

2002 FIRE CHRONOLOGY

JANUARY

MONTH:

Lightning – 0

Human Caused – 1

YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires – 1

Total Acres – 0.10

January started wet, had a bit of a dry spot the second week, and then got ‘wet and cool’ west of the Cascades and just ‘cool’ to the east of the mountains.

Regarding Reservoirs: The amount of water stored in the irrigation reservoirs remains well below average throughout Oregon, except the Upper Deschutes Basin, Upper Klamath Lake, and Henry Hagg Lake. As of the end of January there were 1,264,800 acre-feet of water stored in 27 major irrigation reservoirs. This represents 39 percent of capacity and 65 percent of average, and is a modest increase from last month. Last year at this time the reservoir storage was 85 percent of average with 1,640,300 acre-feet of water stored in the same major irrigation reservoirs.

Bill Lafferty has been selected as Director to the Protection from Fire Program. Lafferty has been with the agency since 1969 as a seasonal firefighter. Lafferty has been quoted in saying, “I look forward to working with the staff, the field, the landowners and all our other partners in addressing the issues and meeting the challenges of managing wildland fire in Oregon today and on into the future.” A major task before the Protection Program is implementation of Senate Bill 360, an act passed by the Oregon Legislature in 1997 to cope with the wildfire threat to the state’s expanding urban fringe. Another key is improving forest health conditions to reduce vulnerability to insect and disease infestations and damaging fires.

The Oregon Department of Forestry has obtained nearly \$3 million in federal grants to fund fire-prevention projects on forestlands throughout the state. The National Fire Plan dollars were received for 21 grant applications that range from fuels-reduction projects in urban fringe communities, to a chipper project in central Oregon to process flammable yard waste, to wildfire-protection demonstration sites.

FEBRUARY

MONTH:

Lightning – 2

Human Caused – 1

YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires – 3

Total Acres – 0.12

February was characterized by generally seasonable temperatures but below-average precipitation. The month started cool and wet, but the weather dried out by mid-month. The last week of February was characterized by clear, dry, spectacular early-spring weather. The question came up – why can I see my breath on cold mornings? Because water vapor in your breath condenses as it encounters the cold air. If your breath is cooled below the dew point, a small cloud forms. If the air is really cold, an ice fog can form.

MARCH

MONTH:

Lightning – 2

Human Caused – 16

YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires - 18

Total Acres – 8.72

March turned out to be cool and wet. Ironically, spring break week had the best weather all month. Another weather-related question – Does dew fall? No. It is coming to say that dew has fallen, but it actually forms in place on objects through the processes of condensation. This occurs when air is cooled by contact with cooler objects. Warm air can hold more water vapor than cold air can. As air-cools it reaches the temperature where it can hold no more water (this is known as the ‘dew point’). At that point condensation begins to occur – dew forms.

Four common denominators that contribute to accidents/incidents have been identified through studies of tragedy fires. It is important for firefighters to readily recognize the following common denominators so that future tragedies can be prevented:

- Most incidents happen on smaller fires or on isolated portions of larger fires.
- Fires run uphill surprisingly fast in chimneys, saddles, gullies, and on steep slopes.
- Most fires are innocent in appearance before unexpected shifts in wind direction and/or speed results in flare-ups or extreme fire behavior. In some cases, tragedies occur in the mop-up stage. Flare-ups generally occur in deceptively light fuels, such as grass and light brush.
- Some suppression tools, such as helicopters or airtankers, can adversely affect fire behavior. The blasts of air from low-flying helicopters and airtankers have been known to cause flare-ups.

APRIL

MONTH:

Lightning – 2

Human Caused – 37

YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires - 39

Total Acres – 50.18

April was a typical April month, a bit dry, and a bit warmer than average. Oregonians had a chance to enjoy the outdoors and begin spring planting and gardening. El Nino seems to be fading away.

