

## Grants

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more than 35 employees; provide a Youth Employment Certificate from the Bureau of Labor and Industries; provide documentation the youth worked between May 1 and Sept. 30; and allow a representative of Willamette Workforce Partnership to visit the workplace.

Bethell said the idea came from Brenda Frketch, owner of Kirsch Family Farms in St. Paul, and was based on a similar program Linn County administers. Bethell said Linn County has done its program for over a decade and hasn't exhausted the money it has set aside in any given year.

Bethell said Marion County's program isn't aimed directly at the agriculture sector and is for businesses of all types.

Nationally, employment among teens is at near-record low levels.

In 2020, 30.8% of teens were employed. In 2000, 51.7% of youth in the United States were employed, according to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. In 1948, the number was 56.5%.

Also, Latino teens (25.8%), Black teens (25.1%) and Asian teens (14.3%)

were less likely to be employed than white teens (33.4%), according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

According to the Pew paper, fewer young people work in entry-level jobs such as sales clerks or office assistants. Possible reasons could include more schools ending later in June and starting before Labor Day, and schools requiring volunteer community service to graduate.

In the latest numbers, from May 2021, 32.4% of youth age 16-19 were employed, a slight improvement over 2020's overall numbers.

The money Marion County is using for the program comes from video lottery proceeds designated for economic development.

Bethell said the money will essentially be used to reimburse a portion of the wages the company pays.

Each employee's wages are capped at 1,000 hours of work in the May through September period.

"It's an opportunity for businesses to shorten one burden that they may experience in the employment market and specifically focus on youth," Bethell said.

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Marion County commissioners Colm Willis and Danielle Bethell speak to community members about a proposal to remove the Scotts Mills dam. ABIGAIL DOLLINS / STATESMAN JOURNAL

## OSHA

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risks to health increase for everyone when the AQI passes 201, and the air is hazardous when the AQI reaches 301.

Air quality in Salem during last year's Labor Day fires exceeded 400 on the AQI scale, and in Bend passed 500. Last year, Oregon OSHA released recommendations, but no rules, on keeping workers safe from wildfire smoke. Many farmworkers continued working, often with limited protection.

Jamie Pang South, the environmental health program director at the Oregon Environmental Council, said the rules are a good start, but don't go far enough. She said worker advocates also sought the creation of a buddy system, the suspension of work quotas and extra mandatory breaks for workers during high AQI levels.

"They're a little bit disappointing, and they will also need strong enforcement," Pang South said, while giving credit to OSHA and emphasizing the rules are a positive step and "a baseline for more permanent rules."

Some positive components of the rules include their limited application to wildland firefighting and other emergency response activities, and the availability of KN-95 masks when the AQI passes 101, she said.

"Our state has been at the center of the climate crisis this summer, and that's shattered any illusion that the Pacific Northwest is safe, and as a result, OSHA's willingness to inch forward on these things show that there is an exigent environmental crisis happening that officials must respond to protect the health of people," Pang South said.

Jenny Dresler, a lobbyist for the Oregon Farm Bureau, a growers' association, said she would have preferred temporary smoke rules more similar to the temporary rules the state of Washington released in July, but appreciates that mandatory, fit-tested respirators are not required under Oregon's rules until the AQI reaches 500. She also hopes OSHA will make information and training materials readily available, she said.

Washington's temporary smoke rules include providing respirators for voluntary use when the AQI reaches 151 and allowing workers rest breaks where the air is filtered.

At the federal level, OSHA lacks rules to protect workers from smoke, and California is the only state with permanent

rules to protect workers from smoke. They include requiring employers to provide respirators for voluntary use when the AQI exceeds 151, and fit-tested respirators for mandatory use when the AQI reaches 500.

OSHA said the temporary smoke rules also apply to labor housing,

### Making sure housing is not too hot

The temporary heat protection rules for labor housing center on employers trying to keep the temperature down in housing units, providing access to indoor or outdoor cooling areas, and ensuring occupants have a way to contact emergency services.

The rules also require employers to put a thermometer in each housing unit and prominently display information on heat risks in housing.

Dresler described the temporary heat rules for labor housing as clear and achievable and said the agricultural employers she has met with already employ some of these practices.

"They're really reasonable and can be applied pretty easily," Dresler said. "They provide clear directions to employers and a clear regulatory scheme for employees to understand what the requirements are in housing."

Employers must aim to keep the temperature in housing units below 78 degrees Fahrenheit through air conditioners or evaporative coolers and/or protecting windows from direct sunlight and making fans available at no cost to workers.

