IV. The 2017 Fire Season Timeline

**June**

On the morning of June 26, a lightning strike ignited the **Sheep Springs Fire**. This area had previously burned in the 2003 B&B Complex and fire was spreading slowly but steadily through the B&B fire scar. Due to the hot and dry conditions, increasing winds, abundance of snags, and high safety risks posed to firefighters, the initial incident commander initiated an indirect strategy to contain the fire.

On June 28, a type 3 incident management team took command of the fire, and continued and planned additional burn out operations. By July 2, burn out operations were complete and mop-up began.

Fire management transferred back to the local Ranger District on July 3, who continued to mop-up and patrol the fires perimeter. Fire was fully contained by July 31.

*See more on this fire in Appendix B*

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The **Sutherland Canyon Fire and Straight Hollow** were a grouping of several lightning starts that ignited on June 26 around Wenatchee, WA. Due to severe conditions, impacts to sage-grouse habitat, and inaccessible terrain, a Type 2 incident management team took command on June 28 of these fires and the Spartan Fire. These fires spread rapidly in grass-dominated fuels under high winds, which led to multiple evacuation orders and one abandoned structure being destroyed. Full containment was reached on the fires by July 2.

Approximately 4,900 acres of greater sage-grouse habitat burned.

*See more on these fires in Appendix F*

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**July**

The **Indian Creek Fire** started on July 4 deep in a canyon near 7 1/2 Mile Camp on the Mt. Hood National Forest. It was determined to be unsafe for firefighters to work directly on the fire. Water drops were used to cool the fire and reduce the rate of spread. The water drops, sometimes over 100,000 gallons in a day, raised the humidity and fuel moisture in the fire area. The fire held at 83 acres for much of August.

A spell of warmer, drier weather caused the fire to become more active. As of September 2, the fire had grown to 373 acres. That day aircraft and crews were diverted to the new Eagle Creek Fire. They helped search for hikers and campers near the fires, and dropped water to try to slow the spread of Eagle Creek Fire. On September 4 a Type 2 Incident Command Team assumed command of Indian Creek Fire and Eagle Creek Fire. On September 5, the fires merged and became managed as the Eagle Creek Fire.

*See more on this fire in Appendix D*

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The **Ana Fire** started on July 7 on private land north of Summer Lake and quickly spread. The fire threatened approximately 25 homes, 10 commercial buildings, and 10 other structures along with sage-grouse habitat, Highway 31, the transmission line that roughly parallels Highway 31, and cultural resources towards the north of the fire.

A Type 2 incident management team took command on July 10 by which time the fire had grown to 6,000 acres resulting in the closure of Highway 31 and Level 2 evacuation orders for some local residences. Crews continued to make good progress despite difficult conditions.

The Oregon Department of Transportation was able to re-open Highway 31 on July 11 with a pilot car. Actual GPS mapping estimated the fire at 5,833 acres. With smoldering fire behavior, all evacuation orders were lifted on July 14 and traffic resumed on Highway 31. The team transferred command of the fire back to Lakeview BLM on July 15.

*See more on this fire in Appendix C*

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A commercial airline pilot first reported the **Chetco Bar Fire** on the afternoon of July 12, 2017. The fire was burning mid-slope along the Chetco River. It was a suspected holdover fire from lightning storms on June 24 and 25. A crew of four heli-rappellers were dispatched to the fire, which was burning within the footprint of the 1987 Silver Fire and the 2002 Biscuit Fire. Three helicopters made 54-bucket drops totaling 17,280 gallons of water on the fire during the first operational period.

By the next day, the fire was 10 acres and had high heat pockets with dead and down materials in heavy brush. Additional resources were requested, including more aircraft. The IC hiked to the fire and began putting in cup trenches but stopped when he saw they were ineffective at catching the roll-out; he directed continued bucket drops on flare-ups. Air Attack requested two single engine air tankers with retardant, recommending the additional hand crews not engage before the fire spread was slowed by retardant.With fire behavior increasing in the late afternoon, helicopters retrieved the firefighters off the hill and the IC elevated the fire to a Type 3 IC.

Over the next several days, firefighters cleared a helispot and constructed direct and indirect fireline while keeping the fire in the wilderness. By July 24, 80 firefighters were constructing and improving containment lines. Two Hotshot Crews were assigned and analyzed options for containment lines closer to the fire. The fire had an east wind event that increased the fire behavior to about 100 acres a day in growth, but the Chetco River was checking spread to the south and west.

On July 29, a National Incident Management Organization took command of the fire at 2,181 acres with 131 personnel assigned. The team met with local cooperators, discussing evacuation plans, should they be needed, and identified residence in the potential fire path. Crews continued to construct contingency lines.