The following safety message is from The Forest Log, Vol. 6, No. 11, dated May, 1936: Who Am I? I am more powerful than the combined armies of the world. I have laid waste more foresters and destroyed more men than all the nations. I am more deadly than bullets, and I have wrecked more homes than the mightiest of siege guns. I spare no one, and I find my victims among the rich and poor alike, the young and the old, the strong and weak. Widows and orphans know me. I loom up to such proportions that I cast my shadow over every field of labor, from the turning of the grindstone to the moving of every railroad train. I massacre thousands upon thousands of wage earners every year. I lurk in unseen places and do most of my work silently – you are warned against me but you heed not. I am relentless. I am everywhere – in the house, on the streets, in the forest, in the factory, at railroad crossings, and on the sea. I bring sickness,

degradation, desolation and death, yet few seek to avoid me. I destroy, crush or maim; I give nothing but take all; I am your worst enemy. I am carelessness!

MAY

MONTH:

Lightning – 6

Human Caused – 84

YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires – 90

Total Acres – 87.69

May was unusually cool, and generally somewhat drier than average. There were several significant cold snaps during the month, bringing unexpected late freezes to some areas and having adverse effects on agriculture. Continued dry conditions in parts of eastern Oregon suggest that last year's drought may not be entirely over.

Salem Coordination Center began dispatching ODF personnel out-of-state on fire assignments to Alaska, New Mexico, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, and Arizona to assist fire-fighting efforts in those states. Fire engines have been dispatched to Arizona and New Mexico.

May 7th, 2002, at 12:01 a.m., Walker Range Forest Protection District went into fire season. They are the first District to go into fire season this year; followed by the Prineville Unit and Sisters Unit of Central Oregon District on May 23rd.

Oregon Fire Service honored an ODF employee, John Barnes, for his heroic action with the Citizen Lifesaving Award - one of only two such awards given for 2001. Barnes arrived at the scene of the fire, he notified 911, then circled the smoke-filled house on foot to see if anyone remained inside. On the back porch he noticed a pair of feet extending from underneath miscellaneous household items. Clearing away the debris, Barnes discovered a body. With flame inches from the unconscious man's feet, Barnes carried him to safety. Moments later, the house imploded from the heat of the fire. Barnes works out of the East Lane District office.

A former seasonal ODF employee was arrested this month by the Oregon State Police and charged with arson. The charges involve several wildland fires that occurred in southern Oregon during the 2001 fire season.

Wallowa Lake Basin in eastern Oregon is a heavy tourist draw in the summer. Wallowa Lake is one of the state's crown jewels. But wildfire poses a growing threat to people and property there. A project to build a two and a half-mile fuel break could protect the prime recreation spot from an onrushing forest fire. Matt Howard of the ODF Wallowa office was quoted in saying, "When you alter the fuels, it will alter the fire behavior. The intent of the fuel break is to keep the fire on the ground to give the firefighters the chance to get in there and control or suppress the fire prior to it getting up into the crown of trees."

JUNE

MONTH:

Lightning – 42

Human Caused – 169

YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires – 211

Total Acres – 409.91

June was characterized by mostly above-average temperatures and below-average precipitation in Oregon, but most areas were actually rather close to June's normals. As we enter the warmest part of the year, there is some concern about water supply and fire danger. For many, however, this is the finest time of year and the reason we live in Oregon: spectacular summers!

Klamath-Lake District went into fire season on June 1st; Douglas Forest Protection District the 6th; Southwest Oregon District the 11th; Central Oregon Units of The Dalles the 13th and John Day the 17th; Eastern Lane and Linn Districts the 15th; Coos Forest Protection District and Western Lane District the 17th; Northeast Oregon District the 27th.

The Salem Coordination Center dispatched overhead personnel out-of-state on fire assignments to Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, New Mexico, Oregon and Utah. Several personnel were dispatched to the Northwest Coordination Center in Portland as expanded dispatchers. Don Underwood was sent to Colorado as a FEMA coordinator.

The Fuller Creek fire began burning on June 12th and quickly spread to 35 acres. The fire was fought by the Toledo Unit of Western Oregon District burning slash and reprod. An escaped slash burn caused the fire.

On June 17th, a Hawkins and Powers C-130A retardant airtanker took off from the Minden Nevada Air Tanker Base to drop retardant on the Cannon Fire on the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. The aircraft experienced an in-flight structural failure and crashed adjacent to the small community of Walker, California. Pilot, co-pilot and flight engineer were killed. A lead plane was not on the scene at the time of the accident because it had timed out, but a replacement was on order. NTSB was on site conducting an investigation.

The 150-acre Geneva Fire northeast of Sisters in Central Oregon was contained quickly. The fire was lightning caused on June 15th.

