

# NEWSRelease

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

28910 Hwy 20 West • Hines, Oregon 97738 • <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/burns>

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## NEW WILDFIRE IN TROUT CREEK MOUNTAINS

**HINES, Ore.** – Two random lightning strikes in southeast Oregon late Tuesday afternoon ignited a new wildfire near Red Mountain in the Trout Creek Mountains area. The “Water Tower” fire received quick attention from engine crews soon after its start and reportedly laid down until sporadic winds brought the fire back to life around 11:00 p.m. This morning, crews estimate the fire to be approximately 3-500 acres. At least three area ranches with structures are within the fire vicinity though not immediately threatened. Livestock grazing allotments, inaccessible terrain, private inholdings and Sage Grouse core habitat are also concerns.

With high fuel loads of grass and brush from two seasons of productive growth and low winter snow pack, fire spread could be rapid and intense in this area. Longer burn periods and elevated fire intensity extending after sunrise can also be expected. Five Single Engine Air Tankers, three helicopters, numerous engines and dozers will support the suppression operation throughout the day. Heavy air tankers have been ordered for availability if needed. Updated information on the Water Tower fire will be released as conditions change and improve. The High Desert Type 3 Incident Management (Toney) is assigned to the Water Tower fire.

The Miller Homestead fire, which started Sunday, July 8, is currently estimated at 95 percent contained. Dry peat soils in the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge continue to burn below the surface, presenting a unique challenge for firefighters. Some pockets of juniper also show signs of heat within the fire perimeter. Firefighters will continue holding existing control lines, complete mop-up operations and protect unburned pockets of fuel for grazing and wildlife habitat. Up to date information and maps for the Miller Homestead fire are available online at <http://www.inciweb.org/incident/3003>.

Fire danger is EXTREME on BLM-administered lands and HIGH on U.S. Forest Service-administered lands within the Burns Interagency Fire Zone. The Industrial Fire Precaution Level is a level two. A regulated fire closure is in effect for all BLM-administered lands within the Burns Interagency Fire Zone.

Visitors should use caution when traveling through and recreating in the outdoors this time of year.

**To report a wildfire, call 573-1000.**

For more information on current wildfire activity, **call 573-4519.**

About the BLM: The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land – the most of any Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2011, recreational and other activities on BLM-managed land contributed more than \$130 billion to the U.S. economy and supported more than 600,000 American jobs. The Bureau is also one of a handful of agencies that collects more revenue than it spends. In FY 2012, nearly \$5.7 billion will be generated on lands managed by the BLM, which operates on a \$1.1 billion budget. The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural, and other resources on public lands.

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