If employers cannot keep the temperature below 78 degrees in rooms where people sleep, they must provide cooling areas for when the heat index outside the units passes 80 degrees. Employers must accomplish this by giving people constant access to cooling rooms, and/or creating outdoor rest areas with shade, seating, and water misters, cooling vests, or cooling towels.

Employees are also supposed to be protected from discrimination and retaliation when exercising the rights in these rules or making a complaint, the rules note, but worker advocates worry there still may be enforcement issues.

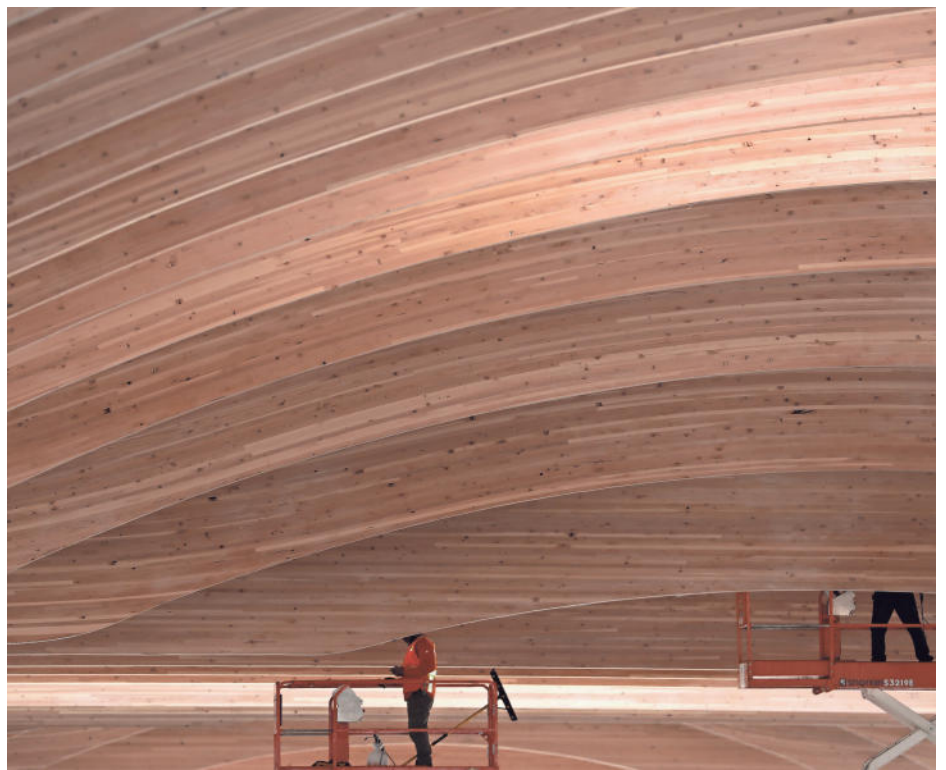
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Smoke rises over the Bruler Fire burning south of Detroit Lake. Temporary rules going into effect next week address worker safety during smoky conditions.

PROVIDED BY U.S. FOREST SERVICE



Crews with Hoffman-Skanska work on the new \$2 billion remodel of the roof using salvaged wood product from Freres Lumber Co. at Portland International Airport.

PHOTOS BY BRIAN HAYES/STATSMAN JOURNAL

## Airport

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to locations around the world.

Owned and operated by the Port of Portland, a quasi-governmental agency, the airport has become the 30th busiest in the United States.

To more efficiently move those millions of people, the airport undertook an expansion in 2017, with plans including a new concourse, a new ticketing area and a major expansion of the terminal.

When completed, the pre-security area will be widened 150 feet to the west to add about 175,000 square feet, nearly doubling it to about 360,000 square feet.

The stores below the roof will be built to resemble Portland neighborhoods, complete with doughnut shops.

To give travelers the feel they are in the Pacific Northwest, the designers opted to build as much as possible out of locally-sourced wood. A project that big requires a lot of it.

"The concept behind the roof is that you're in the forest, that you have the light filtering down through the trees, and you're obviously walking underneath wood," Simonds said.

"I don't think people are going to step off an airplane and say, 'It feels like I'm in a forest,' but it's one of those things in your surroundings that you'll just feel — similar to lighting. When you bring natural light in, people step off a plane and think, 'This is so nice.'"

