced speed limit of 35 mph from Sunset Cove at milepost 67 to Royce Mountain Way at milepost 71, and at Willamette Pass summit due to lingering smoke, and fire suppression equipment and crews still deployed in the area. For more information on travel conditions visit www.tripcheck.com.

Returning residents are reminded to be aware of potential dangerous flare-ups, snags and hazardous trees. Tips about returning home from a wildfire may be found in *After the Wildfire...*
http://egov.oregon.gov/OSP/SFM/docs/Comm_Ed/WUI/After_a_wildfire.doc.

"Many residents can take credit for the survivability of their home," said State Fire Marshal Nancy Orr. "Homeowners in this area have done a lot of fuel mitigation such as removing low-hanging tree limbs, clearing needle accumulation, moving firewood storage, and installing low-combustible roofs. All these efforts go a long way to improving a home's survivability."

Management of the Royce Butte conflagration was conducted by a unified command between the state fire marshal incident management team coordinating structural protection and the central Oregon incident management team coordinating wildland fire suppression.

###