An 18-year U.S. Forest Service employee was charged with starting a raging wildfire southwest of Denver, Colorado. The employee admitted to sparking the blaze, which destroyed 25 homes and burned 103,000 acres. If convicted, she could be sentenced to 20 years in prison and ordered to pay \$250,000 in fines. The employee is being charged with three criminal counts: setting fire to timber in a national forest, damaging federal property in excess of \$1,000 and making false statements to investigators.

Four members of a LaGrande based fire-fighting crew died in a one-car rollover accident in Colorado on June 21st. Eleven members of the 20-person crew were aboard the van, a fifth person died three days later. They were traveling to the East Hayman Fire, part of the 137,000-acre complex known collectively as the Hayman Fire, when the accident occurred.

The Sunriver Owners Association has been selected to receive the Bronze Smokey Bear for its outstanding fire-prevention work. The Cooperative Wildfire Prevention Program is bestowing the national award in recognition of the association's "aggressive ladder-fuel reduction program and other wildland-urban interface fire prevention measures, such as bans on the use of flammable roofing material and the use of charcoal barbecues." Ladder fuel refers to the tiers of vegetation:

grass, shrubs, small trees and large trees that can carry a wildfire from the ground up into the crowns of trees.

JULY

MONTH:

Lightning – 236

Human Caused – 333

YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires – 569

Total Acres – 92,975.18

July was very dry month (even considering that July is the driest month of the year statewide) and rather warm. Dry lightning set numerous fires in southern and eastern Oregon, and many of the fires were still burning at month's end.

The Salem Coordination Center dispatched overhead personnel out-of-state on fire assignments to Wyoming. In addition, personnel were sent out of their own Districts within the state to Eastern Oregon Area and Warm Springs Agency on the Eyerly Fire.

Northwest Oregon Forest Protection District and Clackamas-Marion District went into fire season on July 8th.

A tree-feller from Ontario, Oregon was killed while fighting the Missionary Ridge Fire in Colorado. A tree adjacent to a snag he was cutting fell on him. He was not contracted by an agency, but rather volunteered to help fight the blaze.

On September 3rd, 180 former Civilian Conservation Corps workers, their families and friends gathered to dedicate a life-size statue of a "CCC boy" leaning on his signature double-bitted ax. The bronze figure commemorates the invaluable work 28,000 young men accomplished in Oregon's forests between 1933 and 1942. Stationed in 51 camps around the state, they built trails and bridges, planted trees, erected signs and completed a myriad of other tasks that improved the infrastructure and health of public forestlands.

Timbered Rock, Skunk, Sheldon Ridge, Biscuit, Winter Fire, Toolbox, Squire Peak Fire, Wall Fire, Grizzly. . . these are just some of the names of major fires that swept across Oregon during the 2002 fire season. Resources were stretched paper-thin in July and August as fire crews across Oregon continued battling as many as 19 major fires burning on nearly 450,000 acres. With literally dozens of requests for 20-person fire-fighting crews, Gov. John Kitzhaber called in 500 National Guard troops to receive fire-fighting training, and regular Army troops were helping as well. Fire overhead personnel were brought in from Canada's Yukon Territory. Additional resources arrived from as far away as Minnesota and Florida.

Wallowa Unit of the Northeast Oregon District was busy with the Court House Ranch Fire on July 2nd. The fire burned 150 acres of grass, brush and timber and onto U.S. Forest Service land. The fire was caused by juveniles. Baker City Sub-unit of the Northeast Oregon District fought to control the 220-acre Fish Creek Fire, which burned grass, brush and timber on July 5th. Cause of the fire was equipment use.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced that El Nino is back. Data from NOAA's sprawling network of monitoring buoys in the Pacific, and from its environmental satellites in space, detected above-average sea-surface temperatures for several months in the waters of the equatorial Pacific. This usually triggers a chain reaction of atmospheric and weather changes around the globe, including warmer, rainy weather in the southern United States during winter. El Nino typically does not affect summers in the United States, but historically it tends to suppress Atlantic hurricane activity. At this time, El Nino will not be as powerful as the 1997-98 event, but will be tracked closely for any change in its projected strength. El Nino should maintain a weak-to-moderate strength.

