

Oregon wildfire fighting costs hit \$340 million

Blazes burned more than 678,000 acres

By **PARIS ACHEN**
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Fighting Oregon wildfires this year so far has cost state, federal, local, tribal and private entities more than \$340 million and consumed 678,000 acres, state authorities said Monday.

All of that activity manifested into smoke-filled air and limited visibility for many Oregonians.

The "sheer volume of fires all at the same time and continuous days of growth up through Washington and Idaho" created the oppressive conditions, said Doug Grafe, fire protection division chief at the Oregon Department of Forestry.

More than 8,000 personnel from different agencies have been deployed to fight wildland fires across the state.



Oregon Department of Forestry
A firefighter working on wildfires in southern Oregon. Fighting wildfires in Oregon this season has cost \$340 million, state officials said Monday.

That's more than one-third of the personnel deployed to combat wildfires nationwide, Grafe said.

The most dangerous fires started in late July and early August. The region has been dry since mid-June, with no significant rainfall until Sunday. Tens of thousands of

lightning strikes contributed to the severity of the fire season.

Smoke had already captured the attention of most of the state, when the human-caused Eagle Creek Fire sparked this month in the state's scenic gem, the Columbia Gorge, trapped 150 hikers and threatened Portland's

water supply, the Bull Run Watershed.

Fire crews kept the fire from that crucial water supply and from the Multnomah Falls Lodge, where flames came within 40 feet of the historic structure.

"A lot of what this fire was doing was spotting out ahead

of itself within communities, and they were just having to go after it, and catch it," said Oregon Fire Marshal Jim Walker. "They did that hand-in-hand with all of the resources, partnering together."

Rain on Sunday evoked widespread excitement in the Gorge, where firefighters continued to battle flames visible from Interstate 84.

"I think we are in good place with the rain and the conditions," Grafe said.

Gov. Kate Brown deployed the Oregon National Guard in August to respond to several severe fires. National Guard helicopters assisted with the rescue of trapped hikers and poured 1.3 million gallons of water on burning land and structures. The Department of Forestry has released the helicopters after 45 days of duty.

The conditions on air personnel are as bad, if not worse, than combat, said Dave Stuckey, deputy director of the Oregon Military Department.

The state placed 950 National Guardsmen on state

active duty, a high for any year since Hurricane Katrina in 2005, when 1,979 Oregon National Guard personnel were deployed, Stuckey said.

Fire crews have suffered no fatalities, but there have been about 34 injuries among National Guard personnel and 23 among forestry personnel.

The governor's order to deploy the National Guard covered four fires: Eagle Creek, Nena Springs, Milli and Chetco Bar.

Those four fires alone threatened 19,978 residences and destroyed 10. Nearly 8,000 people were evacuated in those areas. The cost of fighting the fires was about \$15.3 million, said Oregon Fire Marshal Jim Walker.

Oregon is one of the few states with a wildfire insurance policy, but that will cover only 42,000 acres, or about 6 percent of the affected areas in the state, Walker said.

The Capital Bureau is a collaboration between EO Media Group and Pamplin Media Group.

Saving Multnomah Lodge: 'We didn't want Oregon to lose that'

By **JIM RYAN**
The Oregonian

PORTLAND — Rick Buck could feel the fire coming.

Winds swirled like little tornadoes just yards from the Multnomah Falls Lodge. The air alternated between hot and cold. Thick smoke boiled in, burning his eyes.

Buck, the proprietor of the historic 1925 building, felt helpless.

"I just said to myself, 'I'm out of here,'" he recalled.

Soon, flames ripped across the ridge at the top of the falls. They swept down the hillside and raced toward the squat stone structure with a wooden roof.

Trees fell. Temperatures surged. And firefighters had their marching orders: Protect the lodge.

It was an exhausting overnight firefight, but the building emerged unscathed — cedar shakes and all.

"Multnomah Lodge is the icon of Oregon," said Lance Lighty, a Eugene Springfield Fire battalion chief called in to help manage the blaze. "We didn't want Oregon to lose that. And we weren't going to let the fire win on this one."

The wildfire started Sept. 2 along the Eagle Creek Trail, but it took off two nights later, whipped by winds that pushed it hard and fast toward the falls, about 12 miles west in the gorge.