On August 15 at 7 p.m., with the fire at 5,442 acres, the Chetco Effect winds surfaced. These winds pushed the fire northeast and increased the surrounding air temperature by up to 40 degrees. The Chetco Effect winds persisted over the next several days prompting numerous evacuations.

By August 19, the fire was estimated at 48,825 acres and 23 structures had been damaged. The Conflagration Act was invoked by Governor Brown, allowing for the deployment of Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM) resources to support the fire. Between August 17 and August 21, Chetco winds had driven fire growth from around 6,000 acres to almost 100,000. The fire was 97,758 acres with 788 resources assigned.

A Level 1 evacuation notice was issued for Brookings on August 24, while airtankers dropped 46,892 gallons of retardant. A Type 1 incident management team took command on August 26. The National Weather Service issued a high heat warning contributing increased fire activity, including a smoke column developing to a height of 23,000 feet, on September 3 and a Level 3 evacuation of areas within the Forest boundaries.

On September 4, an excessive heat warning remained in effect with temperatures above 100 degrees, creating critical burning conditions and numerous spot fires. A Level 1 evacuation order was issued for residents in the Illinois Valley and Level 3 evacuation order for the Illinois River Road within the national forests boundaries.

In mid-September, the temperatures cooled and rain began to fall. The Curry County Sheriff lifted all evacuation orders on September 18 and the fire transitioned to a Type 4 organization.

A Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) Team arrived in early October to conduct post fire hazard mitigation. Weather continued to moderate fire behavior and spots of heat decreased significantly.

On November 2, the fire was reported as 100 percent contained.

*See more on this fire in Appendix A*

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The **Whitewater Fire**, originally located in the Mount Jefferson Wilderness, is attributed to a lightning strike from June and was first reported on July 23. Initial crews had to hike thee miles to begin suppression efforts. With full suppression under way, the fire was 85% contained by July 27, with the remaining 15% being inaccessible rocky cliff bands.

Fire managers developed contingency plans and ordered additional resource, including a Type 2 team. Base camp was set up at Hoodoo Ski Area and by July 31, 11 miles of the Pacific Crest Trail and numerous access points into Jefferson Park were closed. By August 2, the fire was estimated at 4,479 acres.

A thunderstorm moved through on August 10, igniting addition fires in the area. A Type 1 incident management team took over the Whitewater Fire and supported an additional five smaller fires. On August 22, the team took over another four small fires. Due to unavailable resources, the team also took over the Horse Creek Complex, on August 23.

On August 27, a new Type 1 incident management team assumed command of Whitewater, Little Devil, and Rebel fires and the Horse Creek Complex. Over the next several days, additional fires were detected, all while under a red flag warning for dry and unstable conditions. During this time, crews continued to employ indirect tactics, but used direct attack when burning conditions and fire behavior permitted. Dense smoke hampered firefighting efforts on many days and affected air quality in communities to the west.

Fire spread halted on September 19 when the area saw heavy rain and snow at higher elevations. On September 27, the complex was transferred to the local Type 3 command.

Whitewater Fire ignited in an area located within the 2017 solar eclipse path of totality. The fire prompted an extensive area closure in a large stretch of public lands in a prime viewing location for hundreds of thousands of visitors. The smoke from Whitewater Fire along with multiple fires burning in the region at the same time impacted the quality of life of many people, the recreation of thousands of visitors, and affected the local economy in communities near Detroit Ranger District.

*See more on this fire in Appendix B*

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The **Diamond Creek Fire** was reported on July 23, later determined to be caused by an unattended campfire. The fire was half acre in the Pasayten Wilderness on initial report but quickly grew in heavy and dead fuels. By the end of the day, the fire was estimated at 30-35 acres and a Type 3 incident management team was ordered.

Over the next five days, hand crews and smokejumpers were brought in and began full suppression efforts. However, the weather was hot and dry with above average wind speeds causing the fire to continue to make runs and spot up to a mile ahead of the fire.

On July 29, a Type 1 incident management team took command. The team’s strategy was to keep the fire contained to the Wilderness and protect structures, potentially in the fires path. Several cabins were wrapped in fire resistant material and trails were closed.

Throughout August, the fire continued to grow but stayed contained to the Wilderness, as different incident management teams took command. By late August, the fire had burned around 50,000 acres. On September 4, it made a significant run, growing to approximately 95,000 acres in one burn period, resulting in evacuation orders for three communities. The fire crossed the international border and burned more than 30,000 acres in Canada. On September 15, a National Incident Management Organization (NIMO) team took command of the incident. By Sept. 20, weather conditions had moderated and crews had reached 65% of containment objectives. The NIMO team transferred command back to a type 3 organization on September 27. The fire was contained on Oct. 15.

