



A panoramic view of the burned-out section of Silver Falls State Park. BILL POEHLER/STATESMAN JOURNAL

# Fire

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The fire was located far from the park's popular Trail of Ten Falls and its visitor spots like campgrounds and the Silver Falls Lodge & Conference Center.

## Not the first fire at Silver Falls

This was the largest wildfire at the park in recent times.

"Up here in 1918 was the largest fire in Oregon," Oregon Parks and Recreation Department Forester Craig Leech said. "It was over 900,000 acres. It was just this whole area, this whole part of the Cascades."

DesJardin said he found several old fire scars on larger trees in the area of the current fire, and those trees are still alive and doing fine.

The Silver Creek Fire was started when a tree was hit by lightning during a June 18 storm and slowly smoldered until high temperatures and low humidity allowed the fire to emerge July 12 as a

hard-to-find plume of smoke.

One major challenge fire crews faced when finding the fire is there are few roads that lead anywhere near the area of the park where the fire burned.

There are old logging roads in the park. The ones that led to the location of the fire were overgrown and had to be bulldozed so fire crews could get trucks and other equipment through.

"And that also kind of brought up the issue of maintaining more of our fire roads, but beefing those up, maintaining those, keeping those brushed out so they have quicker access," Leech said.

The technology employed to fight the fire helped keep it from spreading farther and put it out more efficiently.

The firefighters were able to accurately map the extent of the fire with apps on their phones, used drones to spot fire they couldn't see from the ground and hand-held infrared cameras to identify areas on the ground where the fire was still smoldering.

"Technology it just advances at such a fast rate, we're just trying to keep up on all the potential uses for it," DesJardin said.

## What will happen next?

There are many decisions to be made about the 27 acres of the 9,200-acre park the fire scorched.

Options include removing the damaged and felled logs, cutting the rest of the damaged trees and leaving it alone to regrow.

"We have a decision process that we make internally and we look at all the factors such as reburn potential, hazardness of sending someone back into an area like that if there was a re-burn," Leech said.

"We're so early into the game here of just working on suppression and a heavy-duty fire season that that's not really thought out yet."

## When will the impacted areas reopen?

Silver Falls State Park Ranger Supervisor Chris Gilliland said he expects the YMCA summer camp and the rest of the Howard Creek horse camp will reopen this summer.

Both areas were near the fire, but

were only affected by smoke. They were used as staging areas by fire crews.

"We don't know for sure when the YMCA camp Silver Creek will reopen, but it will definitely open again," Gilliland said.

"Some of their activities they do at camp will be limited just because of their proximity to the fire, but they will reopen soon."

Oregon Department of Forestry Public Information Officer Ryan Gordon said the department will continue to have crews monitoring the Silver Creek Fire until sufficient rain comes in the fall.

"Eagle Creek had two holdover fires this spring," Eric Perkins, the Incident Commander for the Oregon Department of Forestry, said of last September's fire in the Columbia Gorge. "It's the exact same concept."

"Some of these hollowed-out trees, something can sit there and slowly burn like a wet cigar and come back to life when everything starts to dry back out when you put a little wind on it."

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# Queen

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aunt was somewhat of an amateur historian. So, I grew up with stories from England."

## Talk me through an average day in the life of a queen.

"At the Renaissance Faire, I have to ride very early to make sure that we have everything we need for the day. I have to get my hair braided and done which takes about a half hour to 40 minutes. It's done by one of our lovely vendors. And, eventually, after that, I put on my riding gear and once it opens I ride through the village greeting everyone saying 'good morning.' After that, I change into my fully-regal dress which is about three layers, three different sets of sleeves and many, many jewels. I walk around the village and see how everyone is doing, shop a little bit if there are any children around I take them around the village. Part of the magic of fairs is the impromptu encounters, so we try to get those as much as possible. Then there are two jousts in the day that I attend. Other than that I am in the pavilion, and I give out favors to the children, this year we are doing bookmarks. So, I get to ask the kids what their favorite books are and why. We teach them how to curtsy and talk with them to see how they like the fair. At the end of the day, I again just walk around to see how everyone is doing and have those on the street interactions."

## How do you prepare for being the queen regarding fashion?

"The main dress is made of upholstery and tapestry fabric, and it is very heavy. I would say it is about 20 pounds. There are several layers to it, there is the hoop skirt, which keeps it away from my legs, then there is an underskirt, a bum

roll, which is a fun little contraption to make your hips look bigger. Then there is the overskirt, the undershirt under the corset and then the over produce, then two pairs of sleeves. One that goes down the arm and the long draping sleeves."

## How long does it take you to get ready?

"Getting all of that on takes about 20 minutes. I also have a headdress I use. The overall process, hair, makeup, the dress, takes about an hour and 15, maybe an hour and a half overall. Then I have my court ladies as well, so we are all cramming for the mirror and helping tie each other's corsets up. It is actually really hilarious in the morning trying to get everyone ready."

## Do you do anything to get yourself into character? How much of your personality do you incorporate into the role?

"The time period is based on Queen Elizabeth I's reign, within the first five years of her reign, but Queen Elizabeth was a very strong and interesting character that may or may not translate well to a modern crowd. What I do is more of historical fiction. For my part, I don't play a very strong Queen Elizabeth because I like playing the more gracious queen part. I will say my own personality comes out a little. I will watch the Elizabeth I movie, Elizabeth the Golden Age, I also read several books, some biographies. It's very interesting for character development. Before fair, I will take about 10 minutes to sit calmly by myself and get myself into a queenly state of mind. Then, I will start interacting with my ladies."

## What is the most difficult about playing the queen?

"Fitting in a throne with a bum roll. The bum roll is nice because it is right below your waist and it holds the weight of the dress, but when you sit down, it

puts your back at a very odd angle. If you ever look closely, I tend to sit at the front of the chair so the bum roll doesn't do that."

## The most rewarding?

"There is so much that is rewarding about being queen. Seeing the kids faces light up when they meet the queen is something so spectacular – they think I am a real queen. It is those memories

when you are young that really inspire an interest in history, an interest in reading and something a little bit greater than yourself."

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