Escaped debris fire burns 677-acres in Central Oregon

by Cheryl McDermott

Fire officials report that an escaped debris pile burn has spread to 677-acres of private land in Crooked River Ranch and BLM land northwest of Terrebonne in Central Oregon, estimating containment at 20 percent as of 8 a.m. Friday. Firefighters continue to make progress, and full containment of the fire is expected today at 6 p.m.

The fire was reported Thursday afternoon, with affected acreage increasing throughout the day. At 6 p.m., the Central Oregon Interagency Dispatch center estimated the burning area at 100-acres. That number grew to 200-acres at 7:30 p.m., then 350-acres by 8:30 p.m. In a news release issued this morning, officials report that the latest increase to 677-acres is due to better mapping.

A voluntary evacuation of near 100 residents in about 40 households was initiated yesterday, and expected to remain in affect until at least noon today. Those fleeing the blaze are taking shelter at Terrebonne Elementary School. All households within Crooked River Ranch south of the Jefferson and Deschutes County lines, extending west to the Deschutes River and east to Rainbow Lane were notified.

About 60 firefighters and support personnel continued to make progress on containment, concentrating their efforts as they worked throughout the night on mopping up hot spots near structures. Additional crews, rural fire engines and federal firefighting resources are expected to join the effort this morning.

The Deschutes County Sheriffâ€™s office is working with fire officials, continuing to monitor and evaluate the threat to homes to determine when it is safe for residents to return. Homeowners may also call 511 to get the latest evacuation information.

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