*See more on this fire in Appendix F*

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A series of lightning storms started upwards of 40 ignitions dispersed through the Rogue-Siskiyou NF, the Umpqua NF and Crater Lake National Park on July 26, starting a series of fires that would eventually become the **High Cascades Complex**. Initial attack resources were unable to contain all of the fires due to the sheer number reported, difficult access, heavy volume of recent initial attack activity by local resources and general shortage of regional resources. Most of the initial attack efforts were effective with the exception of nine fires that became the High Cascades Complex, the largest of which were the Blanket Creek and Spruce Lake fires. The Blanket Creek Fire began on July 26 and was managed by a type two team based out of Prospect, Oregon. On July 31, that team also assumed command of the Spruce Lake Fire.

The timeline of the High Cascades Complex is indeed complex. Fires in the surrounding area were managing separately, then complexed, then moved from one complex to another throughout the duration of the incidents.

By mid-September the Blanket, Spruce Lake, Broken Lookout, Pup and North Pelican Fires combined reached approximately 80,000 acres.

The week of September 18, the region was hit with a significant weather event that brought abundant rain to the fire area. Most work efforts were then redirected to suppression repair and stabilization. The fire was split between two type 3 management teams, dividing the work load between jurisdictions on the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest and the Umpqua National Forest. The fire was called controlled on October 31.

*See more on this fire in Appendix A*

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Lightning started the **Hawk Fire** on July 27 in previously unburned sagebrush within the Cow Lakes PAC, which had tripped a hard trigger due to loss of sagebrush cover and declining sage-grouse population. Jordan Valley RFPA was one of the responding units, with five Type 4 engines and three water tenders. Responding resources from the BLM included one helicopter, five type 4 engines, one type 6 engine, two dozers, and one water tender while the Forest Service also sent a type 6 engine. Several airtankers supported the incident as well. The rapid response resulted in full containment of the fire on July 28 at 1,432 acres.

*See more on this fire in Appendix C*

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**August**

Human activity along U.S. Highway 20 near Glass Butte started the **Cinder Butte Fire** on August 2 and it spread rapidly to the southeast. The fire initially ran an estimated 15 miles under temperatures in excess of 100°F, single digit relative humidity, 30 mph winds, and a very unstable atmosphere (Haines Index 6) through tall grass, sagebrush, and scattered pockets of western juniper trees. Eight people were evacuated and Oregon Department of Transportation closed five miles of U.S. Highway 20, the main route between Bend and Burns. The fire also affected the 12-Mile PAC (priority area of conservation) and general habitat for sage-grouse, residences, powerlines, and local livestock and was threatening the Eastern Oregon Agricultural Experiment Station and the community of Wagontire.

Under severe burning condition, a Type 2 incident management team took command on August 3 and utilized a variety of aircraft to protect threatened resource values.

With cooler temperatures and moderating fire behavior, the team transferred command to a Type 3 team on August 8.

On August 17, the fire was declared 100% contained. Along with destroying four minor structures, causing the evacuation of eight people, damaging powerlines, disrupting traffic on U. S. Highways 20 and 395, and burning in four grazing allotments, the fire affected approximately 1,062 acres of the 12 Mile PAC (priority habitat) and 50,984 acres of general habitat for greater sage-grouse.

*See more on this fire in Appendix C*

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The **Bear Butte Fire** was reported on the afternoon of August 4. Due to the fires quick spread and intensity, a Type 2 incident management team took command on August 5. Fire behavior was observed as short crown runs with long ranged spotting and group torching. A full suppression strategy was implemented as the fire was in close proximity to Anthony Lakes Ski Resort, summer cabins, campgrounds, and powerlines. Evacuation orders were issued immediately for approximately 50 people and the surrounding campgrounds.

Firefighters constructed direct line with the use of dozers and hand crews. The fire was 100 percent contained on August 24. The Bear Butte Fire was the only large fire to be assigned an incident management team in Northeast Oregon during the 2017 fire season. During a record fire year in the region and with a shortage of resources regionally and nationally, this fire was held at a minimal size while threatening valuable resources.

*See more on this fire in Appendix E*

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The lightning-ignited **Shan Creek Fire** was reported August 10, burning about 10 miles west of Grants Pass, Oregon, on the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest. Initial attack fire crews responded on August 11 and made progress on the fire. Due to the its potential and multiple fires in Southwest Oregon, the MAC group made the decision to redirect an out-of-area type 2 incident management team—Rocky Mountain Team Black—which had been ordered to preposition in Central Washington for upcoming weather events. Team Black assumed command of the Shan Creek Fire, which was estimated at 400 acres, on August 17.

