

GOLDEN FIRE UPDATE



Monday, July 24, 2023

Unified Incident Commanders:

Matt Howard, Oregon Department of Forestry IMT 2

Scott Magers, Oregon State Fire Marshals Blue Team

Fire size: 2,052 acres	Containment: 0%	www.facebook.com/goldenfire2023/
Resources assigned: 440	Fire information: 541-887-0928	https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/or98s-golden-fire

Incident confirms lost structures, fire remains within footprint

BONANZA, Ore. – The Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM) began damage assessments today on the Golden Fire, which began on July 22, 2023. Until today, conditions have not been safe for OSFM personnel to fully access structures in the affected area. Low fuel moisture, 90-degree temperatures, and wind gusts up to 20 mph contributed to extreme fire behavior during the initial attack and rapid fire spread. The majority of the structures determined to be destroyed were lost during the fire’s initial run on July 22, 2023. Following the initial attack, downed power lines, tree snags and road conditions have hindered crews’ access.

As of today, the assessment reports that 43 single primary residences and 43 outbuildings were destroyed by the fire. The assessment uses the Office of Emergency Management guidelines to determine primary residence as including 1) a heating source, 2) bed, and 3) a cooking device.

This initial number will likely change as hazardous conditions improve and task forces are able to safely complete assessments. OSFM resources continue to extinguish hot spots and conduct mop-up operations around structures to ensure no additional structures are lost.

Despite near Red Flag conditions, crews were able to strengthen control lines around the fire perimeter and maintain the current fire footprint. Along portions of the fireline, crews began falling snags, a term for standing dead timber, to remove overhead dangers in order for firefighters to safely begin mop-up operations along less-active portions of the fireline.

There are currently 317 homes affected in all evacuation levels. The Red Cross sheltered or assisted 56 community members on Saturday evening and 31 on Sunday evening.

“Our hearts go out to the Bonanza community and those affected by the Golden Fire,” said Matt Howard, ODF Team 2 Incident Commander. “We grieve with the community and your loss. Our goal on

this fire has been, and will continue to be, to contain this fire to minimize its impact. Our job now is to fully suppress this fire so the recovery process can begin. That is our commitment to you.”

Community meeting: Golden Fire Unified Command will host an outdoor, public information meeting on Tuesday, July 25, from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m., at Bonanza School at 31601 Mission Street, Bonanza, OR . Fire personnel will provide presentations on fire status and evacuations, followed by an opportunity to ask questions. Representatives from cooperating agencies including the US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Klamath County will be present. No seating is provided. Bring your own outdoor lawn chair.

Evacuations downgraded: A portion of the level 3 (GO NOW) area was reduced to level 2. The downgraded area follows west of Bechdoldt Flat Road, south of Racoon Lane and Jaguar Lane. See website to find current evacuation maps. Other evacuation levels remain at:

- Level 3 (Go)- All residence east of Highway 140 between Polar Bear Lane and Jaguar Lane.
- Level 2 (Set)- Both sides of Highway 140 and Bly Mountain Cutoff Road, south of Ground Hog Lane to Keno Springs.
- Level 1 (Ready)- All residences west of 140 from Kodiak Lane to Goldfinch Drive.

For the most current evacuation information, call the Klamath County hotline at 541-205-9730, and sign up for Klamath County alerts at <http://alerts.klamathcounty.org>. American Red Cross and Klamath County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) have established an evacuation shelter at Bonanza School, 31601 Mission Street, Bonanza, OR 97623.

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