Type 2 Interagency Management Team to take command of HK Complex

Two new fires were discovered Tuesday within boundary of HK Complex

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Firefighters have made progress on the majority of the wildfires caused by recent thunderstorms. Concentrated lightning activity occurred across portions of the National Forest on Tuesday night.

New smoke reports are anticipated throughout the next few days as the weather conditions remain hot and dry.

Two new fires were discovered Tuesday within the boundary of the HK Complex, which consists of 13 lightning fires burning on the Heppner Ranger District near the Alder Creek Skookum Trailhead, approximately 15 miles north of Monument. The total acreage of all fires within the HK Complex is now estimated at 1,500 acres and the fires are burning in grass, brush and timber. The largest of the fires within the complex is estimated at 125 acres. Fire behavior on Tuesday consisted of torching, spotting and active running. Hot and dry conditions, as well as strong winds, contributed to fire's rapid growth.

A local Type 3 incident management team out of John Day took command of the HK Complex at 6 p.m. Tuesday. However, due to the increased fire activity, a Type 2 Incident Management Team has been ordered and will in-brief at the Heppner Ranger District office at 4 p.m. Wednesday. The Type 2 Incident Management Team will take command of the fire at 6 a.m. Thursday.

A large area, road and trail closure has been implemented on the HK Complex.

Firefighters will continue to complete direct line construction on Wednesday, where terrain and fuels allow for crews to safely engage, while utilizing aircraft to slow fire spread and cool hotspots within the fire perimeter. Approximately 300 fire personnel, including some local resources from Oregon Department of Forestry, are currently assigned to the fire.

The Rocky Flats Fire still remains at 49 acres and 100% lined. The fire is also located on the Heppner Ranger District and is approximately 13 miles northeast of Spray. Resources on scene include one crew and two engines. Suppression strategy is to continue to improve containment lines.

Umatilla National Forest Photo

The HK Complex Fire, seen from Madison Butte, consists of 13 lightning fires burning on the Heppner Ranger District near the Alder Creek Skookum Trailhead, approximately 15 miles north of Monument.

HELICOPTER HELPS WITH GRANITE GULCH FIRE

BAKER CITY — Forest Service officials decided to have a helicopter dump water on part of a fire in the Eagle Cap Wilderness Monday and Tuesday, but their goal is to limit its growth rather than put it out.

Choppers doused flames on the western and southern edges of the Granite Gulch Fire, which was sparked by lightning on July 14 near the center of the 365,000-acre Eagle Cap Wilderness, Oregon's largest.

Under a policy that's been in effect for more than 25 years for the Eagle Cap, Forest Service officials decided to manage, rather than fight, the fire, which has burned an estimated 1,000 acres.

Nathan Goodrich, fire management officer for the Wallowa Fire Zone, said the fire has had beneficial effects, including burning fuel on the ground and creating a mosaic pattern of burned and unburned forest that replicates what fires have historically done in the Wallowa Mountains.

"So far I am pleased with the effects of this fire," said Goodrich, who has monitored several lightning fires in the wilderness over the past 12 years.

According to a press release from the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Tuesday, the purpose of the helicopter water drops was to prevent the fire from crossing the Minam River and burning downstream to the west.

The fire, which started in Granite Gulch, has burned over a ridge to the east into the No Name Creek drainage. The fire has not crossed the Minam River.

According to the Wallowa-Whitman, helicopters could drop water again, and ground crews could be called in if the fire crosses the Minam River.

Although the fire remains about 7 miles from the nearest boundary of the wilderness, it could produce smoke plumes visible from the Baker and Grande Ronde valleys on hot, dry days for the next several weeks.