Fire crews had already successfully contained all but the west flank of the fire by the time the Rocky Mountain team arrived. The team mapped the Shan Creek Fire at 156 acres, had firefighters install a hose lay around the perimeter and had the fire 85 percent contained by August 19, when they transferred command back to a type 3 team. Since the Chetco Bar Fire had made a significant push toward Brookings, Oregon, the MAC group reassigned Rocky Mountain Team Black to support the NIMO team on that fire.

*See more on this fire in Appendix B*

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Between August 11 and 13, approximately 34 fires were reported from a thunderstorm that pushed through the North Umpqua Ranger District. A Type 1 team was assigned to the **Umpqua North Complex** on August 13. A level 3 evacuation was order for the Dry Creek community, a level 2 evacuation order was issued for another, in addition, several campgrounds, and trailheads were closed. By August 20, fires had begun to combine, resulting in additional evacuation orders to be given. Sections of Highway 38 were closed on August 22 due to thick smoke and falling debris. With hotter and dryer weather, fire activity increased on August 27; spot fires and additional new fires were discovered and added to the complex.

Community meetings were held on August 30 and September 1. There was a transfer of command on September 1 to another Type 1 team and an increase of evacuations orders. The new team used an unmanned aerial system to map and develop a management strategy for the Rattlesnake Fire.

On September 4, an air quality alert was issued for the area; dense smoke was affecting fire behavior and the ability to use aircraft; and some evacuation orders were reduced. By September 7, cooler, moister conditions and some rain moved over the complex area, allowing firefighters to begin using direct attack tactics on portions of the complex.

On September 9, Soldiers from Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, completed their first day of training on the fireline. The following day, they began working on the Devil, Brokentooth, and Ragged Ridge fires. Additional rain on the September 9 aided suppression efforts. Fall Creek Fire was contained on September 10.

A public meeting was held on September 11 and crews began making significant progress in containing the more active fires across the complex. Dense smoke returned on September 12 as conditions dried and fire activity began to pick up. Firefighters continued to hold, mop-up, and conduct suppression repair on inactive or less active fires, while patrolling and engaging more active areas.

The complex transferred to a Type 2 team on September 16. As heavy rains moved in on September 18 firefighters continued mop-up and patrol, while most restrictions were lifted by September 23. September 24 was the last day on the fireline for the soldiers of Joint Base Lewis-McChord, who handled multiple fire suppression and repair assignments on not only the Umpqua North Complex but also High Cascades Complex and Elephant Fire.

*See more on this fire in Appendix B*

­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­The **Milli Fire** started August 11 from a lightning strike in the 2006 Black Crater Fire scar within the Three Sisters Wilderness Area, administered by the Deschutes National Forest. Due to difficult access and numerous snags associated with the past fire, the team chose an indirect suppression strategy in the initial management of the incident. During the first shift, the initial attack forces were pulled back from the fire and crews began working to prepare indirect lines along roads east of the fire. The objective was to prevent fire spread into residential areas located to the east of the fire near Sisters, Oregon. The fire, however, increased in intensity and made several major runs to the east and southeast from August 16-20. The speed and intensity of this activity prompted the evacuation of homes and subdivisions on the western and southern sides of Sisters. It also prompted a change in tactics to a combination of direct and indirect attack with the support of aerial resources when appropriate. Night operations proved to be very successful with a combination of direct attack dozer lines supplemented by hand lines in less accessible areas.

Most of the fire growth was in unburned fuel north of the 2012 Pole Creek Fire and south of the 2006 Black Crater Fire. The southern and western portions of the fire remained in Wilderness and were monitored by air and from the ground using lookouts. Once fire growth was in check using direct attack along the northeast flank and eastern head, a plan was developed to employ indirect tactics burning along a series of FS roads tied to lava flows north of the fire. A mix of heavy equipment and hand crews were used to accomplish this work. Burn blocks were established to contain unchecked fire spread to allow enough time for control lines to be completed. Night burning operations were used to moderate fire intensity and to try to minimize fire severity. PSD (plastic sphere dispenser) operations were used to increase the depth of burning and to remove unburned islands within direct lines. Operations associated with the Tri-County MAC Group primarily involved contingency planning in the event of emergencies and wildfire starts associated with increased tourist activities anticipated with the Total Solar Eclipse.

Significant success in confining this fire to a footprint preventing further spread east into private lands and communities was afforded by several years of aggressive and strategically placed hazardous fuels projects in the vicinity of the fire.

The Milli Fire and events/work prior to the Milli Fire has given the Forest Service, agency partners, Deschutes Collaborative, Deschutes N.F., Central Oregon Fire Management (COFMS), and the Cascade Division multiple opportunities to discuss forest management practices (restoration and fuels management) and activities, fire management/suppression efforts both locally and nationally, and funding to support these activities with multiple entities and folks from all walks of life (educational messaging videos as well as multiple media articles have been produced).

