

## 2004 FIRE CHRONOLOGY

### JANUARY

MONTH:

Lightning – 0

Human Caused – 0

YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires – 0

Total Acres – 0

**Weather:** In early January, a snow event turned into a major ice storm. Cold air remained over all of Oregon for the first week of the month. On January 5<sup>th</sup>, a Pacific storm approached the Oregon coast. Rain began to fall in the southern Willamette Valley in the early hours of January 6<sup>th</sup>. As the rain reached the ground, it generally froze on tact with objects that had been chilled by the cold temperatures – the dreaded freezing rain. Icy roads made driving hazardous. Many trees were damaged or destroyed by large amounts of ice adhering to branches. Downed power lines caused power outages. Portland Airport saw many flights cancelled for several days.

In between wildland fire seasons, the State of Oregon has launched a review of its fire protection program. Roy Woo, Deputy State Forester, said, ‘By looking at things that we can do in prevention and pre-suppression to help us be more effective in our firefighting will also reduce costs and reduce damage. One of the increased costs of fire suppression, because we are experiencing more intense fires, and our fire season is becoming longer and longer. The other thing that they are bringing up is the ability to have resources when we need them. When we see and look at fires in the wildland-urban interface, data suggests that there is a lot that can be done to make communities defensible by managing their fuels.’

The Oregon Board of Forestry selected regional **Operator of the Year Award** winners for 2003. The operators earned the recognition for conducting their forest operations in a manner that helps protect natural resources, often exceeding the state’s Forest Practice Act rules. The candidates were selected from nominations proposed by the Oregon Department of Forestry. The award winners were honored for displaying innovation and the ability to handle difficult circumstances, expending extra effort and investing some financial risk or sacrifice to produce outstanding results. **Mark Tsiatsos, M&S Timber Company, LaGrande, Oregon**, earned the Eastern Oregon Operator of the Year Award for an integrated and comprehensive land management approach that promotes sustainable use of forestlands. **Brent Parries, Pacific Forest Contractors, Estacada, Oregon**, earned the Northwest Oregon Operator of the Year Award for a 41-acre operation that included a wetland area and two fish bearing streams. Parries and his crew took extra precautions to avoid altering or disturbing these areas – trees were felled away from the wetland area and a temporary stream crossing was constructed for equipment. **Lone Rock Logging, Lone Rock Timber Compnay, Roseburg, Oregon**, earned the Southwest Oregon Operator of the Year Award for timber harvesting above Cooper Creek Reservoir, Sutherlin. The crew took numerous precautions during the operation to mitigate the steep terrain and to safeguard the reservoir, which is a secondary source of municipal water for Sutherlin. **Blaine Waldiene, LA Logging, Inc., Coquille, Oregon**, received a merit award for harvesting timber on very steep and difficult terrain in the Elliott State Forest. The operation required a Habitat Conservation Plan, as well as a Forest Management Plan, which made harvesting layouts more complex than most. **Russ Young, Iron**

**Triangle, LLC, John Day, Oregon**, also received a merit award for harvesting stands with forest health challenges, such as overstocking, heavy mistletoe infections and bark beetle outbreaks. Primary objective of the operation were to improve the long-term health of the forest and to minimize potential loss from wildfire.

**FEBRUARY**

MONTH:

Lightning – 0

Human Caused – 4

YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires – 4

Total Acres – 2.61

**Weather:** February was characterized by generally near-normal temperatures, with about an equal number of above and below normal observations; temperatures were below normal east of the Cascades and above normal to the west.

**MARCH**

MONTH:

Lightning – 0

Human Caused – 24

YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires - 24

Total Acres – 45.55

**Weather:** March was a very warm and dry month. Every weather station in Oregon reported above-normal temperatures and below-normal precipitation. Water supply folks became a bit concerned about summer water supply because the warm temperatures caused an earlier than average beginning to the spring snow melt. The April 1st snowpack was generally below average in Oregon, compared with the well above average on March 1<sup>st</sup>.

**APRIL**

MONTH:

Lightning – 0

Human Caused – 67

YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires – 67

Total Acres – 105.45

**Weather:** A cold, dry front brought gusty Northwest winds into the area on April 27th, particularly the east slopes of the Cascades, rapidly pushing several human-caused and downed powerline fires.

