

Fire near Sisters 30 percent contained

By **ANDREW SELSKY**
Associated Press

BEND — Firefighters trying to put out an early-season wildfire in central Oregon were assisted by rain showers and low winds on Thursday, and a plane used in the battle blew a tire while landing, causing the regional airport to temporarily close.

Disruptions at the Redmond airport were minimal while the plane was removed from the runway, said airport operations manager Winton Platt. He said no one was injured in the incident.

An airtanker was being used

to drop fire retardant to prevent afternoon winds from pushing the flames past containment lines toward homes on the north end of the 1,930-acre fire, the Oregon Department of Forestry said on its Facebook page. Light rain produced higher humidity and favorable conditions for firefighters, who were using bulldozers and hand tools to fight the so-called Akawana fire north of Sisters and near Lake Billy Chinook, the department said.

Authorities said the blaze was 30 percent contained two days after it started.

About 900 homes are still

considered threatened and residents must be prepared to leave at a moment's notice, the forestry department said.

"The winds here have subsided quite a bit," department spokesman Tom Fields said Thursday morning over the phone from a staging area in Sisters. "Yesterday, winds were greater than 20 miles per hour."

Some 400 firefighters and support staff were expected to work on the fire, using bulldozers and backed by a helicopter dropping water on the flames, Fields said.

Gov. Kate Brown on Wednesday authorized firefighters and equipment from around Oregon to fight

the wildfire.

Fields said that because of cooler conditions and the snow-pack, the 2016 fire season had been expected to start later.

"This is the first major fire of the season," Fields said. "It is much earlier than expected."

Lightning sparked the blaze Tuesday and it was spread by strong winds. Downed trees, some killed by beetles, added fuel to the fire.

The Department of Environmental Quality urged residents in central and southern Oregon to limit their exposure to smoke by keeping windows and doors closed.

Refuge occupier pleads guilty to conspiracy

By **STEVEN DUBOIS**
Associated Press

PORTLAND — Eric Lee Flores, one of the youngest people to take part in the occupation of an Oregon bird sanctuary, accepted a plea deal Thursday that might keep him out of federal prison.

Flores, 22, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to impede officers of the United States. In exchange, prosecutors dropped a charge of firearms possession in a federal facility.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Craig Gabriel said he will recommend

six months of home detention when Flores is sentenced Dec. 8. The charge carries a maximum penalty of six years in prison, but Flores is a first-time felon and he gets points for the early resolution of his case.

A member of the Tulalip Tribes north of Seattle, Flores admitted to U.S. District Court Judge Anna J. Brown that he traveled to Oregon with seven firearms — a mixture of handguns and rifles — and performed guard duty during the Ammon Bundy-led takeover of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge.

He acknowledged his actions intimidated Interior Department employees, preventing them from doing their jobs.

"I thought I was doing the right thing," Flores told the judge when asked why he participated. "I thought it was public land."

The takeover and ensuing standoff began Jan. 2, lasted nearly six weeks and included the fatal shooting by police of rancher and occupation spokesman Robert "LaVoy" Finicum.

Flores left after Finicum's Jan. 26 death and was arrested in Washington when the occupation

fizzled out a couple weeks later.

The occupiers wanted the federal government to relinquish public lands and free Dwight and Steven Hammond, two Oregon ranchers imprisoned for setting fires. Neither demand was met.

Flores is the second of the 26 defendants indicted on the conspiracy charge to accept a plea deal. A September trial has been scheduled for the remaining 24 defendants, including Ammon and Ryan Bundy.

A status hearing on the complex case has been set for June 15.

WORLD BRIEFLY

With careful staging, Obama backs Clinton, nudges Sanders

WASHINGTON (AP) — Testifying to Hillary Clinton's grit and experience, President Barack Obama endorsed his former secretary of state's bid to succeed him on Thursday and urged Democrats to line up behind her. It was all part of a carefully orchestrated pressure campaign aimed at easing Clinton rival Bernie Sanders toward the exit and turning fully to the fight against Republican Donald Trump.

Obama's long-expected endorsement, delivered via an online video, included a forceful call for unity and for "embracing" Sanders' economic message, which has fired up much of the liberal wing of his party. Obama

sought to reassure Democrats that Clinton shares their values and is ready for the job.

"Look, I know how hard this job can be. That's why I know Hillary will be so good at it," Obama said. "I have seen her judgment. I have seen her toughness. I've seen her commitment to our values."

Obama's testimonial came less than an hour after the president met privately with Sanders at the White House to discuss the future of the senator's "political revolution" — one that will not include him taking up residence at the White House. Sanders emerged from the meeting subdued and indicated he had gotten the message.

Although he stopped short of endorsing Clinton, the Vermont senator told reporters he planned to press for his "issues" — rather than victory — at the party's July

convention and would meet with Clinton "in the near future" to discuss ways to defeat Trump.

Official: U.S. moving to expand airstrikes in Afghanistan

WASHINGTON (AP) — After months of debate, the U.S. is close to a decision to expand the military's authority to conduct airstrikes against the Taliban as the violence in Afghanistan escalates, a senior U.S. defense official said Thursday.