*See more on this fire in Appendix B*

The August 11 lightning storm started nine fires in the Norse Peak Wilderness with the **Norse Peak Fire** being the largest at 500 acres and quickly growing to 1200 acres. Due to the thick high elevation forest with heavy dead and down timber, firefighters began constructing indirect fireline. Closures and evacuation orders were quickly issued due to the extreme fire behavior.

A Type 2 incident management team took command on August 18 but due to national and regional demands for resources, many needs were left unfilled, including Hotshot crews. By August 27, the fire had grown to 2,173 acres. With high temperatures, low humidity, and 15-20 mph winds the fire grew to 17,000 acres by September 1, crossing the Pacific Crest Trail and threatening Crystal Mountain Ski Area and communication buildings at Raven Roost.

The fire would double in size on September 5 to 43,500 acres due to another storm front moving in bring 35 mph wind gusts. Additional evacuation orders were issued and the Army National Guard and Air National Guard would join firefighting efforts. Over the next two weeks, firefighters would continue direct and indirect line, night operations, and structure protection.

A Type 1 incident management team took command on September 19. That day also brought the first significant precipitation in 90 days to the area. By September 22, all evacuation orders were lifted and the focus moved from suppression to mop-up. The local unit would manage the fire beginning September 28. By November 1, the fire was considered controlled.

*See more on this fire in Appendix F*

­Along with other fires in the area, the **Jolly Mountain Fire** was started by lightning when scattered thunderstorms moved over Oregon and Washington on August 11. The fire grew rapidly in steep and rugged terrain from 100 acres to 300 acres overnight. Over the next 10 days, the fire grew to an estimated 638 acres. By August 24, the fire had grown to 1,735 acres, prompting the team to establish night operations and the local Sheriff’s Office to issue evacuation orders for local communities. Additional evaluation orders were issued by the Sheriff’s Office on August 25 and the forest closed upper Cle Elem Valley to public access.

A Type 2 incident management team took command of the fire on August 26. On August 27, as the fire continued to spread actively under hot, dry conditions, The Nature Conservancy closed its lands on Cle Elem Ridge to public access and the Washington Department of Natural Resources closed state lands around the fire. The fire was estimated at 8,000 acres on August 30 but almost doubled in size by the next day. After the fire made a 3-mile run, the Sheriff’s Office issued new and increased evacuations levels throughout Teanaway River.

The first week of September brought more and expanded evacuation notices, and more extreme fire behavior. The Seattle Times ran several stories about the fire, including “Ash Falls like Snow in Seattle.” A Type 1 incident management team took command on September 4 when the fire was at 20,975 acres. The town of Cle Elum was under a level 1 evaluation starting September 5.

Burning conditions and the extreme weather began to ease on September 7, leading to a reduction of evacuation order on September 11. By September 28, all evacuation orders had been lifted.

The Jolly Mountain fire burned in a part of the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest that had not had a major wildfire for several decades. Much of the fire was in inaccessible terrain and resulted in numerous evacuations.

*See more on this fire in Appendix F*

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A series of thunder and lightning storms moved across the Rogue River-Siskyou National Forest on August 14 igniting 25 wildfires that spanned across two separate National Forests, two GACC’s, two states, and 3 counties (and 2 IMTs). The series of fires became managed as the **Miller Complex**. All fires within the complex were terrain and fuel drive and in the early stages fire growth was primarily a result of rollout and slope reversal. All IMTs that commanded this fire during its duration noted the jurisdictional complexities in managing an incident that was across state and regional boundaries.

When the fires first ignited, a local Type 3 organization was already in place managing earlier ignitions and assumed responsibility for some of the new fire starts. A Type 2 organization took command of the fire on August 16 to address the increased complexity around safety, external political factors and resource constraints. A contain and control strategy was already being utilized due to the hazards presented to firefighters by the steep terrain and numerous snags. The team took on an incident that had multi-jurisdictional boundaries with challenging collaborative missions, and had low priority status for resource allocation. On August 18, smoke became a significant issue over the complex. Locally generated smoke was enhanced by considerable smoke from other area fires – most notably the Chetco fire. It remained hot and dry, but temperatures in the lower valleys were affected quite a bit by smoke shading.

Smokey conditions and resource shortages persisted and as the incident progressed towards some containment, a Type 1 IMT took command of the incident. On August 25 when the Type 1 IMT took command, the fire was 46% contained.