**37 Oregon Communities** were named ‘Tree City USA.’ ‘The cities need to be recognized for taking the necessary steps to make their communities more livable through planting and caring for trees,’ said State Forester Marvin Brown. Tree City USA, a program of the National Arbor Day Foundation and sponsored by the Oregon Department of Forestry, recognizes cities that have developed programs that plant and care for trees. Tree Cities must meet four criteria set forth by the National Arbor Day Foundation: 1) adopt a tree care ordinance, 2) establish a program, tree board or commission, 3) spend at least \$2 per capita on a community tree care program, and 4) conduct an Arbor Day or Arbor Week ceremony. Those cities recognized are: Albany, Ashland, Baker City, Beaverton, Coburg, Coos Bay, Corvallis, Cottage Grove, Eagle Point, Echo, Forest Grove, Grants Pass, Klamath Falls, LaGrande, Lake Oswego, Lebanon, Madras, McMinnville, Medford, Philomath, Portland, Reedsport, Rogue River, Salem, Scio, Seaside, Sunriver, Sweet

Home, Talent, Tigard, Tillamook, Toledo, Troutdale, Tualatin, West Linn and Wilsonville. Eugene has earned the honor for the 25<sup>th</sup> year in a row.

**Butte Creek Fire** burned 12 acres of scotch broom and re-pod on the 27<sup>th</sup>. The fire was 3.5 miles east of Scotts Mills in the ODF Cascade District. The fire was caused by unattended debris burn.

## MAY

### MONTH:

Lightning – 4

Human Caused – 108

### YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires – 110

Total Acres – 165.92

**Weather:** May was a wet month, especially in eastern portions of Oregon. Maximum temperatures were generally below normal due to persistent cloud cover, while minimum temperatures were mostly above normal.

**Black Rock #1** began on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Winds were erratic and spotting ¼ mile in front of the fire. The fire burned 17 acres 6 miles west of Gilchrist in the Walker Range District. The fire was a miscellaneous caused fire.

**USDA Forest Service** announced on the 10<sup>th</sup> that they had canceled the federal contract for 33 air tankers due to airworthiness concerns. Year after year in Oregon, the heavy fire-retardant planes had demonstrated their worth in attacking and holding fires until ground forces could arrive. Another tough season loomed, and this integral component of the department's aggressive firefighting strategy had suddenly gone missing. Oregon State Forester Marvin Brown declared an emergency due to the shortage of large air tankers and the expectation of an above-average fire season in Oregon this summer. The emergency declaration enables ODF to immediately begin securing its own aviation contracts for other tankers and helicopters to offset the loss of the federal tanker fleet. Bill Lafferty, Director of ODF's Protection from Fire Program said 'we have an agreement with the State of Alaska to have two of their contract tankers and two lead planes brought down to Oregon around August 1<sup>st</sup>. We are also seeking two additional air tankers to be available July 1<sup>st</sup>. Aircraft are integral to our aggressive fire fighting strategy.'

**Wildfire Awareness Week** was May 10-16. The local fire departments, forest protection agencies or fire prevention coop has tips to make your home survivable in the event of wildfire. The Oregon Department of Forestry and the Oregon Office of the State Fire Marshal both have risk-assessment tools on their websites. You can learn to identify hazards and what you can do to correct them. Both these websites have links to other national websites where you can get more information.

**Prineville, Sisters and John Day Units of the Central Oregon District, and, Walker Range District** entered fire season on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Romie Howard Road Fire** began on the 25<sup>th</sup> burning 50 acres of slash and brush in the DFPA District. The fire was caused by slash burning and contained the same day.

**Peppin Fire** on the Lincoln National Forest in New Mexico was burning rapidly. Marti-Lea Graham was dispatched from Salem as an Information Officer.

## JUNE

### MONTH:

Lightning – 40

Human Caused – 215

### YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires – 255

Total Acres – 396.77

**Weather:** June was a little on the warm side and a little on the dry side. Dryland farmers in central and northeast Oregon rejoiced because of abundant rains, at a very opportune time. June rains often ‘make it or break it’ for growers east of the Cascades and after several years with dry periods at this time of year, the farmers and ranchers were especially grateful.

