

WALLOWA COUNTY

# Joseph Canyon and Dry Creek fires dying down

Cooler weather, precipitation aid mopping up of nearly 10,000 acres of burned ground

By **KATY NESBITT**  
For the East Oregonian

ENTERPRISE — The early beginning of Oregon’s wild-fire season was brief, but spectacular. Just one day after the Interagency Team 7 overhead team assumed command of the Joseph Canyon and Dry Creek fires, crews and air support are being released.

The release of the Type 1 helicopters and most of the crews was announced at Team 7’s Tuesday, June 8, planning meeting at Wallowa County Fairgrounds’ Cloverleaf Hall, Enterprise, indicating the fire was winding down.

The Joseph Canyon fire was 20% contained as of June 8. The latest mapping of the fire revealed it burned much more than previously measured — 7,575 acres primarily on private and Nez Perce Tribe land.

Two hotshot crews worked along the eastern flank of the fire while the western edge of the fire moved toward monitoring status. The eastern and northwestern flanks of the fire are contained. The southern edge of the fire continues to be a challenge due to the rugged terrain.

The Dry Creek Fire, a

1,500-acre fire burning on the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, was 50% contained as of June 8.

Lightning in the early morning of June 4 sparked the two fires in the far northeastern corner of Wallowa County. Due to the rugged, remote, steep terrain and dry fuels creating severe fire behavior, helicopters and air tankers battled the fire, with the support of smokejumpers, helicopter rappel firefighters and elite ground crews called hotshots flown into the fire.

High winds hampered air attacks on June 5 and spread the fires far from their ignition points. But by June 6, temperatures decreased and the humidity came up, aiding efforts to cool down hot spots and along the perimeter of the fires.

Weather wreaked havoc and aided to the early demise of the fires. Between 0.25 and 0.4 inches of rain was predicted for the fire locations over June 9 and June 10. The good news was the rain would come in showers and not heavy downpours, reducing the threat of slides and washouts.

Humidity recovery was forecasted to be near 48% at ridge tops with 5-10 mph winds coming from the north and north-



Jana Peterson/Oregon Department of Forestry  
**The Joseph Canyon Fire viewed from the east side of Cottonwood Creek late Saturday, June 5, 2021.**

west. Afternoon and evening gusts could be up to 25 mph and a slight chance of lightning.

The rain and fog were listed as potential factors that could hamper mopping up the fire with helicopter water drops, but fire activity was predicted to diminish even further.

Team 7 Section Chief John Larson said remaining crews and air support would work on securing the fire line and mopping up where possible in the coming days.

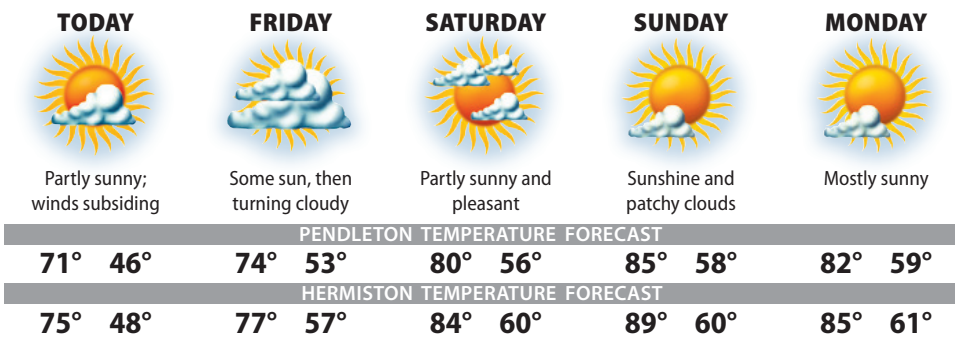
Crucial to the success of putting out the fire and firefighter safety in canyon country were “human repeaters,” fire crew members who could receive radio communication and deliver messages to those in areas where direct communications were hampered by steep cliffs and deep canyons.

Larson said now that the fire was in mop-up mode, “human repeaters” and lookouts would not be necessary as communications would be conducted in areas easier to reach by radio.

Spike camps where crews were camped on the fire line were scheduled for clean up with equipment and trash flown out via helicopter.

