

# Dozens of hikers rescued amid wildfires

By CONRAD WILSON  
Oregon Public Broadcasting

Cascade Locks remained eerily quiet Monday morning.

No gas. No food. Businesses along the main drag were either closed or forced to evacuate.

The perpetual scent of fire, the sun's rays muted by smoke, and the occasional drizzle of ash greeted visitors to the town as the Eagle Creek Fire continued to burn about a mile away, threatening hundreds of homes and other structures.

As of Monday morning, the human-caused wildfire was about 3,200 acres, according to the Oregon Department of Forestry. That marks a small increase from what officials reported Sunday.

"The crews were on it all last night," said Ashley Lertora, a spokeswoman with ODF. "We have a lot of structure protection in place."

Among the firefighters in that operation were seven from Umatilla County Fire District 1, four from Boardman Rural Fire Protection District and crews from Umatilla and La Grande's fire departments.

The smoke has mostly prevented fire officials from using air support, save for a few times Sunday afternoon when helicopters from the Washington Department of Natural Resource were able to dump water on the fire.

By midday Monday, planes could be seen dropping water again.

On Sunday, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown invoked the Conflagration Act, which allows the State Fire Marshal to dispatch equipment and firefighters from around the state.

"We do expect a little bit of growth today on the fire, because of the extreme fire danger weather that we have going on right now," Lertora said.

The Eagle Creek Fire started around 4 p.m. Saturday by someone misusing fireworks, Oregon State Police confirm Monday. Authorities said they have identified a suspect.



Mark Graves/The Oregonian via AP

**Families reunite after campers were evacuated from a forest fire in the Eagle Creek area of the Columbia River Gorge Sunday, Sept. 3, 2017. Two busloads of hikers in Oregon were reunited with their friends and family Sunday morning after they were forced to spend the night in the mountains east of Portland when a wildfire closed their trail and they were trapped between two blazes.**



Mark Graves/The Oregonian via AP

**Fire burns in the Eagle Creek area of Columbia River Gorge, Saturday.**

The fire forced 153 hikers along the popular Eagle Creek hiking trail to spend Saturday night huddled together in the woods. All were safely evacuated Sunday.

While Interstate 84 remains open, Lertora said the Oregon Department of Transportation has a plan to close the highway, should the smoke get worse.

**An eerie stillness in town**  
As Monday morning wore on, the holiday weekend traffic in Cascade Locks picked up.

But as visitors stopped through, they found little open, on what is typically a busy weekend for this economically depressed Columbia River Gorge

community. Rudy, who declined to give his last name, runs Joe Fish. He's with the Yakama Nation. They sell smoked fish, salmon and steelhead.

"This is normally the biggest day of the season for us, we tend to make the most money this weekend," Rudy said. "Town's deserted. It wouldn't be right for us to sell. We don't want to put people in danger."

Understandably, the fire is causing anxiety for nearby residents. As of Monday morning, 283 homes and other structures and 15 businesses on the south side of Cascade Locks were under mandatory evacuation. The Bonneville Dam, which provides power to the City

of Portland and surrounding areas, is under a Level 1, or "get ready," evacuation notice.

Casey Bennett said he watched the flames Sunday night pour down the ridge of the gorge, like flowing lava.

"We already decided if we lose power, we're loading our cars," Bennett said. "If it hits the freeway, which is at the end of my street, we're going to load up and leave. We've got a bunch of dogs and cats and ducks, so I'll have to put ducks in the trunk of my car."

Long distance hikers were also affected by the fire.

Ben Connelly, from Maine, and Jess Dustow, from Sydney, Australia, began hiking the Pacific Crest Trail four months ago, starting on the U.S.-Mexico border.

Connelly said the fires in Oregon have prevented them from hiking about half the trail in Oregon.

"I'd say we probably skipped somewhere in the 200-mile range because of fires," Connelly said.

"Logistically, it's been really tough," Dustow adds. "Some of us didn't budget for this either, having to hop off trails and stay in hotels."

*The East Oregonian contributed to this report.*

# WEATHER: Chetco Bar Fire is the state's largest at 142,857 acres

Continued from 1A

2016 — remains 4.8 inches above average, thanks to an exceptionally wet spring and winter.

