

4.3.2 CROOKED RIVER RANCH

SB 360 Risk Classifications:

- Crooked River Ranch: High
- Rim Around the Ranch: Extreme

Crooked River Ranch is a 16.4 square mile subdivision located between the Deschutes and Crooked River Canyons in southern Jefferson County. The population is approximately 4,700 people. The natural vegetation is juniper, sagebrush, cheat grass and bunchgrass. Crooked River Ranch is an unincorporated community with some light industry, recreational, and commercial development. The fire protection is provided by Crooked River Ranch Fire & Rescue (CRR F&R) which is a tax supported agency governed by a publically elected board of directors.

There is only one all-weather paved road providing access to and egress from the Ranch. This is a potential problem during wildfire incidents, both for evacuating the residents and allowing emergency fire equipment access to the Ranch. The highest priority is provide an alternate access route. There is a plan to extend a road from the Ranch to a paved county road and would involve building approximately one mile of all-weather road.

In 2016, Crooked River Ranch HOA treated 17 acres and conducted Juniper release on an additional 86 acres for a total of 103 acres treated. Home owners treated an additional 5 acres.

Priorities for Crooked River Ranch:

- The Crooked River Ranch Home Owners Association (HOA) is working with BLM to improve and realign a primitive road that runs south from the Ranch to Lower Bridge Road, a paved Deschutes county road. A route for the road has been identified and a preliminary survey and engineering design have been completed. An application for a right-of-way permit has been submitted to the BLM and is undergoing their review process. Sources of funding for the construction of a high speed paved road are being sought.
- Establishing "Safe Zones" with the CRR boundaries where humans can survive a passing wildfire front within the confines of their car. Safe Zones need to be pre-identified, signed, and maintained.
- Homeowners need to continue to work on defensible space, widening the space between structures and combustible fuels. CRR F&R is actively promoting the

Ready, Set, Go program within the community which includes defensible space initiatives. Title III grant funds from Jefferson County are available to help defray the cost of cleanup around structures.

- CRR is at risk from fuels on adjacent lands managed by Crooked River National Grassland and BLM, and by privately owned lands, some of which are owned by the Ranch HOA. CRR F&R is engaged in a multi-agency working group that is exploring legislative adjustments to the Wilderness Study Area (WSA) boundaries to allow for mechanical fuels treatment on BLM lands adjacent to the Ranch. The HOA is committing a portion of its maintenance budget each year to fuels reduction projects. In FY 2015/16 approximately 16 acres of HOA owned property were treated to reduce hazardous fuels.

Large Fire History

August 7, 1983: 174 acres burned in the Sandridge/Canary area. This fire was started by improper disposal of coals from a-backyard barbeque. Mutual aid was requested from the tri-county fire departments.

July 18, 1984: a 400-acre wildfire started along the Deschutes River and came up the canyon. An engine from Redmond was destroyed by the fire. Oregon Conflagration Act invoked to allow state wide fire department mobilization.

July 22, 1985: 200+acres in Horny Hollow. Oregon Conflagration Act invoked to allow state wide fire department mobilization.

May 31, 2007: 350 acres along Rainbow Road. Started by open burn left unattended. Mutual aid requested from the tri-county fire departments.