



Joint News Release

Bureau of Land Management Medford District
Oregon Department of Forestry Southwest Oregon District

Oregon Department of Forestry
Southwest Oregon District
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FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE

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Firefighters line 100% of Woodrat Mountain Fire overnight, extensive work continues today

RUCH, Ore. (August 7, 2026) – Firefighters made significant progress on the Woodrat Mountain Fire overnight, completing fire line around 100% of the perimeter despite poor overnight relative humidity recovery. Dozers constructed much of the line, while hand crews worked through areas where steep terrain and dense timber limited heavy equipment access.

Updated mapping from an infrared-equipped UAS (drone) puts the fire at 282 acres, down from the previous 300-acre estimate due to more accurate mapping. The fire is also 60% hose lined, bringing water access around much of the perimeter to help crews secure line and extinguish hot spots.

Today, firefighters will focus on improving existing lines, extending hose and identifying remaining heat. Night shift crews were aware of potential hot spots outside the eastern side of the perimeter and gridded and searched those areas overnight, but did not locate additional heat to extinguish. Crews will continue checking those areas today.

A strong aviation response is planned, with four Type 1 helicopters, three Type 2 helicopters and two Type 3 helicopters available for water bucket drops as needed. Air tankers are also available for retardant drops, and Air Attack will coordinate aviation operations over the incident.

Resources are positioned across the fire based on terrain and operational needs. The south side is staffed with one falling module (FMOD), four 20-person hand crews, three engines, two water tenders and two dozers. The north side has one FMOD, four 20-person hand crews, four engines, two water tenders and two dozers. On the eastern side, where crews are working in steep terrain and thick vegetation, two FMODs, four 20-person hand crews, five engines, two water tenders and two dozers are assigned.

Although the entire perimeter is lined, firefighters still have extensive work ahead in steep terrain, dense timber and areas with hazardous snags. Another day of critical fire weather is expected, making today's work especially important as crews secure the fire while resources remain ready to respond to any new fire starts across the district.

The Jackson County Sheriff's Office and Emergency Management have issued Level 3 – GO NOW, Level 2 – BE SET and Level 1 – BE READY evacuation notices for areas affected by the fire. Current evacuation information and maps are available at rvem.org/fires. An evacuation shelter for people and pets is open at Jacksonville Elementary School, 655 Hueners Lane in Jacksonville. Individuals needing additional medical care or sheltering assistance can call 541-776-7206. Livestock can be taken to the Jackson County Expo, 21 Peninger Road in Central Point; call 541-864-0546 for livestock assistance.

The fire was first reported just before 12:45 p.m. Thursday, August 6, when firefighters were dispatched to a vehicle fire spreading into surrounding vegetation on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land along Woodrat Mountain Road near Ruch. ODF Southwest Oregon District, Jacksonville Fire Department and Applegate Valley Fire District began an aggressive initial attack, with additional ground and aviation resources ordered as the incident grew.

Numerous partnering agencies from across the Rogue Valley and surrounding area responded yesterday, including Applegate Valley Fire District, Jacksonville Fire Department, Jackson County Fire District 3, Medford Fire Department, Grants Pass Fire Rescue, Rural Metro Fire, Illinois Valley Fire District and the U.S. Forest Service Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest. These partnerships provided additional resources during the aggressive initial attack and first operational period.

A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) remains in effect over the fire area until further notice. Flying a drone near a wildfire is illegal and can force firefighting aircraft to leave the area, putting firefighters and the public at risk.

The official cause of the Woodrat Mountain Fire remains under active investigation. Updates will be provided in the morning and evening, and throughout the day if significant information becomes available. For more information, including current fire regulations, visit our Facebook page, @ODFSouthwest, or our website, www.swofire.com.

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