The Eagle Creek Fire now covers 48,387 acres and has prompted evacuations and the longest shutdown in recent memory of Interstate 84 between Hood River and Troutdale — an area often



Fire crews work to protect Multnomah Falls and the Multnomah Falls Lodge, which was built in 1925, from the Eagle Creek Fire near Troutdale.
Genna Martin/Seattle Post-Intelligencer

closed in spurts when winter storms hit.

Although most people have returned home and the freeway's westbound lanes opened Thursday, the fire continues to burn and is 32 percent contained.

The battle

Lighty had already had a wild Labor Day.

He had helped make the call that holiday Monday to shut down the interstate in both directions, working with the Oregon Department of Transportation. He had watched 30 mph-plus gusts shift and drive flames and smoke through the dense forest parched by a rainless summer.

Now the fire was making a beeline for Oregon's highest waterfall and its namesake lodge, among the state's most revered destinations and backdrops for countless family vacations. A top tourist attraction, Multnomah Falls gets an estimated 1 million to 1.5 million visitors a year.

Lighty and his colleagues knew they would need plenty of firefighters and a way to douse the lodge roof and the surrounding area from above.

The fire was traveling so fast over the steep slopes of the Columbia River Gorge that it was too late to try to remove brush, cut down trees and dig trenches to keep the flames away. Water was the only defense.

It was around 10 p.m. that night when Lighty and other fire managers called for a Portland ladder truck and four fire engines. They also commissioned five water tenders from fire departments in Forest Grove, Gaston, Tualatin Valley and Hillsboro.

The crews rushed to the gorge and set up at the base of the falls. That's where they stayed well into the next day.

The plan? Use the ladder truck as a sprinkler, wetting down the lodge's roof and everything within about 30 to 40 yards: a footpath, the lodge's back

patio, a 500-gallon propane tank, vegetation and other nearby structures.

Do the same with fire hoses. Draw water from a nearby creek and keep the tenders — or water tankers with pumps and hoses — as extra reservoirs.

Some crews began by helping lodge workers remove historic photographs, furniture, paintings, money and other valuables from the building and load them into vehicles. Some moved outdoor furniture and supplies inside. Other crews set up hoses and started

to spray down the roof and foliage.

By midnight, the flames had wrapped around the waterfall, lighting up the ridge like a glowing horseshoe with the 620-foot falls gushing through the middle. In the next several hours, the flames marched relentlessly toward the lodge and the firefighters kept the hoses turned on the line.

The blaze eventually surrounded the lodge on three sides. It burned down to the sprinkler perimeter by about 4 a.m. or 5 a.m.

The line held. But flames still burned on the hillside above, so firefighters kept pouring water on the periphery to stop hot debris from rolling downhill or embers from flying onto the roof.

By late that evening, the worst was over, yet firefighters would have to water down the lodge and surroundings through the following Thursday to make sure their handiwork endured as they dodged falling rocks and trees from the cliffs and hillside around the falls.

A fire engine remains at the scene just in case.