Conditions were similar for August in Hermiston, where just .05 inches of rain fell during the entire month. That's about .15 inches below average. In addition, Hermiston saw eight days of triple-digit heat, including four straight days of record highs from Aug. 9-12, when each day registered 101 degrees.

Looking ahead to September, the forecast does not promise much in terms of immediate relief. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Climate Prediction Center is calling for more above-average temperatures and near-average rainfall for the region. Normal highs at the Pendleton airport range from 83 degrees at the beginning of September to 72 degrees by month's end, while the 30-year average for rainfall is about .57 inches.

Temperatures are expected to reach 96 degrees Tuesday and 97 degrees Wednesday, before cooling down to around 90 degrees Thursday.

Smoky skies have also returned to Eastern Oregon as wildfires continue to swell across the West. Ann Adams, assistant meteorologist with the National Weather Service, said the haze is blowing in from all different directions.

"It's coming from all over," Adams said. "We're surrounded."

Along the Columbia River Gorge, firefighters are scrambling to protect the town of Cascade Locks after 3,200-acre fire erupted Saturday near Eagle Creek. Officials say the blaze was likely started by fireworks in

the popular recreation area.

Closer to home, the Boulder Creek fire on the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest has consumed at least four acres, eight miles northwest of Halfway near the Summit Point fire lookout tower. The fire was sparked Aug. 31 by lightning, and prompted the closure of Forest Road 7715, Trail 1885 and the McBride Campground, where firefighters have set up camp.

Other large fires burning in Oregon include:

- **Chetco Bar Fire** — Oregon's largest blaze at 142,857 acres. Located five miles northeast of Brookings, the fire started July 12 and is just 10 percent contained.

- **Umpqua North Complex** — Consists of 15 fires totaling 28,344 acres on the Umpqua National Forest, about 50 miles east of Roseburg. All together, the complex is 23 percent contained.

- **Miller Complex** — Located 17 miles east of Cave Junction, the complex now spans 17,965 acres and is 35 percent contained.

Air quality was listed Monday morning as moderate for Pendleton and La Grande, and unhealthy farther down the Columbia River Gorge in The Dalles. The National Weather Service and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality will discuss Tuesday whether to implement an air quality alert in Umatilla and Morrow counties. DEQ was closed Monday for Labor Day.

An air quality alert is in effect through noon Wednesday for most of southeast and south central Washington, including the Tri-Cities, Walla Walla, Yakima and Goldendale.

Contact George Plaven at [gplaven@eastoregonian.com](mailto:gplaven@eastoregonian.com) or 541-966-0825.

## 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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Production Manager: Mike Jensen  
541-215-0824 • [mjensen@eastoregonian.com](mailto:mjensen@eastoregonian.com)

## AccuWeather.com Forecast

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>HOT</b>	<b>HOT</b>			
Very hot	Mostly sunny and very hot	A t-storm in spots in the p.m.	Mostly sunny, a t-storm in spots	Mostly sunny and nice
<b>PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST</b>				
96° 63°	98° 67°	91° 67°	84° 63°	82° 55°
<b>HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST</b>				
98° 58°	100° 67°	93° 68°	88° 64°	85° 55°

### ALMANAC

**PENDLETON**  
through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	91°	63°
Normals	82°	53°
Records	100° (1934)	32° (1892)

**PRECIPITATION**  
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"  
Month to date 0.00"  
Normal month to date 0.06"  
Year to date 11.37"  
Last year to date 7.36"  
Normal year to date 8.44"

**HERMISTON**  
through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	90°	56°
Normals	83°	52°
Records	102° (1934)	38° (1929)

**PRECIPITATION**  
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"  
Month to date 0.00"  
Normal month to date 0.04"  
Year to date 6.65"  
Last year to date 5.04"  
Normal year to date 6.16"

### SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	6:21 a.m.
Sunset tonight	7:25 p.m.
Moonrise today	7:24 p.m.
Moonset today	5:33 a.m.

