



NEWS RELEASE

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Elbow Creek Fire Update

PENDLETON, LA GRANDE, VALE, and BAKER CITY, Ore. - Firefighters continue battling the Elbow Creek Fire located in the Grande Ronde River drainage near Mud Springs, approximately 31 miles southeast of Walla Walla, Washington. The fire is burning on both sides of the Grande Ronde River and is on or threatening Umatilla National Forest lands, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest lands, Vale District Bureau of Land Management lands and Oregon Department of Forestry protected lands.

The **Elbow Creek Fire** is now estimated to have burned 9,000 acres. The fire was reported on Thursday, July 15 and is burning in grass and timber. Winds and hot temperatures contributed to active fire behavior and growth yesterday, pushing the fire rapidly to the northeast. The movement of the fire prompted the Wallowa County Sheriff's office to evacuate the communities of Eden Bench and Troy. Firefighters, aided by aerial resources, focused suppression efforts on protecting structures in the area and establishing containment lines to slow the spread of the fire. The cause of the fire is under investigation.

The fire continues to spread to the northeast. Today firefighters will focus on establishing access points to the fire and securing an anchor point where firefighters can build containment lines, utilizing aircraft to slow fire spread where needed. Resources on scene include hand crews, dozers, multiple engines and water tenders. Additional firefighting resources are arriving today, including resource support from the Lick Creek Fire, burning on the Pomeroy Ranger District. The Forest has ordered a Type 1 Oregon Department of Forestry Incident Management Team and will inbrief the team on Saturday.

The Level 3 evacuation notice is still in effect for community members that live at Eden Bench and Troy, as well as along Wild Cat Road, Powwatka Road and the 500/501 Road up to the 763 Road. A Level 3

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means those within the evacuation area should leave immediately. Additional information regarding evacuations is available through the Wallowa County Sheriff's Office at (541) 426-3131 or by monitoring the Wallowa County Sheriff's Office Facebook.

Hot and dry conditions are expected to persist throughout the week. Fire officials want to remind everyone that the current fire danger rating remains at EXTREME.

Due to extreme wildfire activity and the concern for the safety of the public the entirety of the Umatilla National Forest has been temporarily closed. Additional information regarding this area closure is available at: <https://bluemountainfireinfo.blogspot.com/2021/07/umatilla-national-forest-lands.html>.

The latest fire information will be posted on the Blue Mountains Fire Information Blog. To receive updates on fires in the Blue Mountains, follow our blog at <http://bluemountainfireinfo.blogspot.com/>. The latest fire information can be found by visiting the Blue Mountains Fire Information Blog (<http://bluemountainfireinfo.blogspot.com/>).

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