Heat began to build again on Aug. 31, and a red flag warning for poor night time humidity recoveries and gusty east winds was issued for the night of the 31st into the morning of Sept. 1. Very hot weather returned Sept. 1 and continued through Sept. 5. Another red flag warning for poor night time humidity recoveries and strong east winds was issued for the night of Aug. 31 and this was followed by a red flag for hot, dry, and unstable weather with a Haines index of 6 on Sept. 1, prompting a mandatory evacuation for (evacuation Level 3) for 40 residences in the Applegate community.

During this hot spell, temperatures peaked at around 100 degrees on Sept. 1 and humidities bottomed out at 12% over the peaks on Sept. 3. Red flag warnings were issued for the potential of lightning on very dry fuels for both Sept. 6 and 7. On Sept. 8, evacuations were relaxed for all communities on the Oregon side of Miller Complex. On Sept. 11, the Type 1 team transferred command of the fire to a Type 2 team. Generally warmer conditions were observed Sept. 15 and 16, but smoke returned and held surface temperatures down and humidity’s up in many locations.

Conditions began to change significantly on Sept. 17. Clouds moved over the area as a cold front approached the coast, and a few showers were observed over the complex. Rain moved in overnight and into Sept. 18 with as much as a half-inch of rain observed over the western portions of the incident and lighter amounts elsewhere.

A mid-October heat wave caused an increase in fire activity on the Abney Fire on the northeast flank where private property was still threatened. With a continued warming and drying trend in the forecast, the Rogue River-Siskiyou Forest managers decided on Oct. 14 to order a type 2 team to assume command on Oct. 16. The team was in place through Oct. 20 when the area received significant rainfall and the fire was transferred back to the local unit.

The fire reached 100% containment on November 2.

*Additional information on this incident is in Appendix B*

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The 16,436 acre **Horse Prairie Fire** started on private land mid-afternoon of August 26. Due to the values at risk, a large number of resources were assigned to this fire. With an unstable atmosphere, extreme fire behavior, steep terrain, and smoke hampering air operations, initial response resources used indirect suppression tactics. Two days later, evacuations orders were issued when smoke began to effect residents and transportation. On August 31, crews continued with burnout operations on the western side of the fire and mop-up elsewhere. Containment steadily grew, so that on September 18 the fire was 95% contained. Of the 16,436 acres within the fire perimeter, 7,626 acres were managed by Roseburg BLM and 8,810 acres were managed by private timber companies.

*See more on this fire in Appendix B*

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The **Uno Peak Fire** started August 30, 15 miles northwest of Mason, Washington on the Okanogan-Wenatchee NF near South Navarre Campground. The fire was reported to be on the steep slopes on the northeast side of Lake Chelan near Uno Peak. The area was under critical fire conditions with live woody and herbaceous fuel moistures at critical levels and high temperatures and low relative humidity’s. The decision was made to order a load of smokejumpers early the next morning as well as an air attack to conduct a recon of the incident on its way to the Diamond Peak Fire.

The following morning the Air Attack recon arrived on scene and reported this incident as two separate fires one being 10 acres and the other being approximately 40 acres, approximately half a mile east of the Sawtooth Wilderness. The Air Attack also reported that the smaller fire was most likely a spot fire from the larger fire and not two separate starts. It was also reported that there were recreational structures threatened above the fire and one structure below the fire near Lake Chelan. The nearest structures were approximately .25 miles from the incident. The air attack ordered scooper planes and fire bosses to be used due to the fires proximity to the lake and the possibility of having quick turn arounds. The load of jumpers was unable to staff the incident due to mechanical issues and had to return to Twisp. The majority of the orders for scoopers were diverted or not filled due to higher priority fires. The fire was mostly worked aerially by Fire bombers, helicopters and heli-tankers for most of the first shift. That afternoon a Type Two Incident Management Team was ordered and by 5 p.m. the size of the incident was estimated at 90 acres. There were area closures placed on summer blossom and safety harbor trailheads and South Navarre Campground.

By the morning of the September 1, the fire was still burning very actively with short uphill crown runs, spotting and creeping fire spread in all directions. The fire was now estimated at 400 acres. The initial management strategy was to utilize existing roads, construct new dozer lines and reutilize past fire lines to complete an indirect line to the northeast, east, and south east side of the fire. The northwest area of the fire was monitored as it spread into the Sawtooth Wilderness. The indirect strategy was chosen due to the fact the incident was burning in the Rex Creek burn scar from 2001 and had a large number of snags that presented safety issues to firefighters on the ground. There were also extensive logistical issues with how remote the fire was and poor road conditions for ground resources to reach the fire line. Travel time to the incident was two hours from camp. The decision to build a spike camp was made to mitigate travel times. The fire was now threatening the historic Crow Cabin, as well as, the endangered White Bark Pine which was scattered throughout the higher elevations of the incident. The large existing fire load in Oregon and Washington meant air and ground resource availability was scarce and many orders for additional support were not filled.

