

News Release



Oregon Department of Forestry

visit us at <http://oregon.gov/ODF/FIELD/NEO/aboutneo.shtml>



Umatilla National Forest

visit us at www.fs.fed.us/r6/uma/

Angie Johnson, Oregon Department of Forestry, (541) 786-2630
Joani Bosworth or Tommy Fulgham, Umatilla National Forest (541) 278-3722

August 9, 2008

Lightning Wildfire Update

Pendleton, OR: Firefighters are busy working on over 50 active fires scattered across lands protected by Oregon Department of Forestry, Umatilla National Forest, and Washington Department of Natural Resources. These fires are a result of the recent lightning activity and range in size from a single burning snag to 460 acres of grass and timber. Three large fires are being managed by Oregon Department of Forestry.

The Eagle Creek Fire, located off Wildhorse Road six miles SE of Athena, OR, has burned 460 acres and is 40% contained. The fire is burning in a mixture of grass, dense brush, and heavy timber and is managed under joint command between the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) lands and the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF.) Fire managers are concerned with the steep terrain and heavy fuels that could provide potential for fire growth. Firefighting resources include CTUIR fire engines, and rural fire engines from Pilot Rock, East Umatilla County, Keating and Pendleton. Five hand crews, one dozer, two water tenders and miscellaneous overhead are also assigned to the fire.

The Buckaroo Fire, burning 10 miles west of Dale, north side of the North Fork of the John Day River, is at 100 acres and 20% contained. The terrain is very steep and difficult to get equipment to. Crews will continue to build hand line and establish hose lays, providing for water on the fire line. A helicopter will be used to aid crews with suppression. Three Hot Shot Crews from La Grande, Oregon, Jackson, Mississippi and Golden Eagle, California and miscellaneous ODF personnel are assigned to the fire.

93 acres have burned on the Cable Creek Fire six miles east of Ukiah. OR. The fire burned in timber and grass along Cable Creek and Hwy 244 and is 70% contained. Two contract engines, two Department of Corrections crews, and one La Grande ODF engine are assigned to the fire and plan to complete containment and mop up today.

A “mini” fire camp has been set up in Ukiah, OR to provide lodging, meals, porta-potties and showers facilities for the 100-plus firefighters assigned to numerous fires in the area.

“The majority of these lightning fires have remained small thanks to the tremendous efforts of our initial attack resources,” said Brian Goff, Deputy Fire Staff Officer for the Umatilla National Forest. Goff credits the success to interagency cooperation that includes local and neighboring rural fire departments, contractors, private landowners, and tribal, state and federal agencies.

Reconnaissance observation flights are scheduled to scout for holdover lightning fires that pop up as the day heats up. Additional reports of new fires are expected throughout the week. “We are staffed and prepared,” said Goff.

ODF/USFS