The Winter Fire, ten miles north of Paisley, just one of many fires that resulted from a severe dry lightning storm on July 12th, soon became top priority in the state. ODF Team II was mobilized on the 13th. The fire has threatened an eagle nest site, private residences, and a commercial lodge and burned on private and the Fremont National Forest lands, burning more than 35,000 acres. The fire caused intermittent closures of state Highway 31 and evacuation of homes and summer residences on the west side of Summer Lake. Bonneville Power Administration cut the power they were sending to California in half to prevent electrical arcing that could occur when thick smoke surrounds power lines. The fire gobbled up the Rim Fire, which popped up a few days after crews began to tackle the Winter Fire. The fire also merged with the Tool Box Complex. The combined acreage of 92,000 acres made it the second-largest fire in the country at the time. Oregon National Guard assisted in fire suppression.

The Eyerly Fire burned 23,000 acres by a lightning storm that occurred on July 9th. People reported seeing the fire or the glow from the fire in Redmond, Camp Sherman, and Sisters. Campers deep in the Mt. Jefferson Wilderness reported ash-fall.

ODF Team III was mobilized to the Squire Peak Fire near Medford on the 15th. The fire was also lightning caused and burned rapidly. There were 2,700 dry lightning strikes statewide the evening of the 12th and morning of the 13th. Squire Peak Fire reached 2,804 acres before containment.

Sheldon Ridge Fire near The Dalles ran quickly when low humidity combined with 35-mph winds propelled a mile-wide fire. The fire burned 12,591 acres, beginning July 23rd, the lightning caused fire threatened homes, businesses and lives. The Oregon National Guard assisted in fire suppression.

Timbered Rock Fire in Jackson County burned nearly 27,000 acres in some of the state's most rugged terrain. The fire early on claimed a light helicopter that was providing air control for other helicopters dropping retardant. The fire was lightning caused on July 13th; control date was September 14th. The Oregon National Guard assisted in fire suppression.

Biscuit Fire was caused by lightning deep in the Kalmiopsis Wilderness of the Siskiyou National Forest. Over 6,410 people from around the country including Canada, New Zealand, Australia assisted on this project fire. The fire has exceeded cost over \$56 million to fight. The fire burned more than 499,968 acres. The ignition date was July 13th; fire control date was November 8th. The Oregon National Guard assisted in fire suppression.

AUGUST

MONTH:

Lightning – 277

Human Caused – 458

YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires – 735

Total Acres – 95,862.46

August was another dry month with generally ‘average’ temperatures. Lightning-caused fires continued in southern and eastern counties. Weak ‘El Nino’ conditions continue in the Pacific.

The severe fire season stretched Oregon’s fire-fighting forces to the max. But without the help of the state’s prison inmates, the breaking point would have come weeks ago. By early August, 134 inmate firefighters from Oregon Dept. of Corrections institutions around the state have taken up shovels and hoses on the firelines. Inmate work crews are also giving critical logistical assistance to ODF’s incident management teams. By early August, the Powder River and Coffee Creek Correctional facilities had made more than 30,000 sack lunches and delivered them to state incident bases. The working relationship between ODF and DOC adds cost-effectiveness of Oregon’s fire-suppression program.

For a record 10th time this year, Gov. John Kitzhaber has invoked the Emergency Conflagration Act. This time it’s to call up structural firefighters from municipalities and counties across the state, so they can help protect homes on the western flank of the Biscuit Fire. The biggest fire in Oregon history has grown to over 400,000 acres.

The East Antelope Fire began on Aug. 13th, about seven miles NE of Ashland in Southern Oregon, burned more than 1,947 acres. The cause of the fire was an electrical arc between a tree and a 500-kilovolt-power line that dropped sparks into surrounding brush. The cost of the fire control effort is \$1.3 million.

Huckleberry Lane Fire located 17 miles east of Pendleton in Deadman’s Pass burned 16 acres of private and tribal land. The fire had the potential to be much larger, but due to coordinated efforts to battle the blaze initially by ODF, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, and the Meacham Rural Fire Department, it was nipped before becoming a major problem. Cause of the fire was smoker dropped a burning match.

The Siuslaw River Fire, 15 miles SW of Veneta, was first reported on August 17th as 30+ acres. The fire burned a total of 800 acres with extremely dry fuels and very steep terrain, burning old growth and second growth trees as well as young trees and logging slash. Team II was deployed and many resources. The cost to fight the fire is over \$1.5 million. Oregon National Guard assisted in fire suppression.