At 6 a.m. September 2, a type 2 team took command of the fire, which at this time was now estimated to be approximately 900 acres and had 109 personnel working on it. The team would continue to monitor the spread to the north and continue the indirect line construction to the northeast, east and south east side of the incident. Additionally a separate incident would be reported two miles northwest of the Uno peak fire. It was called the Ferry Fire and was reported at 75 acres. This fire would also be managed by the same incident management team.

Under critical fire weather conditions (near record high temps, low relative humidity and gusty winds), on September 3 the fire grew from approximately 900 acres to 2,151 acres. The fire spread across safety harbor creek prompting level one evacuations to structures and inholdings south and east of the fire. Also, during the run the historic Crow Cabin burned.

The next day, after crossing Safety Harbor creek the fire had a wind and slope alignment that triggered an uphill/up-drainage run. This caused extreme fire behavior and spread in the safety harbor creek drainage. The fire grew from approximately 2400 acres to 6000 acres in a single burn period. The spread was mainly to the north and west and prompted more Level 1 evacuations to the Llama Ranch and Canoe Creek areas, threatening an additional 13 residences and 22 other minor structures. The fire grew approximately within three miles of these residences. Despite the extreme fire behavior and rapid growth the fire remained within the planned containment lines.

Between September 6 and 9, the heavy inversion of smoke from other fires in the nation was still an influence and had completely grounded all aviation efforts due to poor visibility for the next three operational shifts. During this time the fire continued to spread moderately in heavy fuel loads. The structure group completed structure preparations at Llama Ranch and had moved north to the structures at Canoe Creek to begin efforts there. The acreage with the addition of the Ferry fire was 7,236 acres. On September 9, Air National Guard helicopters arrived and were committed to bucket work on the east flank of the fire allowing ground crews to continue line preparation on Nelson Ridge. Divisions on the north end scouted options for inserting Hotshot crews to begin a direct attack.

By September 15, a significant change in the weather slowed burning conditions. Four days of precipitation were forecast with snow levels falling to around 5000 feet. The weather change prompted the team to switch to monitoring the existing burn and begin backhaul and suppression repair efforts. By September 20, most of the fire above 5000 feet had seen 1-4 inches of snow and below 5000 feet significant rain stopped fire spread. At this time the fire was approximately 8,750 acres in size. A type three local team took over the fire September 20.

The local unit continued with suppression repair and backhaul efforts for the next month. The fire had some growth within containment lines to its final footprint of 9,500 acres. The fire was called contained and controlled on October 24.

*See more on this fire in Appendix F*

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**September**

The **Eagle Creek Fire** was reported on Saturday, September 2 at approximately 4 p.m. The two Columbia River Gorge NSA engines were dispatched soon thereafter to respond to an initial fire report at Eagle Creek Trail. The reporting party, a Forest Service law enforcement officer, was attempting to make contact with a group of teens reported to have been setting off fireworks about a mile up Eagle Creek Trail.

Within half an hour, the fire had grown to 50 acres and aircraft, including "medium" helicopters, were diverted from the Indian Creek Fire to help with the new Eagle Creek Fire. They helped search for hikers and campers near the fires, and dropped water to try to slow the spread of Eagle Creek Fire. The crews and security officers assigned to Indian Creek Fire helped locate hikers and campers in the vicinity of the Eagle Creek Fire.

Fire managers learned that there were 153 people trapped at Punch Bowl Falls. Another group of three hikers were on Ruckel Ridge reported fire burning a quarter mile below them, making their rescue a priority. Hood River County requested a National Guard hoist-capable helicopter from Salem to rescue the three hikers, and the National Guard completed their rescue by about 7:30 p.m.

A division supervisor along with three members of the a fire crew joined three from a search and rescue crew to begin to the trapped people, a roughly 10 mile hike, carrying drinking water and food in their packs. A second group of about 20 hikers had left the Punch Bowl Falls area earlier in the evening and made it to Wahtum Lake around midnight. A waiting bus took them to their cars at the Eagle Creek Trailhead.

The Sheriff’s department issued evacuation levels to a Level 3 south of the interstate, Level 2 for everything south of WaNaPa Street, and Level 1 for the rest of Cascade Locks on September 3. Meanwhile, the rescue crew arrived at High Bridge at 3:20 a.m. They slept for a couple of hours before heading out at first light. At 5:30 a.m., the crew prepared stranded hikers for the long hike up to Wahtum Lake. In all, 144 hikers and 9 rescuers had spent the night near High Bridge. All hikers arrived at Wahtum Lake around midday**.**

A type 2 incident management team assumed command of the 3,200-acre Eagle Creek Fire and the 850-acre Indian Creek Fire on the morning of September 4. The team entered into unified command the Oregon Department of Forestry and Oregon State Fire Marshal. The Multnomah County Sheriff’s Offices ordered Level 3 evacuations for the communities of Warrendale and Dodson, level 2 evacuations for East Corbett, and Level 1 evacuations for Corbett, Latourell, and Bridal Veil. Hood River County Sheriff’s Office increased all Level 1 evacuations in Cascade Locks to Level 2.