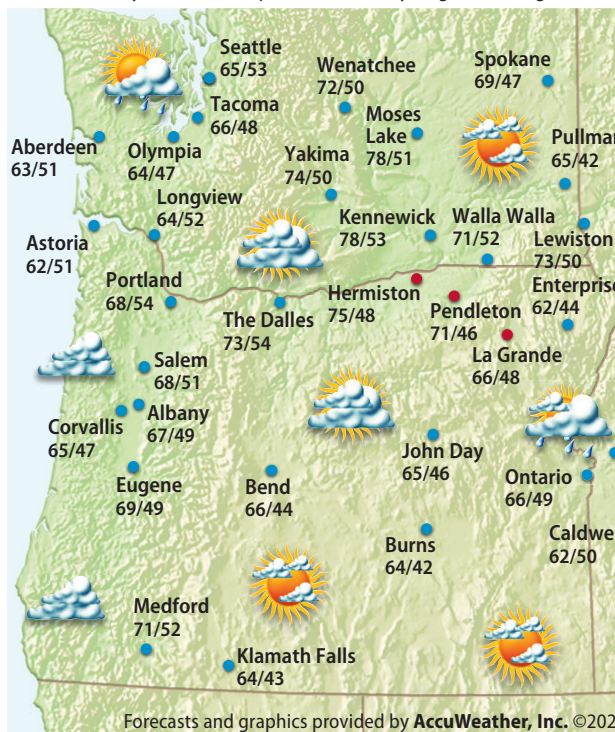
The Nez Perce Tribe has temporarily closed the Precious Lands Wildlife Management Area within the Joseph Canyon Fire footprint.

## Forecast for Pendleton Area



## OREGON FORECAST

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



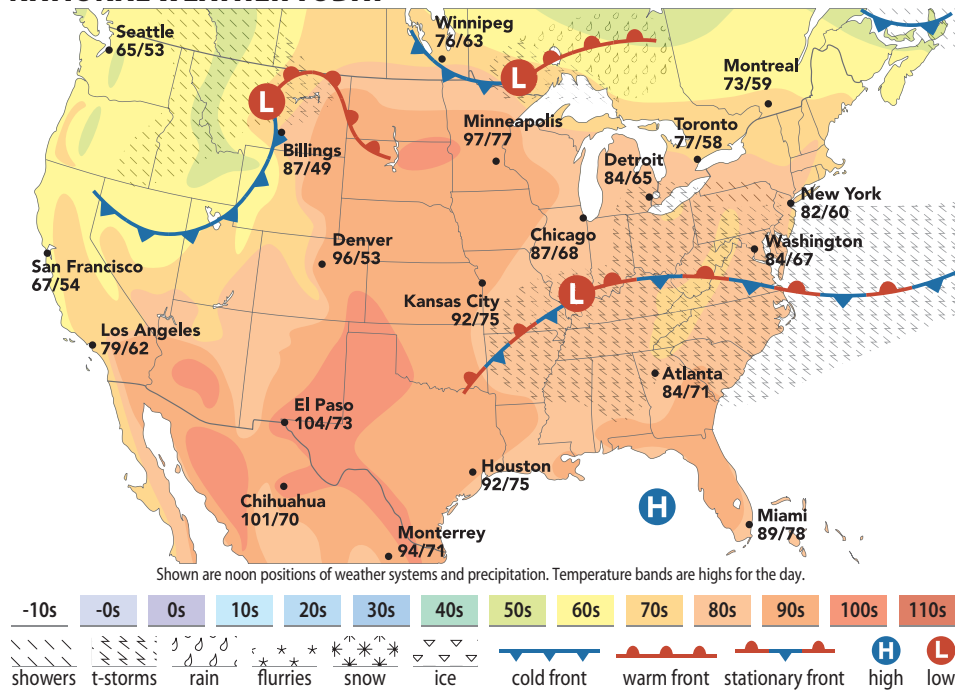
## ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.				
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW		
Yesterday	68°	54°		
Normals	76°	51°		
Records	103° (1918)	39° (1999)		
PRECIPITATION				
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"			
Month to date	Trace			
Normal month to date	0.50"			
Year to date	4.03"			
Last year to date	7.93"			
Normal year to date	7.01"			
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.				
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW		
Yesterday	71°	54°		
Normals	78°	52°		
Records	98° (2015)	41° (2019)		
PRECIPITATION				
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"			
Month to date	0.00"			
Normal month to date	0.23"			
Year to date	1.70"			
Last year to date	1.43"			
Normal year to date	5.34"			
WINDS (in mph)				
	Today	Fri.		
Boardman	WSW 10-20	WSW 6-12		
Pendleton	W 10-20	WNW 6-12		
SUN AND MOON				
Sunrise today	5:06 a.m.			
Sunset tonight	8:44 p.m.			
Moonrise today	5:09 a.m.			
Moonset today	9:24 p.m.			
	New	First	Full	Last
	June 10	June 17	June 24	July 1

## NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)  
High 108° in Presidio, Texas Low 27° in Bodie State Park, Calif.

## NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



## Man pleads guilty to using COVID-19 relief loan for personal purposes

By **JAYSON JACOBY**  
Baker City Herald

PORTLAND — A 32-year-old Baker City man pleaded guilty Tuesday, June 8, for receiving a \$145,200 federal COVID-19 relief loan on behalf of a fictitious company and then using the money for personal purposes, including buying a \$49,000 car, federal officials said.

Jeremy Michael Clawson pleaded guilty to one count of theft of public money, according to a press release from the U.S. Attorney's Office in Portland.

Theft of public money is punishable by up to 10 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine, and three years' supervised release. With Clawson's continued acceptance of responsibility, the U.S. Attorney's Office will recommend a 24-month prison sentence followed by three years' supervised release, according to the press release. Clawson will be sentenced on Sept. 13, 2021.

As part of the plea agreement, Clawson agreed to pay \$125,200 in restitution to the U.S. Treasury.

Acting U.S. Attorney Scott Erik Asphaug of the District of Oregon made the announcement.

Clawson is serving a 19-month sentence at the Snake River Correctional Institution, Ontario, after pleading guilty Sept. 29, 2020, in Baker County Circuit Court to attempting to elude a police officer and driving under the influence of intoxicants on Aug. 21, 2020. His earliest release date on that conviction is Dec. 17, 2021, according to Oregon Department of Corrections records.

Clawson, who was driving the 2016 Dodge Challenger he bought with part of the federal loan, failed to stop and drove south, running through two stop signs.

He had been arrested for driving under the influence three times in the past three years, in July 2017 and August 2019 in Malheur County, and in March 2018 in Baker County.

Clawson's arrest happened 10 days after he deposited \$145,200 from a federal loan into an account at Umpqua Bank that Clawson and his

girlfriend opened.

Clawson received the Economic Injury Disaster Loan through the Small Business Administration, according to a press release from the U.S. Attorney Billy J. Williams.

That was one of the financial aid programs included in the CARES Act that Congress passed in late March 2020.

According to court documents, shortly after depositing the \$145,200, Clawson made multiple large cash withdrawals at the drive-thru window of the Umpqua Bank branch in Baker City.

On Aug. 17 he received a \$49,905 cashier's check from the bank to buy the Dodge Challenger.

Umpqua Bank investigators noted the unusual activity on Clawson's account and reported it to the SBA.

Federal agents seized the Dodge Challenger and approximately \$50,000 in cash derived from the fraudulent EIDL pursuant to seizure warrants issued by the federal court and voluntary abandonment of funds in third parties' possession.

## IN BRIEF

### Walla Walla man dies in moped crash June 6

WALLA WALLA — A Walla Walla man died the morning of Sunday, June 6, apparently due to head injuries while he was delivering Walla Walla Union-Bulletin newspapers on his moped.

Danny Davis, 65, was found dead in the 300 block of Howard Street, according to law enforcement officials.

Walla Walla County Deputy Coroner Allison Barnett said early investigation efforts lead her to believe that at about 4 a.m. the “saddle bag” Davis was using to hold newspapers got caught in the rear tire of the vehicle.

That apparently caused a sudden stop, and Davis was thrown about 25 yards, Barnett

said, noting nothing is yet conclusive.

Davis was not wearing a helmet, which is required by Washington state law.

The Walla Walla Police Department notified the next of kin.

Mike Cibart, director of operations at the Union-Bulletin, said the death is a blow to all.

“Danny has been integral to us in delivering for the last 10 years,” Cibart said. “He started by helping another carrier and then took his own routes in 2017. This loss is devastating.”

Newspaper carriers are independent contractors, but the U-B stresses the importance of safety with anyone on a route.

An autopsy was scheduled for June 8, Barnett said.

— Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

**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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