**Klamath-Lake District** entered fire season on the 1<sup>st</sup>; **Southwest Forest Protection District** on the 4<sup>th</sup>; **Douglas Forest Protection District** on the 12<sup>th</sup>; **The Dalles of CO Forest Protection District** on the 19<sup>th</sup>; **North Cascade District** and **South Cascade District** on the 21<sup>st</sup>; **Western Lane Forest Protection District**, **Coos Forest Protection District** and **Western Lane** on the 23<sup>rd</sup>; **Northwest Oregon Forest Protection District** and **West Oregon Forest Protection District** on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Larry Hoffman**, Unit Forester of The Dalles Unit in Central Oregon District died June 5<sup>th</sup> while taking the Work Capacity Test (pack test) prior to fire season. Friends and firefighters gathered on June 11<sup>th</sup> at The Dalles to pay final tribute to Larry. Larry began his career with ODF in 1976 working at several different District offices throughout the state.

**Fire School for Firefighters** had approximately 50-60 firefighters from the Northwest sharpened their skills in classroom and field exercises for four days (21<sup>st</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>). Safety and teamwork are important aspects of fire school. Students will learn the 10 standard fire orders. “Fight fire aggressively but provide for safety first,” was emphasized throughout all daily activities within the Oregon Department of Forestry. Fire School was set up at the Jewell School in Jewell, Oregon.

**Tim Keith** was selected as the new Assistant State Forester for the Protection Division. Tim was previously the District Forester for Northeast Oregon Forest Protection District. He brings to the new position a wealth of experience in his long career with ODF, and also the invaluable experience of being an Incident Commander for Fire Team 1. As Assistant State Forester, Keith will oversee the Protection from Fire Program. Its main purpose is to protect 15.8 million acres of private and public forestland from wildfire.

**John B. Creek Fire** began on the 27<sup>th</sup> burning 43 acres in the Coos Forest Protection Association District. The fire burned Coos County forestlands in light logging slash and small trees. Cause of the fire was a smoker dropping a lit match.

## JULY

### MONTH:

Lightning – 135

Human Caused – 419

### YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires – 554

Total Acres – 587.06

**Weather:** July was a warm month, and quite dry everywhere except northeast Oregon – where significant thunderstorms rumbled through Northeast Oregon on the afternoon of July 19<sup>th</sup>,

bringing strong winds, hail, heavy rain, and flooding. Some parts of the region received more than two inches of rain. A possible developing El Nino in the Pacific is causing some interest among climate folks.

**Northeast Forest Protection District** entered fire season on the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**Storm King** blaze occurred ten years ago when 14 firefighters from Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington perished on Storm King Mountain in Colorado. It was on July 6<sup>th</sup>, 1994 when high afternoon winds whipped a creeping ground fire into a firestorm, blowing the Storm King blaze, officially called the South Canyon Fire, into the history books. The lightning caused fire slowly crept over rugged terrain until the winds came – then everything changed. Some firefighters outran the fire, others survived in fire shelters. Fourteen firefighters were overtaken. Today, Storm King 14 Memorial Trail was built by volunteers, has become a place of pilgrimage for firefighters and others who want to understand what happened there. There is a Wildland Firefighters Monument in Prineville, Oregon, both a memorial for those who died and a celebration of the men and women who fight wildland fires. Prineville is home to the hotshot crew that lost nine of its members in the fire. The monument sits on the bank of the Ochoco Creek in Ochoco Creek Park, Prineville's largest, and neighbors the Circle of Honor, a war memorial. It's an elegant place, green and welcoming. A grove of young aspen, a large elm and a large spruce shade the walkway, encourages visitors to linger.

**Powderhouse Fire** began on the 15<sup>th</sup> in Tillamook District burning 8 acres in heavy slash. The fires location on the South Fork of the Trask River enabled a quick response of four South Fork Crews to assist on the fire. The fire was caused by equipment use.

