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Financial good times may be ending

State economists offer two possible scenarios: reduced economic growth or outright recession

By DIRK VANDERHART
Oregon Public Broadcasting

SALEM — Oregon state economists on Wednesday, Aug. 31, delivered their most serious warning in years: The state's surging revenue growth is about to end.

Even if the state and country don't experience a recession in the next year — a possibility economists say is extremely plausible — recent tax receipts described as "shocking," "unbelievable" and "stunning" are about to come back to earth, state economist Mark McMullen told lawmakers.

"Even if we don't go into a recession, unfortunately not all of this revenue boom is sustainable," McMullen said. "We are due for a hangover."

According to McMullen and another state economist, Josh Lehner, that hangover has not yet arrived.

In their quarterly presentation, the pair diverged from their typical practice of offering lawmakers only a "baseline" forecast that they feel is most likely to play out in coming years. On Aug. 31 they also delivered a picture of what a recession might look like. McMullen told lawmakers it's virtually a "coin flip" for which scenario comes to pass — and warned a recession, if it arrives, could be deeper than economists have supposed.

But in either scenario, the state's short-term revenue outlook is positive. Taxes on business income and gains realized in the stock market have not slowed, and personal income taxes are still strong.

Under the more

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UP IN FLAMES

Wallowa County residents urged to evacuate

Freezeout Road closed to allow fire resources to move into area to fight Double Creek Fire

By BILL BRADSHAW
Wallowa County Chieftain

IMNAHA — Residents of Freezeout Road south of Imnaha were urged to evacuate Friday, Sept. 2, because of danger from the Double Creek Fire, according to a notice texted by the Wallowa County Sheriff's Office.

The road closed at 9:14 a.m., according to a press release.

A 7:17 a.m. text read had been sent out urging residents to evacuate.

"There will be fire units moving in," the text read.

The road, also known as National Forest Road 4230, runs southeast from the Upper Imnaha Creek Road along Freezeout Creek.

The road was recommended for evacuation in a notice issued by the sheriff's office Sept. 1 and then reduced to the Level 2 "Get Set to Leave" later that day. Early Sept. 2 it was returned to the Level 3 "Evacuate Area."

This fire, first detected on Aug. 30 along Hat Point Road near Grizzly Ridge, was also likely sparked



A bulldozer prepares to offload on its way to battle the Double Creek Fire upriver from Imnaha on Thursday, Sept. 1, 2022.



Emilie Wood, left, and Megan Ross of the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest are tasked with ensuring nobody uses the road to Hat Point Summit on Thursday, Sept. 1, 2022. The road was closed at Imnaha because of trees felled by the Double Creek Fire.

by lightning. The blaze exploded overnight, going from 50 acres Aug. 31 to 1,500 acres

Sept. 1. As of early Sept. 2, the fire was still listed as 1,500 acres with zero

percent containment. Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Public Affairs Officer Matthew

Burks called the blaze an "active fire suppression incident" and noted that full suppression efforts are underway, including air tankers, helicopters, rappel crews and firefighters.

"It is growing and it'll probably grow today," Burkes noted of the fire during a Thursday, Sept. 1, interview. "But we're working with our partners to put that one out."

A briefing on the firefighting efforts is planned from 6-8 p.m. Sept. 2 at the Joseph Community Events Center.

Brian Anderson, district ranger for the Wallowa Mountains Office of the

See, *Evacuate/Page A3*

Wildfires bring some benefit to forests

Sturgill, Nebo fires help ecosystem while Double Creek Fire receives full suppression effort

By SHANNON GOLDEN
The Observer

LAGRANDE — Fire season is well underway, and as smoke-filled thunderhead clouds loom, residents in Northeastern Oregon may see cause for concern.

According to Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Public Affairs Officer Matthew Burks, portions of the region's forest fires are doing what they need to be doing.

"They're wildfires that are being used for resource benefit," Burks asserted. "They've started naturally and they're in an area that has an overabundance of trees, so we need them to help clean up the forest and put some fire breaks in."

Due to this year's long, wet spring and minimal fire activity



Smoke rises from the lightning-caused Nebo Fire, which was reported Thursday, Aug. 25, 2022, in the southeast part of the Eagle Cap Wilderness.

in the area, Burks said letting these fires burn will help prepare for the next hotter, drier season — and also create a more natural habitat. He emphasized that they are continuing to burn as expected.

Fire management

The Sturgill Fire, in the North Minam Drainage, is burning through mixed conifer forests.

This naturally occurring blaze, started by lightning on Monday, Aug. 22, around noon, covered around 4,815 acres as of midday Sept. 1.

The Nebo Fire, 21 miles southeast of Enterprise near Mount Nebo, is estimated to have started on Aug. 25 from lightning strikes earlier in the week. With a size estimated as 3,086 acres on Sept. 1, the fire

CLOSURES DUE TO NEBO AND STURGILL FIRES

- The Minam River Trail (1673) from the junction of Bear Mountain Trail (1655) heading south to the junction with the Rock Creek Trail (1905).
- The North Minam Trail (1675) from the junction of the Minam Trail (1673) and North Minam Trail (1675) to the junction with the Bowman Trail (1651).
- Green Lakes Trail (1666) from the junction of the North Minam Trail (1673) to the terminus of the trail at Green Lake.
- Tenderfoot Trail (1819) from the trailhead to the 1828 and 1812 trail junctions.
- Lick Creek Trail (1809) from the trailhead to the junction of the South Fork Imnaha Trail (1816).
- Forest Service Road 3900100 from the junction of 39 Road to Tenderfoot Trailhead.
- Forest Service Road 3925015 from the junction of Forest Service Road 3925 to Lick Creek Trailhead.
- Forest Service Road 3900200 from the junction of 39 Road to Forest Service Road 3925015.

has reached the Upper Lick Creek Drainage and is burning in subalpine fir and grass.

Burks noted that both the

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WEATHER Full forecast on the back of B section

Tonight 49 LOW Mainly clear

Sunday 89/51 Sunny, very warm

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