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TV LISTINGS

Evening listings
TUESDAY

TUESDAY EVENING													SEPTEMBER 19	
A	L	6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM	11:30	
2	KATU	(2) KATU News at 6 (N)		Jeopardy! (N)	Wheel Fortune (N)	The Middle	Fresh Off the Boat	Black-ish	Black-ish	Somewhere "One Must Die" (SF) (N)	KATU News (N)	(35) Jimmy Kimmel		
5	KOMO	(4) KOMO 4 News (N)		Wheel of Fortune	Jeopardy!	The Middle	Fresh Off the Boat	Black-ish	Black-ish	Somewhere "One Must Die" (SF) (N)	KOMO 4 News (N)	(35) Jimmy Kimmel		
6	KING	(5) NBC News (N)	KING 5 News (N)	KING 5 News (N)	Evening	America's Got Talent "Live Show Finale" (N)				Will and Grace (N)	KING 5 News (N)	(35) Tonight Show		
6	KOIN	(6) KOIN Local 6 (N)	Evening News (N)	Extra	Ent. Tonight	NCIS "Rendezvous"	Bull "Benevolent Deception"			NCIS: New Orleans "Poetic Justice"	KOIN 6 News (N)	(35) Colbert		
7	KIRO	(7) KIRO 7 News (N)	Evening News (N)	KIRO 7 News (N)	Ent. Tonight	NCIS "Rendezvous"	Bull "Benevolent Deception"			NCIS: New Orleans "Poetic Justice"	KIRO 7 News (N)	(35) Colbert		
8	KGW	(3) KGW News at 6:00 p.m. (N)		Live at 7 (N)	Inside Edition	America's Got Talent "Live Show Finale" (N)				Will and Grace (N)	KGW News (N)	(35) Tonight Show		
9	KRCW	(3) Modern Family	Modern Family	The Goldbergs	The Goldbergs	The Flash "Cause and Effect"	Legends of Tomorrow "Doomworld"			News at 10 (N)	Mom	Two and a Half		
10	KOPB	(10) Ask-Old House	Business (N)	PBS NewsHour (N)		Rare: Creatures of the Photo Ark	The Vietnam War "The River Styx (January 1964-December 1965)" (N)			Vietnam "Riding the Tiger (1961-1963)"				
12	KPTV	(12) 6 O'Clock News (N)		Family Feud	Family Feud	Lethal Weapon "Commencement"	The Mick	Brooklyn 99		10 O'Clock News (N)	News (N)	Page Six TV		
13	KPDx	(13) Mike & Molly	Mike & Molly	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	FOX 12's News (N)	9 O'Clock News (N)			American Dad!	The Game	The Game		
13	KCPQ	(13) Modern Family	Modern Family	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Lethal Weapon "Commencement"	The Mick	Brooklyn 99		Q13 News at 10 (N)	Q13 News (N)	The Simpsons		
20	TBS	(20) Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory		Conan (N)	Conan (N)			
29	KZJO	(29) Friends	Friends	The Goldbergs	The Goldbergs	Modern Family	Modern Family	Q13 News at 9 (N)		Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Two and a Half 2/2		
29	ESPN	(29) MLB Baseball (L)		SportsCenter (N)		SportsCenter (N)		SportsCenter With Scott Van Pelt (N)		SportsCenter (N)		Two and a Half		
30	ESPN2	(30) WNBA Basketball Playoffs (L)				Skateboarding Street League		The Fantasy Show		NFL Live	Jalen & Jacoby (N)	ESPN Films		
31	NICK	(31) The Loud House	Henry Danger	Henry Danger	The Thundermans	The Thundermans	NickyRickyDicky	Full House	Full House	Full House	Friends	Friends		
32	DISN	(32) Jessie	Bunk'd	K.C. Undercover	K.C. Undercover	Descendants 2 (2017, Fantasy)	Cameron Boyce, Sofia Carson, Dove Cameron.	(05) Liv Maddie	K.C. Undercover		Bizaardvark	Raven's Home		
34	FAM	(34) (4:45) Forrest Gump (94, Comedy/Drama)	Sally Field, Gary Sinise, Tom Hanks.	Project Almanac (14) Amy Landecker, Jonny Weston.	(4:45) Project Almanac (2014, Sci-Fi)	Amy Landecker, Jonny Weston.		(4:00) FXM Presents		The Longest Ride (2015, Romance)	Scott Eastwood, Alan Alda, Britt Robertson.			
36	LIFE	(36) Dance Moms		Dance Moms		Dance Moms: Dance and Chat		Dance Moms		(05) So Sharp	Dance Moms (/15) Dance Moms			
38	ROOT	(38) Mariners Access	MarinersPre-game	MLB Baseball Texas Rangers at Seattle Mariners Site: Safeco Field -- Seattle, Wash. (L)				MLB Whiparound (L)		Post-game	MLB Baseball Texas Rangers at Seattle Mariners			