**Old Sams Complex** consisted of four fire starts in Gold Hill on the 15<sup>th</sup>, the largest burning 60 acres. The four were intentionally set arson fires, ODF was asking for information that may assist in the arrest and conviction of the person(s) responsible. Two of the fires posed a threat to nearby homes, but fast action and mutual aid assistance from surrounding fire department averted the threat.

**Governor Kulongoski** honored ODF in Salem with a visit on the 16<sup>th</sup> to talk about fire preparedness and tour the facilities. The Governor arrived at ODF's Operations Building where State Forester Marvin Brown, Fire Program Director Bill Lafferty, and journalists from Salem and Portland greeted him. The Governor visited the Salem's Fire Coordination Center where Belinda Boston, Fire Operations, explained the functions and activities of dispatch. He spent some time examining a large wall map of Oregon and discussing fire-ready resources, including tankers and aircraft, available at various sites around Oregon. The visit included Meteorology Office where he was briefed by Meteorology Manager Mike Ziolk. Meteorologist Nick Yonker demonstrated the fire weather software ODF uses for the fire danger rating system and talked about weather data. The tour then went to Salem's fire warehouse where the Governor was greeted by two ODF firefighters wearing full firefighting gear. The tour also included Salem's Fire Cache. Fire Cache Manager Jim Liesch who showed the Governor where ODF's firefighting equipment is stored and how fire cache system works. The Governor made a stop to examine a fire investigation can where Fire Investigator Jeff Bonebrake briefed him on the fire investigation program and showed him some forensic gear.

**Log Springs Fire** began on the 25<sup>th</sup> on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation in Central Oregon. The fire burned 25,000 acres; the fire was caused by . Highway 9 was closed for a while to Kah-Nee-Ta Resort and the Indian Head Gaming Casino. Although this was a Federal fire, ODF assisted by sending overhead personnel in various capacities from Salem and the Northwest Oregon Area.

## AUGUST

### MONTH:

Lightning – 254

Human Caused – 554

### YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires – 808

Total Acres – 5,693.61

**Weather:** August started warm and dry, like July, but things really changed by the end of the month. Several unseasonably cool storms brought significant amounts of rain to most of the state. Many sites had more than a month's worth of rain in a few days. The vast majority of Oregon stations had above-normal precipitation for the month, and some were more than three times the August normals. Temperatures, by and large, were above normal.

**Panorama Fire** began on the 2<sup>nd</sup> by a dry-lightning storm moving across the state. The fire was three miles SE of Hood River burning 100 acres on state protected land in the Central Oregon District. Timber and wildlife habitat were threatened while the fire burned grass, brush and timber. This was a lightning caused fire.

**Calf Ranch Mountain Fire** began on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and burned 41 acres south of Myrtle Point in the Coos Forest Protective Association District. Fuels involved were slash, fell and buck and was on steep terrain. The fire was caused by equipment use.

**Redwood Highway Fire**, a wind-driven wildfire threatened the town of Cave Junction on the 4<sup>th</sup>, burning 210 acres. An evacuation of the USDA Forest Service's Illinois Valley Ranger District and about 180 homes occurred; the fire burned right up to the Forest Service compound, but they were able to stop it at that point. Winds around 20 mph and gusting higher caused the fire to jump the Illinois River at Forks State Park and head towards the town. The fire was caused by a power line that had gone down.

**Smokey Bear's** 60<sup>th</sup> birthday was August 9<sup>th</sup>. An event that was celebrated during fire season reminding the public that 'wildfire prevention is everyone's responsibility.' The birthday theme is "60 Years of Vigilance." Over the last 60 years the message has stayed pretty much the same, 'Only You Can Prevent Forest Fires. Smokey Bear has been our reminder that we, people, do cause about 80% of the fires in the United States. If we do our A, B, C,'s in preventing fires, there would be less human caused fires,' states Mindy Sherrieb, Klamath Fire Prevention Cooperative Chairperson. Smokey Bear continued to celebrate his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday at the Oregon State Fair. Cake and beverages were served as well as pictures with Smokey. Smokey Bear began his career as the 'Fire Preventing Bear' in 1944 after 103,000 forest fires had burned 30 million acres of America's forests and range land. According to the U.S. Forest Service, nine out of ten of those fires were human-caused and could have been prevented. It was WWII, however, that brought national attention to the importance of fire prevention. The threat of forest fires from enemy shelling prompted the USDA Forest Service to organize the Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Campaign