The fire doubled in size on September 5 with 1,122 people evacuated; in addition the fire jumped the Columbia River near Multnomah Falls and was burning on the Washington side. It was also reported that the fire was surrounding Multnomah Falls Lodge. During this burn period, Indian Creek Fire and Eagle Creek Fire merged and were estimated to be around 20,000 acres.

Over the next week, the fire was quieter giving fire fighters the opportunity to gain 11 percent containment.

Between September 12 -18, westerly winds increased fire behavior on east end of fire. The fire grew to 35,636 acres and crossed Herman Creek above Camp Creek. Fixed wing aircraft conducted reconnaissance over parts of the fire, but heavy smoke prevented water drops. Crews conducted burnout operations adjacent to Herman Creek and were successful in securing the utility corridor.

On September 18, the sheriff lifted all evacuation orders in Multnomah County, and Hood River County Sheriff downgraded evacuation levels for Hood River Valley. All evacuation levels for the fire along I-84 were lifted, but due to a flash flood advisory, exit 56 west to the county line remained on Level 1 notice.

Interstate 84 eastbound lanes are reopened on September 23, with access limited to one lane near Shellrock Mountain.

The fire is declared 100% contained on November 30 but still has security personnel assigned to monitor the perimeter around the area closure.

*See more on this fire in Appendix D*

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The **Sawmill Creek Fire** started September 4, 2017 on the Okanogan-Wenatchee NF and the cause is still under investigation. Local and state resources responded quickly to the fire but were hampered by steep rocky terrain, smoky conditions, and limited road access. Initial air and ground operations were hampered the first 48 hours of the fire due to heavy smoke. Responding agencies took a defensive stance for the first couple of days for firefighter safety due to the smoke, terrain difficulties, and fire activity.

A Type 2 incident management team took command on September 9 and then on September 11 took command of the North Zone of the Norse Peak Fire as well. With moderate weather in the middle of September, the Type 1 team on the Norse Peak Fire took command of the Sawmill Creek Fire also. On September 20, the Sawmill Creek Fire was placed in monitor status and then returned to Washington Department of Natural Resources on September 23.

*See more on this fire in Appendix F*

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The **Desolation Fire** started in the Mill Creek Wilderness, about 20 miles northeast of Prineville, Oregon near the intersection of the East Fork of Mill Creek and Desolation Canyon. Due to safety concerns related to snags and steep terrain, no ground resources were initially assigned to the fire, and aircraft was used to drop water and check its growth, while obtaining better size estimates. On day three, strong wind gusts out of the northwest fanned the fire, pushing it south out of the wilderness toward private structures along Highway 26, including the 53-acre site of the Ochoco Christian Conference Center (formerly Mount Bachelor Academy), and prompting Level 2 evacuation notices for another 27 residences in the Marks Creek area along Hwy 26 between mileposts 45-50. The fire was estimated at 2,000 acres.

On September 13, a Type 3 Central Oregon Incident Management Team took command of the fire, with a focus on a confine and contain strategy to keep the fire north of the highway. Five airtankers were utilized, supporting ground resources by slowing the fire's progress and cooling actively burning flanks. Challenges remained with heavy fuel, warm temperatures and afternoon winds. A structure protection group began working to secure private residences in the area, and 75 firefighters were on scene, with six additional 20-person crews arriving.

From September 14-16, the Desolation fire stayed within planned containment lines through gusty winds as firefighters worked through the day and into the night to keep the fire north of Highway 26 and protect adjacent private residences. Crook County lowered the evacuation notice for homes in the Mark’s Creek area to a Level 1 (Get Ready).

Firefighters continued prepping the northern containment line along Forest Road 27 with feller bunchers and other heavy equipment to form a “catcher’s mitt” should the fire grow toward the northeast. Crews also removed fuels around Whistler Campground and Bingham Springs Trailhead and around private property near the highway. The fire was mainly a ground fire, burning through dead and down timber and shrubs within the 2000 Hash Rock Fire scar. On September 16, Central Oregon experienced wetting rain, with some snow falling on the Desolation fire, helping reduce fire activity and clear smoke from area wildfires.

*See more on this fire in Appendix E*

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