— Jayson Jacoby, EO Media Group

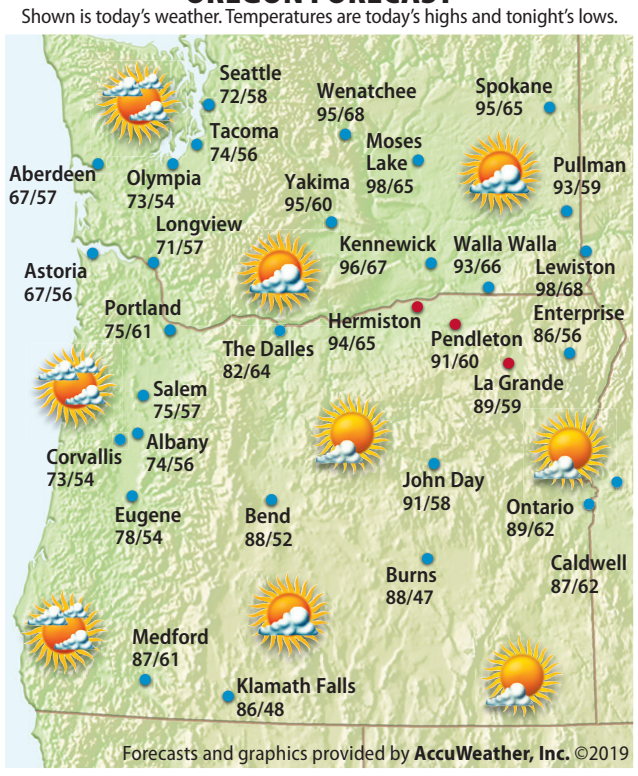
Forecast for Pendleton Area

AccuWeather DOWNLOAD THE FREE APP

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly sunny	Pleasant with some sun	An afternoon shower in places	An a.m. shower; clouds and sun	Sunny, pleasant and warmer
PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
91° 60°	89° 58°	77° 59°	77° 53°	84° 58°
HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
94° 65°	92° 62°	82° 61°	82° 56°	87° 55°

OREGON FORECAST

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.



Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather, Inc.** ©2019

ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	99°	65°
Normals	89°	59°
Records	110° (1898)	42° (1931)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"
Month to date	0.00"
Normal month to date	0.08"
Year to date	9.61"
Last year to date	6.49"
Normal year to date	8.03"

HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	101°	62°
Normals	89°	59°
Records	106° (1972)	41° (1939)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"
Month to date	0.00"
Normal month to date	0.05"
Year to date	4.56"
Last year to date	5.10"
Normal year to date	5.97"

WINDS (in mph)

	Today	Fri.
Boardman	SW 7-14	S 6-12
Pendleton	W 6-12	NNW 4-8

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	5:46 a.m.
Sunset tonight	8:15 p.m.
Moonrise today	2:56 p.m.
Moonset today	12:13 a.m.

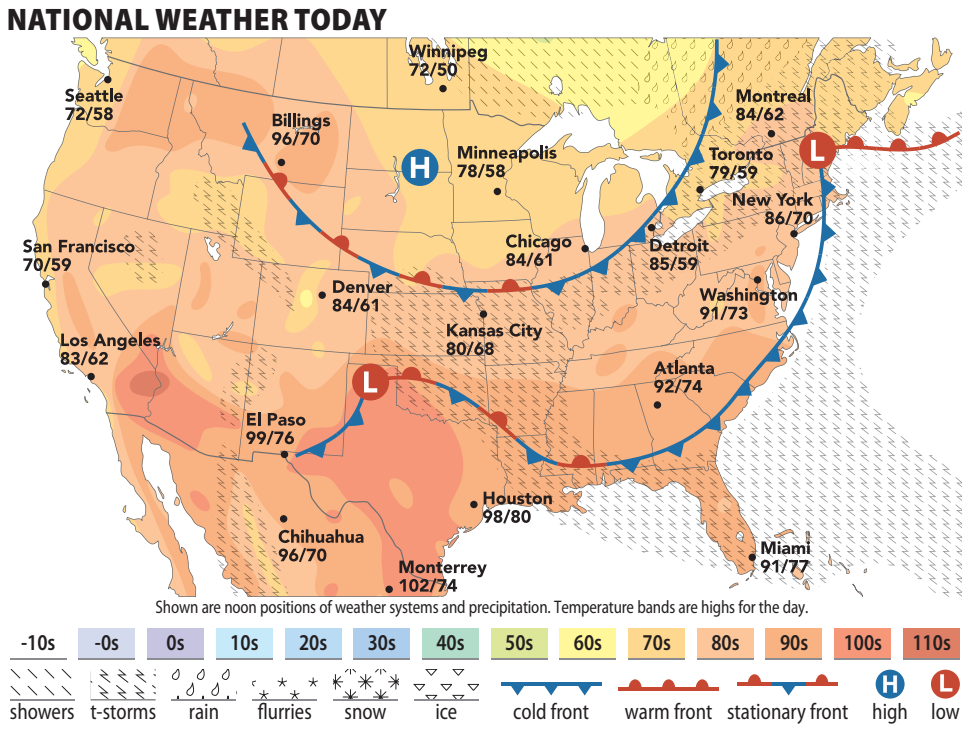
Full	Last	New	First
Aug 15	Aug 23	Aug 30	Sep 5