(CFFP), designed to encourage citizens nationwide to participate in fire prevention as an aid-to-the-war-effort. CFFP Campaign officials sought volunteer advertising support from the newly formed Wartime Advertising Council (now the Ad Council), which initially incorporated Walt Disney's Bambi into the campaign, and later decided to use its own original character: A bear. In 1944, Artist Albert Staehle, created the nation's No. 1 fire prevention symbol. His first rendition is of a bear pouring a bucket of water to drown a campfire. That message is alive today, known as "Drown, Stir, Drown." In 1945, the Wartime Advertising Council (WAC) used Staehle's illustration for its national public service advertising campaign and named the bear "Smokey Joe" Martin, the popular assistant chief of the New York Fire Department from 1919 to 1930. The timeless fire prevention campaign slogan, 'Only YOU Can Prevent Forest Fires,' was coined by a volunteer agency, Foote, Cone, & Belding/Honig Advertising, which still serves as the campaign's volunteer agency to this day. Forest Service artist Rudy Wendelin became Smokey's artist in 1947 and continued to develop the character of Smokey Bear, and assumed the role of the 'caretaker of the Smokey Bear image' until his retirement in 1973. Under Wendelin's guidance, the gentle Smokey's paws became hands, Smokey wore blue jeans and his hat was modeled after a forest ranger's – and don't forget the shovel. Wendelin's Smokey appeared on government posters, postage stamps, first day covers, and television. He also appeared in magazines, "spoke" on the radio, and was used in various teaching materials. He even appeared in a movie. Wendelin continued to promote Smokey Bear posters and coloring sheets until his death in 2000. In 1950, a bear cub, displaced by a forest fire in the Capital Mountains of New Mexico, was rescued by a fire fighting crew and, under the care of the New Mexico State Game and Fish Warden Ray Bell, was sent to the National Zoo in Washington, D.C. to become the living symbol of Smokey Bear. In 1952, Public Law 359 of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Congress, better known as the Smokey Bear Act, was passed, protecting the commercial use of Smokey Bear from exploitation. This law gives the Secretary of Agriculture the authority to grant permission for the use of the Smoke Bear character, contingent upon a royalty fee that goes to further wildfire prevention education. In 1961, Goldie, an orphaned bear found in the Magdalena Mountains of New Mexico, was sent to the National Zoo to become Smokey's lifetime partner. However, they never produced a cub. To recognize those individuals for their outstanding achievement in the field of wildfire prevention, the Smokey Bear awards program was born in the late 60's. The awards became known as the 'Oscars of the Forest Fire Prevention Field.' Gold, Silver, and Bronze statues have been given to many individuals across the United States for their prevention efforts. In 1971, an orphaned cub, later named Little Smokey, was found in the Lincoln National Forest and was sent to live with Smokey and Goldie at the National Zoo. In 1976 when the original living symbol of Smokey Bear died of old age; he was buried at the Smokey Bear State Historical Park in Capitan, New Mexico. Little Smokey carried on the legacy and continued to greet more than three million visitors each year. Little Smokey died in 1990, thus ending the story of the living symbol of Smokey Bear. Today, millions of children and adults alike recognize and cherish Smokey Bear, the second most recognized icon (Santa Clause is #1). While his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday was actually August 9<sup>th</sup>, celebrations have been occurring across the nation to celebrate and remind the public that "Smokey's Friends Don't Play with Matches," "Fire Prevention is Everyone's Responsibility," and "Only You Can Prevent Wildfires."

**Wilkins Road Fire** burned 132 acres in the South Cascade District near Springfield on the 11<sup>th</sup>. The fire burned in flat terrain and more than 50 firefighters, 15 engines, and a helicopter, and

several rural fire Districts assisted in the fire suppression. Cause of the fire was mower in ag field, spark from a rock.