The official said a final decision has not been made, but the discussions are in their final stages. There is a broad desire across the Obama administration to give the military greater ability to help the Afghans fight and win the war. The official said the U.S.

is likely to expand the authority of U.S. commanders to strike the Taliban and do whatever else is necessary with the forces they have to support the Afghan operations.

The 9,800 U.S. troops still in Afghanistan, however, would not be involved in direct combat.

The official was not authorized to talk publicly about the discussions so spoke on condition of anonymity.

The expected decision comes as the Afghans struggle with a resurgent Taliban, particularly in the south. But it is fraught with political sensitivities because President Barack Obama had made clear his commitment to get U.S. forces out of Afghanistan. That effort, however, has been stalled by the slow pace of the development of the Afghan military and the resilience of the Taliban.

TRAINS: 161st anniversary of U.S. treaty with the Yakamas

Continued from 1A

general council, rang a bell before leading the group in what he called a "messenger song," which the tribe used to honor a small bird whose arrival signified the return of the Columbia River each year.

"This is his song that we use," Washines said. "It's a messenger song and I hope that from this day the message gets stronger. This is for the land, the water, the children."

The tribal leaders said they were especially sad to be gathering to discuss the derailment on the 161st anniversary of the U.S. government's treaty with the Yakamas, an event that was to be marked with a weekend of celebrations including a parade and powwow. The pollution caused by oil spills threatens the fishing rights reserved in the treaty, the tribe said.

Among the two dozen tribal members who attended were leaders of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation in Oregon and the Lummi Nation in Washington state.

"We are farmers of the river, farmers of the sea, farmers of the land, and we have been since time immemorial," said Jay Julius, a member of the Lummi tribal council. "The fish always returned because we gave them great respect. Where are we at today?"

An organization representing 8,000 union firefighters in Washington on Wednesday asked Gov. Jay Inslee to urge federal regulators to halt oil trains through the state until there's a full investigation into the cause of the Oregon derailment.

"What happened in Mosier could have just as easily happened in a population center like Spokane or Seattle, resulting in even greater tragedy," Dennis Lawson, president of the Washington State Council of Fire Fighters wrote in a letter.

Corrections

The *East Oregonian* works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

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AccuWeather.com Forecast

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Variable clouds, showers; cooler	Clouds and sunshine	Mostly sunny and pleasant	Partly sunny and pleasant	Intervals of clouds and sunshine

PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST

67°	47°	70°	45°	77°	50°	75°	47°	68°	46°
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HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST

73°	49°	74°	45°	81°	52°	78°	52°	72°	46°
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REGIONAL CITIES

	Today	Sat.
Astoria	61 49 t	62 49 sh
Baker City	59 38 sh	63 33 pc
Bend	61 34 c	61 34 pc
Brookings	60 47 c	65 48 pc
Burns	65 34 c	64 30 s
Enterprise	55 38 sh	60 38 pc
Eugene	66 46 c	69 43 pc
Heppner	63 42 sh	67 43 pc
Hermiston	73 49 sh	74 45 pc
John Day	60 42 sh	65 41 pc
Klamath Falls	62 32 c	67 35 s
La Grande	60 40 sh	64 39 pc
Meacham	55 38 sh	61 33 pc
Medford	71 45 c	75 46 pc
Newport	57 47 c	59 45 pc
North Bend	62 49 sh	63 49 pc
Ontario	79 53 pc	75 46 pc
Pasco	73 49 sh	75 46 pc
Pendleton	67 47 sh	70 45 pc
Portland	65 52 t	65 50 sh
Redmond	63 35 c	64 34 pc
Salem	64 50 t	67 47 pc
Spokane	58 44 sh	64 44 t
Ukiah	57 37 sh	60 35 pc
Vancouver	63 50 t	63 48 sh
Walla Walla	66 49 sh	71 48 pc
Yakima	72 44 sh	72 44 pc

ALMANAC

PENDLETON
through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	77°	54°
Normals	76°	52°
Records	103° (1918)	39° (1999)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.09"
Month to date 0.10"
Normal month to date 0.50"
Year to date 5.69"
Last year to date 4.99"
Normal year to date 7.05"

HERMISTON
through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	80°	56°
Normals	78°	52°
Records	98° (2015)	41° (1985)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.05"
Month to date 0.08"
Normal month to date 0.23"
Year to date 4.31"
Last year to date 3.14"
Normal year to date 5.37"

SUN AND MOON
Sunrise today 5:06 a.m.
Sunset tonight 8:44 p.m.
Moonrise today 11:15 a.m.
Moonset today 12:17 a.m.

	First	Full	Last	New
	June 12	June 20	June 27	July 4

REGIONAL FORECAST

Coastal Oregon: Variable cloudiness today with a couple of showers. A passing shower tonight.

Eastern and Central Oregon: Intervals of clouds and sunshine today; a couple of showers and a thunderstorm.

Western Washington: Variable clouds today with showers. A passing shower tonight.

Eastern Washington: A couple of showers and a thunderstorm today, except dry in central sections.

Cascades: Variable cloudiness today with a couple of showers; cooler in the south.

