

Lake George Fire More than Doubles Overnight to 4,250 Acres

by Cheryl McDermott

There was significant growth on the Lake George fire to the south and west of Mt. Washington yesterday and last night, and marked increased fire activity in the southeast corner around Dugout Butte. The fire more than doubled in size from an estimated 2,000 acres to 4,250 acres in less than 12 hours Monday night, and containment is estimated at 5 percent.

Lake George fire activity in southeast area. Photo by Gary Beal Noticeable dense, heavy smoke settled into the Black Butte and Sisters areas as well as areas farther away, prompting the Oregon Department of Transportation to close State Highway 242 at 2 p.m. Monday between Cold Springs Campground approximately four miles west of Sisters, and milepost 76 which is west of the Dee Wright Observatory near the Pacific Crest Trailhead. Motorists are advised to take alternate routes as the road closure remains in effect until further notice.

Today over 650 firefighters will work to reinforce hand fire-lines and dozer lines where the fire was pushed by winds out of the Wilderness on the east and southeast perimeters, and work to connect fire-line on the north and northwest into the rocky slopes of Mt. Washington. Supervisors will scout the western edge of the fire for control opportunities to check the fire's progress into the Wilderness.

Predicted higher humidity and cooler temperatures for Tuesday are expected to result in decreased fire activity today. Relative humidity should be 30-35 percent and temperatures in the low 70's. Winds this afternoon are expected to be westerly 7-15 mph with gusts to 20.

The lightning-caused Lake George Fire which started August 7 is being managed by Pacific Northwest Incident Management Team 3 (PNW3) under a joint delegation from the Deschutes National Forest, Willamette National Forest, and the Oregon Department of Forestry. Currently PNW3 consists of 656 personnel with seven helicopters, two fixed wing-retardant aircraft, 12 engines, six dozers and seven water tenders.

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