SEPTEMBER

MONTH:

Lightning – 301

Human Caused – 576

YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires – 877

Total Acres – 96,195.28

September was a mild, sunny, generally dry month in most of Oregon. It was a delightful month, more like late summer than early fall.

Oregon Department of Forestry honored the lifesaving actions of two helicopter pilots assigned to the Timbered Rock Fire. Helicopter Pilot Scott Dunn was presented an ODF Aircraft Safety Award for emergency actions that saved his life, and the life of passenger Mike Coffel. Scott's quick thinking and excellent piloting skills were key factors in turning a potentially deadly emergency into a life-saving maneuver. Helicopter Pilot Francisco Orlaineta received an ODF Aircraft Safety Award for extraordinary rescue actions he initiated in air-lifting Dunn and Coffel from the crash site. On July 22, 2002, Scott Dunn and Mike Coffel were flying a mission over a deep canyon on the Timbered Rock Fire when the aircraft experienced mechanical problems. Dunn immediately performed an emergency 'auto-rotation' maneuver. In these maneuvers, the helicopter's rotor blades are turned by air rushing upward as the aircraft descends. When the helicopter nears the ground, the pilot increases the pitch of the blades to catch a cushion of air between the blades and the ground, which slows the descent to a point in which a landing without power is possible. In an auto-rotation, the pilot has only one chance to catch that cushion of air. Pulling pitch on the blades too early, or too late in the descent eliminates the possibility of a controlled landing.

On September 13th, at 8:30 p.m., a fire was reported within 500 feet of Rogue Community College. The fire threatened up to 15 homes and burned a garage on one property and a home on another property. A total of nineteen acres of grass brush and hardwood canopy burned. The fire was wind-driven, so it spread quickly. ODF Grants Pass Unit speculates that more homes would have been lost if the fire would have started earlier in the afternoon. The fire burned right into the back yard of many of the homes, but several of these homeowners had done fire prevention work using wildfire urban interface grant monies. Most likely, this clean up played a major role in allowing firefighters to control the Campus View blaze. Nineteen acres burned; case was a burning building.

OCTOBER

MONTH:

Lightning – 301

Human Caused – 699

YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires – 1,000

Total Acres – 96,315.97

An arctic outbreak at the end of October brought record-setting low temperatures to locations throughout the state. October was dry and quite cool.

Fire Season 2002 ended on October 29th in Northeast Oregon District. The District typically goes out of fire season around the 20th, but it's been a long, dry season this year. On the same day, NEO had a 336-acre fire that was caused by debris burning. The North Fork Clark Creek fire didn't last long, with the help of Mother Nature (rain); the fire was quickly contained.

As the days become shorter and the nights grow longer, an amazing transformation takes place in our urban landscapes. The deciduous trees in our yards, along our streets and in neighborhood parks begin to change color. Often this change brings about questions, such as: Why do leaves change color? And how can I get that color in my yard? Paul Reis, Oregon Department of Forestry's urban forestry coordinator had answers to both questions. Homeowners can create a palette of fall colors by planting selected hardwood or deciduous tree species. He offered the following guide: Reds: oaks (especially scarlet oak), sweetgum, black gum or tupelo, dogwood;

Purples: sweetgum, autumn purple ash; Oranges: sugar maple (also turns red), sassafras, vine maple; Yellows: ashes, honeylocust, Norway maple, yellow poplar, birches, ginkgo.

NOVEMBER

MONTH:

Lightning - 302

Human Caused – 801

YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires – 1,103

Total Acres – 98,970.96

Big storms, lots of rain, and mountain snows began early in November. A massive ridge of high pressure diverted Pacific storms to areas well to the north of Oregon. Therefore, November ended with generally below-average precipitation.

Fossil Unit in Central Oregon was still busy fighting fires; the 1,000-acre Chamber Springs fire was fanned by strong winds on November 7th. The fire was caused by debris burning.

As of November 8th, all Districts are officially out of fire season.

Oregon Department of Forestry was pleased to announce that after 37 years of hard work, a family-owned tree farm in Scio, Oregon has taken first place in the nationwide “Tree Farmer of the Year” competition. Ron and Barbara Bentz were presented the honor at an Asheville, NC convention.

