

Weekend lightning storm sparks new wildfires in Central Oregon

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

Firefighters were busy Sunday suppressing approximately 15 new wildland fires across Central Oregon that are believed to have been ignited by lightning from a storm that passed through the area Saturday. Fire crews, responding from a combination of federal, state and rural fire departments are taking action quickly to keep these new fires, scattered throughout public and private land, small. Most of the new starts are currently being held to less than two acres and are located throughout Deschutes, Crook and Jefferson counties.

One of the new wildfires started on the west side of Shevlin Park. This incident, estimated at 1.5 acres, is being staffed by a 5-person hand crew and several engines. Fire crews have a line around the fire and are currently mopping up the interior. The cause of this fire remains under investigation.

Crews continued to make progress as they mopped up the Crooked Fire located within the Crooked River Ranch subdivision. The fire was expected to be 100 percent contained at 6 p.m. Sunday evening. Firefighters will continue to mop up the area for the next several days.

Fire crews will continue to respond to any new incidents arising from yesterday's storm, as well as any starts from the storm currently tracking through Deschutes and Crook counties. After a busy start to fire season, firefighters could get some relief this week when daytime temperatures drop into the 60's.

Two Fires Burn near Kimberly

KIMBERLY, Ore. — A new wildfire started Saturday afternoon four miles south of Kimberly and west of Hwy. 19. The Longview Fire is approximately 1,700 acres in size at this time. The cause has not been released; however, lightning from yesterday's storm did track through the area.

The Longview Fire, originally staffed through John Day Oregon Department of Forestry, is now under joint command with the Central Oregon Fire Management Service. By Sunday evening, resources staffing the fire included 3 hand crews, 2 water tenders, and 11 engines and one helicopter.

A second wildfire, the Big Bend Fire, located between Kimberly and Monument has grown to 100 acres. Access to this fire, as well as resource availability, is making suppression challenging. Currently one engine is staffing the fire; however, a single engine air tanker, a Type II helicopter, eight hand crews, four additional engines have been ordered. Both fires are burning in a mix of grass, shrub and western juniper, and there are currently no structures threatened. There are no estimates for containment on either fire at this time as well.

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