

Eagle Creek Fire

Oregon Destination Marketing Organization Briefing

Dec. 6, 2017



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Multnomah County Sheriff's Office



Eagle Creek Fire

- Started: Sept. 2, 2017
- Acres burned: 48,831
- % Contained: 50% (as of Nov. 3, 2017)
- Deaths/injuries reported: 1 sprained arm
- Days I-84 closed: 19
- Hazard trees removed by ODOT: 3000+



Early PIO Work

- Friday before Labor Day:
 - Air advisory (other fires) and cooling centers message
- Sat., Sept. 2
 - Fireworks spark Eagle Creek Fire near Bonneville dam
- Sun., Sept. 3
 - MultCo PIO's, Emerg. Mgt., Sheriff, DCHS monitor fire
 - Prepare advisories in case fire expands
- Mon., Sept. 4 (Labor Day)
 - Staff co-locate, draft evacuation alerts
 - 7 pm: Wind shifts leads to evacuations
 - Hundreds of residents, livestock evacuated



Fire Grows West

- Night of Sept. 4: Fire spreads 12 miles west overnight
- 10,000 acres burned
- I-84 closed
- Evacuation levels 1, 2 and 3 announced
- County Emergency Declaration
- EOC & JIC Stood Up at Troutdale Sheriff's Office
 - PBEM and MultCo Sheriff PIO's launch JIC at night
- Tues., Sept. 5: JIC Ramps Up
 - Julie Sullivan, JIC Manager / Chad Gaidos, Lead PIO
 - 10 – 12 PIO's from MultCo, Portland Water, ODOT, USFS



Troutdale JIC within EOC



News briefings

Twice a day news briefings to start



News briefings

Diverse speakers held media's interest



From law enforcement to elected leaders



Briefings broadcast on Facebook Live:
[Sept. 5](#) (the video reached 3,150 people and was viewed 1.7k times)



Donation management issue



Donation Management



- Human nature to donate after a disaster
- Respond with donation instructions



Eagle Creek Fire

Red Cross & County set up shelter at MHCC



Shelter moved to church
when MHCC classes
began



VIP & Media Tours of Fire Zone



- Coordinated with ODOT, Incident Command
- Provide images to show damage & saved areas



Media Tours Provided Visuals



Multnomah Falls



Visuals explained I-84 Closure



- Closed 19 days
- Pressure to reopen from freight users



VIP Visits to EOC & JIC



Community Meeting - Corbett



- 1 day after Type 1 team took command
- Evacuee community
- 300+ attendees
- Facebook Live

Sept. 10, 2017



Community Meeting - Edgefield



- 2 days after Type I team take command
- Type I Team briefing
- Resource fair (25 orgs)
- Evacuation, fire updates
- 150 attendees

Sept. 11, 2017



Re-Entry Center - Corbett



Sept. 13, 2017



JIC Statistics

days open = 10

stories posted to MultCo website = 40+

website hits = 500,000+

JIC PIO's = Around 30 (up to 15 per shift)



Facebook



In 4 weeks including fire:

- MCSO Facebook page becomes primary source of information.
- Used to Facebook Live press conferences, this video remained as a post.
- Users increase greatly over course of event.



Twitter



In 4 weeks including fire:

- Increased our tweet impressions (number times our posts were seen) to 914,000 (up 172.9%).
- Increased our Twitter profile visits to 20,700 visits (up 213.6%).
- Increased our followers to 11,960 from just over 3,500 at beginning of the fire.



JIC Lessons Learned (+ side)

- Ex-journalists well-suited to JIC
- PIO's from outside volunteered
- Strong multi-agency collaboration, including JIS
- Diversity of news briefers held media interest
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Flickr) worked
- Staff photographer
- High traffic on county, other agency websites
- Important news reach public
- Minimal controversy and finger-pointing



Where does ODMO fit in this type of event?

- The Columbia River Gorge is one of the most visited outdoor attractions in our area.
- We had visitors who were looking for alternative destinations after learning the gorge was not accessible.
- Press conferences could have included a piece on alternatives to those frustrated by the lack of access because of the fire.



Life doesn't stop during an incident



Two MultCo PIO's spent their birthdays working at the JIC



After Fire Risks & Actions



- Flash flood risk
- Info in evacuee packets
- MCEM & Sheriff door-to-door visits before 1st post-fire storm
- PublicAlert sign-ups
- Roads/trails still closed



Questions?