**Hogback Fire** began on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> in Klamath-Lake District. The fire burned grass and brush and firefighters were able to stop the fire fairly quickly after burning only 18 acres. Arson was the cause of the fire.

**Bland Mountain Fire #2** began on the 20<sup>th</sup>, 40 miles southeast of Roseburg burning 4,705 acres. The fire burned timber and 12-15 year old trees that were planted following the last devastating fire on Bland Mountain in 1987, as well as grass, brush, timber and madrone. Private landowners called their assets a total loss with no salvage opportunities. (The fire occurred during one of the worst fire seasons in Oregon history, burning 10,000 acres while destroying 14 homes. Two loggers were killed in the 1987 fire when trying to retrieve equipment.) The fire burned private lands (primarily industry lands), and Bureau of Land Management lands. Two vacant residences and three outbuildings were destroyed in the fire. Fire spreading in tree roots resulted in live trees and dead snags falling over. Two hours after the fire started it had burned 1,000 acres; by the end of the day it burned 2,500 acres. The cost of the fire exceeded \$7 million. The fire was miscellaneous caused.

## **SEPTEMBER**

MONTH:

Lightning – 258

Human Caused – 630

YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires – 888

Total Acres – 5,917.20

**Weather:** For the first time in quite awhile, Oregon experienced a cooler than average September. In particular, high temperatures were unusually mild due to frequent cloud cover. Much of the state was wetter than normal, as autumn rains came early.

**Table Mountain Fire** burned 8.5 acres, 13 miles south of Pilot Rock in the NE Pendleton Unit. The fire began on September 1<sup>st</sup>; a severity helicopter flew three hours to assist in the firefighting efforts on the wind-driven fire. The fire was caused by a recreationist/warming fire not extinguished.

**Redwood Highway #2 Fire** began on the 1<sup>st</sup> burning 25 acres, destroying one mobile home and three outbuildings. The fire was located north of Cave Junction in Kerby. The fire was caused by juveniles playing with fire.

**Three New District Foresters** were announced this month: **John Buckman**, Unit Forester in Pendleton was selected as District Forester for Northeast Oregon District, headquarters in LaGrande. John began his career with the department in 1986. **Dan Thorpe**, Unit Forester in the Southwest Oregon District was selected as District Forester for the same district. Dan began his career in 1973 with the department. **Ross Holloway**, State Forests Program Director was selected as the new District Forester in the Tillamook District. Ross began his career with the department in 1978. Congratulations to all of you!



**Ben Isenberg**, an inmate crew chief at ODF's South Fork Camp in Tillamook, was killed September 13<sup>th</sup> in Taji, Iraq when his military vehicle was attacked by enemy forces using small arms fire and an improvised explosive device. A traditional soldier's memorial was held at a church in Sheridan, Oregon attended by Governor Kulongoski.

## **OCTOBER**

MONTH:

Lightning – 258

Human Caused – 662

YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires – 920

Total Acres – 5,940.72

**Weather:** October's generally mild and wet conditions mirrored those in September, providing a good start to the Water Year. Eastern Oregon regions which have been especially hard-hit by drought conditions in recent years were the main recipients, with some stations receiving more than 300% of the October normal.

**Keep Oregon Green** was established in 1940. Public interest in Oregon was aroused by the Tillamook burns of 1933 and 1938 and the shelling off the California Coast after Pearl Harbor was bombed. Also, over 3,000,000 acres of forest had burned in the previous few years due to human carelessness. The forests were needed for ships and other war-related items, and so keeping Oregon free became a reality when the Association was formed and a governing board was appointed in 1941. The first directors were county commissioners, one from each of the 36 OR counties. Letters soliciting funds were sent to individuals and companies in the lumber or related industries. Contributions from one dollar to \$500 were received and these funds were (and remain) the main support of the program. The State Board of Forestry provided office space and secretarial help. Today, KOG continues to educate the public about their responsibility for reducing unwanted human-caused wildfires in Oregon. We are sustained by membership dues and landowner assessments, and are wholly devoted to wildfire prevention programs and activities.