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)

High 108° in Needles, Calif. **Low** 36° in Stanley, Idaho

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



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

Maj. Gen. Rees to speak in La Grande

'Soldier's soldier' will participate in National Guard Reunion Weekend

By DICK MASON
EO Media Group

LA GRANDE — One of the best known generals in recent Oregon history is set to make an appearance in La Grande.

Maj. Gen. Raymond Rees will be the keynote speaker at the Reunion Weekend of La Grande's National Guard unit, the 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment. Rees will speak Sept. 15 during a dinner at the Blue Mountain Conference Center.

Rees served as Oregon's adjutant general four times during his career. His first stint began in 1989 when he was appointed by Oregon's governor. His final stint began in 2009 when he was appointed by Gov. Ted Kulongoski, and he served four years.

As adjutant general, Rees was responsible for providing the state of Oregon and the United States with a ready force of citizen soldiers and airmen, equipped and trained to respond to any emergency or situation, including deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Rees

Rees is credited with being instrumental in getting new National Guard armories built throughout Oregon, including in La Grande. The current local armory was built about 15 years ago, according to retired National Guardsman Lou Gerber of La Grande, who is helping organize Reunion Weekend.

Gerber said Rees is known for his ability to connect with the soldiers working under him.

"He is a soldier's soldier," Gerber said.

Rees, who grew up in Helix, graduated from Griswold High School in 1962 and the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1966. He served in Vietnam in the late 1960s and, upon leaving the active Army, joined the Oregon Army National Guard. He then advanced through command and staff positions of increasing rank and responsibility.

MORE INFORMATION

Reunion Weekend, which is open to the public, will begin Sept. 14 with a pool tournament at the American Legion hall, 301 Fir St., La Grande.

Activities will continue on Sept. 15 at the Blue Mountain Conference Center. A social hour begins at 1 p.m. followed by an informal dinner at 2 p.m. and an address by Rees. Those attending are encouraged to wear casual dress.

Tickets for the Reunion Weekend are now on sale for $20. The price of tickets will rise to $25 on Sept. 5. Tickets may be purchased in person in La Grande at the Blue Mountain Conference Center, 404 12th St.; American Legion Post #43, 301 Fir St.; Joe Beans, 1009 Adams Ave.; and Denny's, 2604 Island Ave. Tickets will be available online at https://3-116cav.brownpapertickets.com.

For additional information call Lowell Beeman, a retired National Guardsman who is helping put on Reunion Weekend,, at 541-963-9084 or 541-786-5605.

BRIEFLY

Body of missing Baker City man found

BAKER CITY — A relative on Monday evening located the body of a Baker City man missing in the Elkhorn Mountains.

Baker County Sheriff Travis Ash confirmed that the relative found the body of Derrick Austin Coates, 32, in the Marble Creek area about 9 miles west of Baker City.

That's where a huckleberry picker found Coates' Jeep Cherokee early on the morning of July 27.

Coates was last seen the afternoon of July 26 when he talked with his grandmother in Baker City.

Nearman lands new job

SALEM — Oregon state Rep. Mike Nearman is now also the state director for a group seeking to reduce the influence of public employee unions.

Nearman, R-Independence, said Wednesday that he will keep his legislative job while working for the Freedom Foundation.

The Olympia-based organization frequently fights with unions. It has run a variety of outreach campaigns showing workers how they can quit unions and stop paying union dues. Under the U.S. Supreme Court's 2018 Janus decision, public employees in Oregon and many other states are no longer required to pay dues if they decline union membership.

Nearman has been one of the most conservative Oregon legislators. He previously was a board member for Oregonians for Immigration Reform, a group seeking tighter immigration laws.

He said he doesn't think his new job conflicts with his legislative work.

"The same question could be directed to some of the members of the Legislature who are actively involved with unions," Nearman said.

— EO Media Group

CORRECTION: In the Page A1 story "Mass shootings stun weary nation," published Tuesday, Aug. 6, the story misspelled the name of Pendleton Walmart manager Shawna Nulf.

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