



Flames from the Mile Post 85 fire spread rapidly through grass west of The Dalles in the vicinity of Pinewood Mobile Manor on Old Highway 30 and Interstate 84 Wednesday, June 2. View is west of The Dalles from the freeway overpass. The freeway was shut down soon after this photograph was taken. Photo courtesy Gary Elkinton

FIRE Restrictions instituted

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the fire at full containment within a few days.

The Wasco County Sheriff's Office originally issued a Level 3 Evacuation (GO!) in the immediate area then reduced it to a Level 1 Evacuation (Get Ready!) in the evening. All evacuation levels were dropped.

Burn bans are already in effect for all counties in the Gorge, as of June 1, which is a month earlier than normal. July 1 is when such bans are typically put into place.

Extreme fire conditions

On June 5, due to extreme fire conditions, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has banned activities likely to start a fire on national wildlife

refuges in the Mid-Columbia River Fire Zone. This ban took effect June 5 and remains in effect until midnight, Sept. 30.

Included in the order are the Hanford Reach National Monument and Columbia, Cold Springs, Conboy Lake, McKay Creek, McNary, Toppenish and Umatilla National Wildlife Refuges. Use of any fire, including the use of charcoal briquettes and cooking stoves, is prohibited.

Also banned are smoking outside of an enclosed vehicle and operation of any motor without an approved and working spark arrester. Fireworks and campfires are banned year-round.

This ban comes almost a month earlier than normal due to the drought impacting Oregon and Washington.

With the exception of Conboy Lake, all of the refuges mentioned are already in severe to extreme drought.

Wildlife Service is asking for the public to take extra vigilance in preventing fires.

"The fire season is a full month ahead of where we would normally be," said Service Fire Management Officer John Janak. "The severe drought conditions have us very worried about catastrophic fires this summer and fall."

Wildlife Service urges the public to be especially careful when parking along roadsides with tall grass.

Parking warning

Many large fires on refuge lands are started by vehicles pulling to the side of the road, Wildlife Service noted. Dried grass, wheat stubble and weeds can come into contact with the vehicle's exhaust system, creating sparks. Dragging metal tow chains are also a hazard, according to forestry officials.

New shelter coming soon

Will serve victims of domestic violence

By Tamara Kaufman
For Washington Gorge Action Programs

Klickitat County will soon be home to a new shelter to support victims of domestic violence, thanks to efforts coordinated by Programs for Peaceful Living (PFPL) and Washington Gorge Action Programs (WAGAP). After a multi-year effort, WAGAP has closed on a three-bedroom home that will act as a haven for individuals and families who have been affected by domestic violence and need a transitional space to figure out their next steps.

Supporters are dubbing the new shelter "Gina's Place" for Rep. Gina Mosbrucker (R-District 14), who was pivotal in securing \$250,000 from Washington State's capital budget during the 2019-2020 session, part of the \$345,000 raised toward the effort. These funds made it

possible to secure the building, which came in for a total cost of just under \$280,000. The remaining funds will go towards remodeling, furnishing, supplying, and operating the shelter.

"We are just really excited! This is years and years in the making," said Leslie Naramore, WAGAP's executive director. "To bring this to life is thrilling! We are so thankful to Gina for working with us to make this possible. Without her assistance to work with the capital budget, I don't know if this would have happened."

"It is an honor and privilege to be available to those that need to break the silence," said Mosbrucker of the efforts to bring a domestic violence shelter to Klickitat County. "This will help to break that cycle of violence. You can't heal and break that cycle without a lock on the door. They need to get to a place of safety."

"Now that the purchase is complete, we are so excited to, finally, start the next phase," said PFPL Director Kirsten Poole. "Our team is jumping in by doing a deep cleaning of the building and

an inventory. We can then focus on what needs to be done to bring the place to code. We need to make sure the site and program will meet all of the WACs (Washington Administrative Codes)."

It has been several decades since a functioning space was last available for this purpose. Klickitat County is one of two counties in Washington State that currently does not have a facility. Poole said she hopes to have the site up and running by the end of summer this year. Until that time, they will continue to partner with other regional agencies for shelter services.

Programs for Peaceful Living serve all Klickitat County residents and their families with domestic violence prevention, sexual assault prevention, and general crime victim services. All services are free and confidential, and referrals are made for those who reside outside of the county.

If you are in crisis, call the 24/7 toll-free crisis line at 844-493-1709. For assistance or more information, call the Goldendale office at 509-773-6100 or the Bingen office at 509-493-2662.

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USDA to support economic development in National Scenic Areas impacted by wildfires

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development is making priority funding available to support economic development and create jobs in National Scenic Areas, located along waterways, that have been devastated by wildfires.

The funds may be used to establish business support centers; provide funds for job training and leadership development; or to support targeted technical assistance, training, feasibility studies, and other activities leading to the development or expansion of small and emerging private businesses with fewer than 50 employees and less than \$1 million in gross revenue, said a press release.

Rural Development is reserving \$2 million under the Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG) Program for eligible projects in rural communities located on a river or ocean coastline.

Priority is being given to National Scenic Areas impacted by wildfires.

National Scenic Areas are environmentally-protected, federally-designated locations that have outstanding natural and scenic value.

State and local government entities, nonprofits, and federally-recognized tribes are eligible to apply. Proposed projects must be consistent with any local, tribal, or area-wide community and

economic development strategic plans and support other economic development activities in the project area.

These grants are awarded on a competitive basis.


Applications must be received by July 6 at 4:30 p.m.

In Oregon, applications may be submitted electronically to or.rd.bp.apps@usda.gov or mailed to USDA Rural Development, ATTN: Faith Harris, 1220 S.W. Third Ave., Suite 1801, Portland, OR 97204.

Prior to developing an application, interested applicants are encouraged to contact Faith Harris, business and cooperative programs specialist, 503-414-3358, to discuss their project proposal.

Additional information is also available on page 27365 of the May 20 Federal Register.

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Robert Jamack
Where has the time gone?



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