**John Buckman** was selected as the new District Forester for Northeast Oregon and will begin his new job on Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>. Tim Keith vacated the position in July to become assistant state forester for the department's Forest Protection Division in Salem. Buckman began his career with the department in 1986 as a forest technician in Tillamook. Since then he has worked various capacities in The Dalles, Salem, and Pendleton.

**Dan Thorpe** was selected as the new District Forester for Southwest Oregon District. Dan will succeed Jeff Schwanke who retired from ODF. Thorpe began his career in 1973 on a fire suppression crew. His career has included assignments in Grants Pass, Philomath, LaGrande, Coos Bay, Fossil and Medford.

**Fine Stein Fire** began on the 14<sup>th</sup> burning 17 acres in the Forest Grove District. The fire was started from an escaped slash burn.

**End of Fire Season** – all remaining Oregon Department of Forestry districts went out of fire season on this date. The Central Oregon District was the last to announce season closure, and it was also the first to enter fire season, May 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Aggressive firefighting made the difference in 2004:** to prepare, the Oregon Department of Forestry lined up additional helicopters and air tankers. ‘These resources, both helicopters and large air tankers, are mobile. They were initially strategically placed throughout the state, and those were kind of their home bases. If we had a lightning storm moving into the Klamath area, we would mobilize helicopters from John Day or Pendleton or other areas to that area of predicted high fire danger,’ said John Boro, ODF Operations Manager. Boro continues, ‘We had lightning storms come through as we always do. However, most storms this year had at least some moisture with them. This buys us time to find and suppress the fires early. The Bland Mountain #2 Fire was an excellent example of how ODF’s relationship in the fire program with industry should be, can be, and hopefully will be in the future. Industry played a significant role in the suppression efforts on this fire and provided both logistical and operations support when we needed it most. The air tanker that came from Alaska was under the authority of the Northwest Compact Act, and that’s really a valuable tool for the states to use for the exchange of firefighting resources.’

**Roy Woo**, Deputy State Forester, retired after 30 years of service with the Oregon Department of Forestry. Roy held his current position for the last four years, as well as a variety of other positions throughout the years as Director of Northwest Oregon Area, District Forester at Klamath-Lake District, Assistant Personnel Director in Salem, and forester positions in Coos Bay, Dallas, Tillamook, and Prineville. Additionally, Roy worked with Governor Kitzhaber on the Ten Year National Fire Plan.

## **NOVEMBER**

### **MONTH:**

Lightning - 258

Human Caused – 662

### **YEAR-TO-DATE:**

Total Fires – 920

Total Acres – 5,940.72

**Weather:** November was a big disappointment this year. A strong ridge of high pressure dominated the weather for the month, bringing generally dry conditions, very little snow, and plenty of valley fog. Water managers begin to worry: the rule of thumb is that the deepest snow pack occurs on or about April 1.

**Marvin Brown** was selected as the vice president of the Society of American Foresters, the premier scientific and educational organization representing the forestry profession in this country. In accepting the society’s vice presidency, Marvin cited globalization and communication as the two key concerns he will address. ‘Effective communications is a challenge that has faced our profession since Day One,’ he said. ‘Globalization is a more recent issue, but one that becomes more embedded each day in the problems that we try to solve in our respective responsibilities.’ Founded in 1900 by Gifford Pinchot, the Society of American Foresters is the largest professional society for foresters in the world, with about 15,500 members. Its mission is ‘to advance the science, education, technology, and practice of forestry; to enhance the competency of its members; to establish professional excellence; and, to use the knowledge, skills and conservation ethic of the profession to ensure the continued health and use of forest ecosystems and the present and future availability of forest resources to benefit society.’

**Ross Holloway** was selected as District Forester in the Tillamook District. Ross will begin his new job on November 1<sup>st</sup>. He succeeds Mark Labhart, who retired from the department.

Holloway was the State Forests Program Director in Salem, a position he has held since 2000. He began his career with ODF in 1978.

**Fallon Logging**, located in Tillamook, has been selected as the NW Operator of the Year for 2004. They were nominated by Joe Travers for their work on an extremely complex harvest operation on State Forest lands. The operation included the headaches of multiple move-ins, murelets, both fish and domestic streams, and skeptical neighbors. Fallon is also a past winner of the award. **Dan D Company**, also from the Tillamook area, received a merit award for their work on a very difficult clear-cut operation. They were enominated by Dan cotton for a Stimson owned unit located in the Sand Lake area. Also receiving a merit award was **Melcher Logging** from Sweet Home. They were nominated by Doug Grafe for their cut-to-length/forwarder thinning operation on property owned by Emery Investments, south of Newport.