The roof is designed to appear like rolling waves to simulate the current of rivers and oceans in Oregon, and decorative elements underneath will be made of more wood, including planters for trees on the floor.

### Giving destruction new life

The Beachie Creek Fire, first detected Aug. 16 in the Opal Creek Wilderness, spread rapidly due to a high wind event Sept. 7, growing to over 130,000 acres in one night.

The fire killed five people, ravaged 193,573 acres and destroyed about 500 homes.

When it tore through communities in the Santiam Canyon, Freres Lumber's Mass Ply mill and other manufacturing facilities in Lyons were in the evacuation areas.

"We had fires still going on our properties next to the mill site," said Tyler Freres, vice president of sales for the family-owned business.

The wood product manufacturing business was shut down for three weeks. Though its facilities were relatively unscathed, the private timber land the company owns around the Santiam Canyon was heavily impacted.

Freres said about 5,700 of the company's 17,000 privately-owned acres of timber were damaged in the Beachie Creek Fire.

But the flames moved so fast that when it killed the trees, the wood wasn't harmed structurally.

Since the wildfire, Freres Lumber has been salvaging wood from its private acreage and wildfire-damaged trees from other sources and turning them into usable products.

"So far, we have yet to see a real structural or even a visual aspect that's been affected by the fires for the wood that we're processing," Freres said. "Of the fiber that we're pulling in that salvage wood, it's all good usable fiber."

Freres said the company has already replanted more than 500,000 seedlings in the salvage logged areas.

A large part of the wood products being processed at Freres' Mass Ply Panel facility on the edge of Lyons has been going to Portland International Airport since April.

### Building a roof, then putting it in place

The new roof is going to be gigantic. It's being built 13 feet up on 23 acres of concrete poured specifically for the

construction on the northwest portion of the airfield. The entire roof will be constructed in pieces.

Over the span of three nights in the spring of 2022, each piece will be moved a few thousand feet to the terminal by a transporter designed to move sub-marines and installed 55 feet in the air at times there will be no one below.

"It really keeps the terminal operating," said Katrina Day, construction manager for contractor Hoffman Skanska, explaining that building the roof in place would have required the terminal to be shut down for safety.

Zip-O-Log Mills of Eugene is supplying the beams for the project and Freres is supplying the MPP panels, a structural veneer-based mass-timber product.

The Y-shaped steel supports for the roof at the terminal are being dug 160 feet into the ground, as opposed to the normal 90 feet, and the entire roof is designed to sway 24 inches in any direction in case of an earthquake.

"It's all being designed so that when, not if, but when we get the big Cascadia event, that this thing rides it out and this region still has an airport," said Brad Harrison, senior manager of construction service for the Port of Portland.

Freres said the family company will supply about 800,000 board feet of MPP for the roof, the equivalent of 79,000 cubic feet of wood or about 30 acres of mature timber.

Each panel is warped by carpenters onsite to fit the waves in the roof over the beams, but still fit precisely next to each other like a jigsaw puzzle.

The company started delivering panels in April and will continue multiple deliveries each week through June 2022. Much of the wood ceiling won't be visible during construction as it will be covered with acoustic panels.

Once the new wood roof is in place, the current one will be removed and more construction will take place below.

### Salvage logging a difficult proposition

Salvage logging after a wildfire is a contentious issue.

On public lands, it often draws a fight, such as when the Oregon Department of Forestry put forth in 2020 a controversial plan to log about 20% of the more than 15,000 acres of state-owned timber land burnt in the wildfires.

Environmental groups like Sierra Forest Legacy argue salvage logging increases fire risk, unnecessarily disrupts wildlife and can lead to increased erosion.

On private lands, the state requires notification, reforestation, wetland protections and that salvagers follow fire prevention and suppression methods.

Salvage logging allows private companies like Freres, which took an estimated \$24 million hit due to the wildfires, to recoup as much as possible.

All of the wood Freres is currently processing is salvaged.

"To me, it's really interesting and a somewhat complex concept because wildfire is devastating," Simonds said. "It's devastating to the people, the communities, the land owners and the forests."

"It's nice to have something to do on the back side because it does mean the landowners still have a way to benefit and find sustenance and survivability for the companies and families."

The Portland International Airport terminal will reopen by 2023, though further phases of construction will continue through 2025

The thousands of people each day who pass under it may not know the circumstances of the wood, but they will still be protected by it when the Oregon skies are pouring rain, producing something good from tragedy.

"That's the silver lining, when you get down to it," Freres said.

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