

Lake George Fire Grows to 2,000 Acres, McKenzie Highway Closed

by Cheryl McDermott

Fire crews lost ground Monday as the Lake George fire near Sisters grew an additional 400 acres and part of the McKenzie Highway was closed due to heavy smoke.

Motorists are advised to take alternate routes as the current road closure for McKenzie Highway #242 from milepost 76 (west end) and milepost 87 (east end, near the Cold Springs cut-off) remains in effect until further notice.

Fire activity as seen from Windy Point, photos courtesy of PNW Team 3 Now burning approximately 2,000 acres, the fire containment estimate fell from 10 percent to 5 percent Monday, and has now spread south of Mt. Washington two miles into the Willamette National Forest. The lightning caused fire started August 7 approximately 13 miles west of Sisters in the Mt. Washington Wilderness.

The blaze is making moderate intensity upslope runs back toward Mt. Washington as the fire continues to flank to the north. It is likely that the east side of Mt. Washington will see unchecked fire edges to the east and north if predicted afternoon westerly winds arrive.

According to authorities with the Incident Information System, higher humidity and cooler temperatures expected after midnight are likely to result in decreasing fire activity that will continue throughout the night. The evening fire crews will focus on the easterly side of the fire and the fire line that has extended into the Dugout Butte area.

Firefighters will continue to fight aggressively and attempt to reclaim any lost ground caused by the wind gusts that occurred on Monday. The number one priority remains keeping firefighters and the public safe while fighting fire aggressively in order to limit the fire spread.

The weather forecast for tomorrow will be cooler with mild winds from the north, aiding in firefighting operations. Fire activity will decrease early in the day due to higher humidity and lower temperatures. Air Support operations may be delayed due to smoky conditions, as they were on Monday.

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