## DECEMBER

### MONTH:

Lightning – 258

Human Caused – 663

### YEAR-TO-DATE:

Total Fires – 921

Total Acres – 5,940.72

**Weather:** December looked very promising, but the middle of the month there was another strong ridge of high pressure brought generally dry conditions, and very little snow. Many of the basins are facing possible shortfalls, and some folks are beginning to use the “D” word: Drought.

**Oregon Forest Operators** were honored for their work in 2004. The recognition was earned for conducting forest operations in a manner that helps protect natural resources, while consistently surpassing Oregon standards of complying with recognized forest management practices. The Oregon Department of Forestry stewardship foresters selected the nominees for the awards, and then representatives from the three Regional Forest Practices Committees toured each of the work sites to determine the winners. Operators have displayed innovation and the ability to handle difficult circumstances, expending extra effort and investing some financial risk or sacrifice to produce outstanding results.

**Bob Bottorff, Moonlight Timber, LLC**, Klamath Falls, earned the Eastern Oregon Operator of the Year Award for protecting significant wetland in a riparian management area (RMA) while completing a harvest operation east of Chiloquin. Forested wetland soil is very sensitive to severe impacts such as rutting and compaction. Because operations in such areas need to be done under either very dry conditions or when the ground is frozen and protected by snow, Bottorff had to carefully time the operation to limit disturbance to the soil and understory vegetation, and use the appropriate equipment to ensure ‘light touch’ harvesting. By using a boom-mounted saw, Bottorff’s and his crew were able to access each free from a distance, without negatively impacting the wetland and RMA.

**Ken Fallon, Fallon Logging, Inc.**, Tillamook, earned the Northwest Oregon operator of the Year Award for a State timber harvest 25 miles north of Tillamook that included fish bearing, non-fish bearing and domestic-use streams. Fallon Logging has consistently performed well over the years, receiving ODF Letters of Commendation and acknowledgement as a former ODF Operator of the Year. The harvest included clear cutting stands infected with Swiss Needlecast and thinning infected areas adjacent to stream buffer zones along fish bearing streams (Type F). These areas

will be reforested with other conifer species to develop future complex structures near Type F streams. A number of stream enhancement activities were implemented; fill was removed from an old road crossing' and deteriorating culverts were removed that did not pass fish; a log culvert was removed from Type F and Type N (non-fish bearing) stream. The improvements provide approximately 11,650' of fish habitat, some of which may be suitable for Coho salmon.

**Mike and Gary Brownson, Brownson Logging Company**, Myrtle Creek, earned the Southwest Oregon Operator of the Year Award for timber harvesting a unit approximately seven miles northwest of Sutherlin that included a small fish bearing stream. Brownson was also a former Operator of the Year Award winner during 2000. The operation was done carefully to minimize the number of yarding corridors through the riparian buffer strip. A swing yarder with a mechanical slack-pulling carriage was used to gain light through the RMS, as well as to direct logs through the corridors. To minimize the impact to protected resources, the operation had to progress slowly to avoid damage to live trees in the RMA, decreasing the profitability of the operation. Because the operator received a waiver to operate during an Industrial Fire Precaution Level 3 period, Brownson made sure that additional fire equipment was brought to the site to further protect against fire.

**Oregon's Tree Farmer of the Year** for 2004 was recognized by the Oregon Tree Farm System, Inc. Retired Oregon State University Extension Forester Steve Woodard of Cottage Grove was selected for managing his 200-acre tree farm sustainable for a variety of uses. Woodard said he harvests about 30 truckloads of the 60 truckloads of conifers growing on his land every year, while diligently reforesting with mixed conifers and under planting thinned areas with shade tolerant western red cedar and coastal redwood. The soils on his property can grow 800 board feet of lumber per acre per year, and most of the conifers are sold to local mills.