39	FS1	(39) (5:00) FIFA Soccer International Friendly		Boxing Premier Champions Card TBA (L)						Speak for Yourself	Skip and Shannon: Undisputed			
43	SPIKE	(43) Ink Master "Grim Inker"		Ink Master "Pit Fall"		Ink Master "Sell Out"		Ink Master "Casting the First Stone"		Ink Master "Marathon to the Finale" (N)	Ink Master (N)	Tattoo Night.		
44	COM	(44) Futurama	Tosh.0	Tosh.0	Tosh.0	Tosh.0	Tosh.0	Tosh.0	Tosh.0	Tosh.0 (N)	Jim Jefferies (N)	The Daily Show (N)		
45	HIST	(45) America: The Story of the US		Forged in Fire		Forged in Fire: Cutting Deeper	Enhanced episodes of 'Forged in Fire.'				(05) Forged in Fire			
46	A&E	(46) Remini: Scientology		Remini: Scientology		Remini: Scientology (N)		Remini: Scientology (N)		The Murder of Laci Peterson "Reasonable Doubt?"	(35) L. Remini			
47	TLC	(47) The Little Couple "All Aboard!"		The Little Couple "Countdown to the New Season" (N)		Little "A Sheep Is Going to Eat Us!" (N)	(05) 7 Little Johnstons			(05) Little "A Sheep Is Going to Eat Us!"				
48	DISC	(48) I (Almost) Got Away With It		I (Almost) Got Away With It		I (Almost) Got Away With It		Justice "Bullet With My Name On It" (N)		Street Justice: The Bronx City Grit (N)	Street Justice: The Bronx City Grit			
49	NIGO	(49) Bomb Squad NYC "Line of Fire"		The State "Part One"		The State "Part Two"		The State "Part Three" (N)		The State "Part Four" (N)	The State "Part Three"			
50	TNT	(50) (5:30) *** The A-Team (2010, Action)	Bradley Cooper, Jessica Biel, Liam Neeson.	*** Olympus Has Fallen (2013) Morgan Freeman, Aaron Eckhart, Gerard Butler.		*** Con Air (1997, Action)	John Cusack, John Malkovich, Nicolas Cage.			(15) *** Django Unchained ('12) Christoph Waltz, Jamie Foxx.				
51	AMC	(51) (5:30) *** Predator 2 ('90, Sci-Fi)	Gary Busey, Maria Conchita Alonso, Danny Glover.			WWE Super Smackdown		Chopped		Chopped "Fried Chicken Time"	Chrisley Knows (N)	Modern Family		
52	USA	(52) Chrissy Knows	Chrissy Knows	Chrissy Knows	Chrissy Knows	Chopped		Chopped		Chopped "Comfort Zone" (N)	Chopped After (N)	Chopped After		
53	FOOD	(53) Chopped		Chopped		Chopped		Chopped		House Hunters (N)	House Hunters (N)	House Hunters		
54	HGTV	(54) Fixer Upper "Space in the Suburbs"		Fixer "Rustic Italian Dream Home"		Fixer "Bloopers, Outtakes, and More"		Fixer "A Veteran Home Makeover"		House Hunters (N)	House Hunters (N)	House Hunters		
55	FXX	(55) Men in Black 3 ('12) Will Smith.		*** Kingsman: The Secret Service (2014, Action)	Colin Firth, Samuel L. Jackson, Taron Egerton.			Anderson Cooper 360		Cult "Neighbors From Hell" (N)	Cult "Neighbors From Hell"			
57	CNN	(57) Anderson Cooper 360		CNN Tonight With Don Lemon		CNN Tonight With Don Lemon		Anderson Cooper 360		Anderson Cooper 360	CNN Tonight With Don Lemon			
58	FNC	(58) The Five		Hannity		Tucker Carlson Tonight		The Five		Hannity	Tucker Carlson Tonight			
61	CNBC	(61) Shark Tank		Filthy Rich Guide	Shark Tank			Shark Tank		Filthy Rich Guide	Shark Tank	Paid Program		
63	TRAV	(63) Watch What Happens Live		Below Deck "The 1 Percenters"		Below Deck		Below Deck (N)		A Night (SF) (N)	A Night With My	WatchWhat (N)		
64	TCM	(64) (5:00) Good Morning, Miss Dove		*** Love Is a Many Splendored Thing ('55) Jennifer Jones, William Holden.		*** The Man in the Grey Flannel Suit (1956, Drama)	Jennifer Jones, Fredric March, Gregory Peck.					Movie		
65	SYFY	(65) (4:30) Legion ('10)		*** The Green Hornet (2011, Action)	Jay Chou, Christoph Waltz, Seth Rogen.			Face Off: Game Face (N)		*** xXx (2002, Action)	Samuel L. Jackson, Marton Csokas, Vin Diesel.			
68	RFD	(68) (5:30) Cattlemen	Chasing-Madison	Downunder Horseman.		Chris Cox	Rural Eve. News	Ag PhD	Cattlemen to Cattlemen	Chasing-Madison	Product Showcase			