Northern California: Partly sunny today. Clear tonight. Partly sunny tomorrow.

REGIONAL CITIES

	Today	Sat.
Astoria	61 49 t	62 49 sh
Baker City	59 38 sh	63 33 pc
Bend	61 34 c	61 34 pc
Brookings	60 47 c	65 48 pc
Burns	65 34 c	64 30 s
Enterprise	55 38 sh	60 38 pc
Eugene	66 46 c	69 43 pc
Heppner	63 42 sh	67 43 pc
Hermiston	73 49 sh	74 45 pc
John Day	60 42 sh	65 41 pc
Klamath Falls	62 32 c	67 35 s
La Grande	60 40 sh	64 39 pc
Meacham	55 38 sh	61 33 pc
Medford	71 45 c	75 46 pc
Newport	57 47 c	59 45 pc
North Bend	62 49 sh	63 49 pc
Ontario	79 53 pc	75 46 pc
Pasco	73 49 sh	75 46 pc
Pendleton	67 47 sh	70 45 pc
Portland	65 52 t	65 50 sh
Redmond	63 35 c	64 34 pc
Salem	64 50 t	67 47 pc
Spokane	58 44 sh	64 44 t
Ukiah	57 37 sh	60 35 pc
Vancouver	63 50 t	63 48 sh
Walla Walla	66 49 sh	71 48 pc
Yakima	72 44 sh	72 44 pc

WORLD CITIES

	Today	Sat.
Beijing	92 66 t	88 62 pc
Hong Kong	90 81 t	90 83 t
Jerusalem	75 58 s	77 62 s
London	70 57 pc	66 55 sh
Mexico City	76 57 t	72 56 t
Moscow	63 47 pc	59 49 sh
Paris	72 58 pc	68 56 t
Rome	78 63 t	78 65 pc
Seoul	85 68 pc	82 65 pc
Sydney	68 50 s	67 51 s
Tokyo	80 67 pc	80 68 pc

WINDS

(in mph)	Today	Saturday
Boardman	WSW 8-16	WSW 8-16
Pendleton	WSW 6-12	WSW 8-16

UV INDEX TODAY

1 2 4 5 4 1

8 a.m. 10 a.m. Noon 2 p.m. 4 p.m. 6 p.m.
0-2, Low 3-5, Moderate 6-7, High; 8-10, Very High; 11+, Extreme

The higher the AccuWeather.com UV Index™ number, the greater the need for eye and skin protection.

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NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.

National Summary: While the Northeast will stay cool today, heat will hold and expand in the Central states. Storms will rim the heat in the Midwest. Showers will cool the Northwest. The cool air will take aim at the Southwest.

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 106° in Needles, Calif. **Low** 27° in Spincich Lake, Mich.

NATIONAL CITIES

	Today	Sat.
Albuquerque	95 68 pc	91 64 t
Atlanta	92 72 s	94 74 s
Atlantic City	75 61 s	79 72 c
Baltimore	81 62 s	90 72 t
Birmingham	89 61 pc	82 56 pc
Boise	82 52 pc	72 48 pc
Boston	68 54 pc	74 62 s
Charleston, SC	90 72 s	90 73 s
Charleston, WV	84 65 pc	94 68 pc
Chicago	92 72 t	94 62 t
Cleveland	82 69 s	92 64 t
Dallas	94 75 pc	91 76 s
Denver	92 63 t	91 62 pc
Detroit	81 68 s	93 64 t
El Paso	99 76 pc	95 73 t
Fairbanks	71 52 pc	69 50 c
Fargo	92 64 t	86 63 s
Honolulu	83 72 t	83 74 pc
Houston	88 72 t	88 73 t
Indianapolis	88 69 pc	92 72 pc
Jacksonville	89 70 t	90 69 pc
Kansas City	90 72 s	93 73 s
Las Vegas	101 78 s	98 74 pc
Little Rock	93 72 s	95 74 pc
Los Angeles	76 62 pc	74 60 pc
Louisville	92 69 pc	94 72 pc
Memphis	94 73 s	95 75 s
Miami	88 76 t	89 76 t
Millwaukee	86 70 t	91 59 t
Minneapolis	94 74 t	92 67 s
Nashville	95 67 s	98 70 s
New Orleans	91 77 t	89 76 t
New York City	77 59 s	78 68 t
Oklahoma City	91 71 pc	91 72 pc
Omaha	97 74 s	98 73 t
Philadelphia	79 58 s	87 73 t
Phoenix	101 81 pc	104 78 t
Portland, ME	66 49 pc	70 55 s
Providence	72 52 pc	75 61 pc
Raleigh	85 67 s	95 73 pc
Rapid City	91 61 pc	97 62 pc
Reno	81 51 pc	78 52 pc
Sacramento	95 54 pc	90 59 s
St. Louis	85 73 s	96 77 s
Salt Lake City	97 70 pc	81 59 t
San Diego	70 64 pc	70 65 pc
San Francisco	69 53 pc	77 55 pc
Seattle	64 51 t	63 52 pc
Tucson	95 74 t	97 73 t
Washington, DC	81 67 s	91 75 t
Wichita	92 71 s	93 73 s