Full

Last

New

First

Sep 5   Sep 12   Sep 19   Sep 27

### REGIONAL FORECAST

**Coastal Oregon:** Hazy sun today; cooler in the south.

**Eastern and Central Oregon:** Hazy sunshine and very hot today.

**Western Washington:** Hazy sunshine today; smoky. Mainly clear tonight, except mostly cloudy at the coast.

**Eastern Washington:** Hazy sun today; smoke from area fires will lead to poor air quality.

**Cascades:** Hot and smoky today with hazy sun. Partly cloudy tonight.

**Northern California:** Some sun today; hot in central parts.

### REGIONAL CITIES

	Today			Wed.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	77	57	pc	72	57	s
Baker City	98	52	pc	100	54	s
Bend	95	58	pc	91	58	pc
Brookings	72	61	pc	69	59	pc
Burns	99	52	s	98	54	s
Enterprise	96	57	pc	97	58	pc
Eugene	90	59	pc	84	58	pc
Heppner	93	61	pc	96	66	s
Hermiston	98	58	pc	100	67	pc
John Day	101	62	pc	101	62	s
Klamath Falls	95	54	pc	84	52	pc
La Grande	96	54	pc	98	54	s
Meacham	95	50	pc	97	52	s
Medford	99	66	pc	91	62	pc
Newport	68	57	pc	68	55	s
North Bend	70	58	pc	70	56	pc
Ontario	98	58	pc	99	61	s
Pasco	98	57	pc	98	58	pc
Pendleton	96	63	pc	98	67	s
Portland	98	66	pc	86	65	s
Redmond	97	52	pc	93	54	pc
Salem	98	63	pc	86	62	s
Spokane	91	62	pc	96	65	pc
Ukiah	97	55	pc	97	55	s
Vancouver	98	64	pc	85	65	s
Walla Walla	97	67	pc	98	70	pc
Yakima	98	61	pc	100	63	pc

### WORLD CITIES

	Today			Wed.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	87	63	c	89	61	s
Hong Kong	89	79	c	92	80	pc
Jerusalem	87	68	s	83	64	s
London	68	52	pc	65	51	pc
Mexico City	71	58	t	70	57	t
Moscow	54	50	r	62	52	sh
Paris	72	55	pc	66	54	c
Rome	79	60	s	79	66	pc
Seoul	80	65	pc	75	65	r
Sydney	66	51	s	66	51	s
Tokyo	82	72	c	80	72	r

### WINDS

(in mph)	Today	Wednesday
Boardman	NNE 4-8	NNW 4-8
Pendleton	NNW 6-12	NW 6-12

### UV INDEX TODAY

1   3   5   5   3   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:** Rain and storms will erupt along a push of fall-like air from Maine to Tennessee and Texas today. Showers will cool the Great Lakes, as storms dot Florida and the Southwest. Heat will persist in the West.

**Yesterday's National Extremes:** (for the 48 contiguous states)  
High 106° in Lemoore, Calif.   Low 30° in Walden, Colo.

### NATIONAL CITIES

	Today			Wed.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Albuquerque	88	62	pc	88	63	pc
Atlanta	86	66	pc	74	56	t
Atlanta City	83	70	s	74	61	r
Baltimore	86	65	pc	86	56	r
Billings	76	47	s	82	52	s
Birmingham	85	63	t	77	54	sh
Boise	98	65	pc	98	67	s
Boston	85	66	s	72	62	r
Charleston, SC	89	74	t	88	68	t
Charleston, WV	74	59	r	71	51	c
Chicago	70	49	pc	66	51	pc
Cleveland	75	54	pc	69	52	pc
Dallas	94	67	pc	85	62	s
Denver	75	50	pc	82	54	s
Detroit	72	50	pc	67	50	pc
El Paso	93	67	s	91	65	s
Fairbanks	62	52	r	66	44	r
Fargo	67	42	pc	68	47	pc
Honolulu	86	71	pc	87	74	pc
Houston	92	73	pc	86	63	pc
Indianapolis	76	51	pc	68	51	pc
Jacksonville	89	73	t	87	71	t
Kansas City	74	49	pc	71	49	s
Las Vegas	104	81	pc	100	79	pc
Little Rock	83	60	t	77	55	s
Los Angeles	84	68	pc	84	66	pc
Louisville	77	55	c	71	51	pc
Memphis	80	60	t	76	54	pc
Miami	91	80	t	92	79	t
Millwaukee	69	49	pc	65	52	pc
Minneapolis	64	50	pc	66	51	pc
Nashville	78	56	t	75	52	pc
New Orleans	89	74	t	84	68	t
New York City	86					