November 1st, Clackamas-Marion District tackled a 30-acre fire that began on Halloween. The fire was east of Silverton, 2nd growth conifer, and a slop over from a rekindled broadcast burn.

Chilson Creek fire began on November 3rd burning 310 state protected acres of grasslands in a steep canyon in Northeast Oregon District. The Pendleton Unit handled the fire that burned within a wildlife area. The fire was caused by a recreationist not extinguishing a warming fire.

This fire season would not end; Astoria District fought a 40-acre fire on November 19th, Elk Mountain fire. The fire was caused by debris burning, and it burned for several days maintaining potential for continued growth.

DECEMBER

MONTH:

Lightning – 302

Human Caused – 811

YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires – 1,113

Total Acres – 99,076.64

After a slow start, December really made up for lost time. Copious rains, big windstorms, and heavy mountain snows characterized the last three weeks of the month. Most of Oregon ended up being much wetter than average, and seasonal percentages of normal approached or exceeded normal in much of Oregon.

Between May 1st and December 2nd, South Fork crews responded to 30 fires and three slashburns for an all-time high of 4,737 inmate worker days on fire business. Some crews were deployed for up to 33 days, similar to the 1987 fire season. The season proved to be long and challenging.

Both line crews and kitchen crews provided excellent support and suppression actions in coordination with security staff and contracts crews from Department of Corrections. Fire fighter commitment to safety was demonstrated with an outstanding safety record of zero personal injuries.

The U.S. Forest Service had an extremely difficult year with their Aviation Program. They experienced 13 accidents, lost six professional aviators in three fatal accidents, and three serious injuries among the remaining accidents.

ODF employees received a 'Letter of Gratitude to Pacific Northwest Fire Fighters.' The letter: "In the wake of one of the most devastating wildfire seasons in our region's history, it is time to recognize the sacrifice and contribution of thousands of firefighters, support personnel, cooperators agencies and contractors.

The summer and fall of 2002 saw the safe and successful mobilization and management of the largest concentration of firefighting resources in a single-season campaign the Pacific Northwest has ever seen.

The enormity of this truly interagency effort is difficult to comprehend. Largely due to widespread lightning strikes, wildfires in Oregon and Washington burned more than a million acres. Of the more than 2,600 fires counted in the two states, 375 resulted from a three-day series of lightning strikes in early July; and 66 of them are on the books as project fires. The impact of these fires placed human lives and homes at risk in both states. The Biscuit Fire in southwest Oregon, which threatened more than 17,000 people for several weeks before it was contained after burning nearly a half-million acres, is believed to be the largest fire in Oregon in more than a century.

Over the course of the summer 22 Type I Incident Management Teams, 54 Type II Incident Management Teams and six Area Commands took charge of the major fires. More than 30,000 firefighters and support personnel, several hundred aircraft and over 2,100 engines, bulldozers and tenders were committed to the fire suppression efforts. Indeed, the overall suppression costs were high and, regrettably, some homes and other structures were lost.

However, in the face of this huge mobilization and coordination task, the most remarkable statistics reflect the safety accomplishments. There were no fatalities, no serious ground vehicle accidents – outstanding achievements for a wildfire season, which ran so long and required such a large mix of people and equipment. This safety performance did not happen by chance but because it was our highest priority.

We are particularly proud of the professionalism of all the firefighting organizations, which safely completed this suppression task in spite of many challenges. The 375 fire starts from over 15,000 lightning strikes between July 12-15 presented extraordinary competing resource needs and demands for some suppression skills that were limited or unavailable. Our fire managers applied the skills and resources to the greatest needs first – human life and property – regardless of land ownerships.

Praise and gratitude are also deserving of the many employees who remained at home to complete the all-important field season work, while lending their support to the critical fire borrowing needs, which this wildfire season required.

As we now move ahead to assessment and implementation of fire rehabilitation and recovery, we can all be proud that the skill and resilience of our Pacific Northwest workforces have again risen to and surpassed the needs of the critical task at hand.

Thank you one and all for your dedicated efforts.”

The letter was signed by: Linda Goodman, Acting Regional Forester of Region 6, USDA Forest Service; Elaine Brong, State Director, USDI Bureau of Land Management, Oregon/Washington; Doug Sutherland, Washington State Commissioner of Public Lands; and Jim Brown, State Forester, Oregon Department of Forestry.