

The Bulletin

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Fires rage as spring turns to summer

Warm Springs, Klamath County blazes threaten structures

Bulletin staff and wire reports

A fire on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation grew to 4,300 acres by late Saturday night.

The S-503 Fire caused the Wasco County Sheriff's Office to issue Level 3 "go now" evacuations orders for some residents of the community of Pine Grove on Saturday night.

The Oregon State Fire Marshal's office deployed a structure protection team to the

area, according to the Warm Springs Fire Department.

In Klamath County, a wildfire reported Saturday afternoon was threatening 120 structures in Southern Oregon, authorities say.

The Cutoff Fire is burning on Bureau of Land Management property about 6 miles north of Bonanza, a small town in Klamath County.

The fire was about 1,000 acres and growing

quickly, heading to the east toward the Wren subdivision, according to a joint press release from Klamath County Emergency Management, Oregon Department of Forestry and BLM Lakeview District.

Klamath County Emergency Management officials issued various levels of evacuations orders for nearby residents.

Klamath County sheriff's deputies and search and rescue volunteers are assisting evacuees. An evacuation point is being set up at Bonanza High School, 31601 Mission St.

The cause of fire is under investigation.



The Oregonian

The S-503 Fire is burning on the north end of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation.

SUMMER SWOOPS IN

A paraglider passes in front of the rising moon while flying high above Pine Mountain just before the sun dips below the horizon Saturday. Ryan Brennecke/The Bulletin



THE EFFORT TO MOVE OREGON'S BORDER

These rural Oregonians 'no longer recognize' their state

BY DOUGLAS PERRY

The Oregonian

Thousands of people in Eastern and Southern Oregon want to leave the state — so long as they don't have to pack up and go anywhere.

In May, five rural counties — Baker, Grant, Lake, Malheur and Sherman — voted to study moving the border so they would become part of neighboring Idaho. They joined Jefferson and Union counties, both of which voted in November to look into switching to the Gem State.

The reasons for this unlikely secession movement, laughed off by political observers a year ago but now being given grudging respect, are not as straightforward as they might appear at first glance.

Rural Oregonians, who tend to be politically conservative, unquestionably feel ill-treated by the state's city dwellers, who skew to the political left and whose numbers now mean perennial Democratic majorities in the Oregon Legislature.

"The majority party constantly wants its ideals imposed on rural areas, and the people in those rural areas have had it," former Oregon Senate Minority Leader Herman Baertschiger Jr. said. "They want to leave."

Baertschiger, a Republican who is now a Josephine County commissioner, added:

"When I was in the Legislature, I was always jumping up and down about the urban-rural divide. It's two very different lifestyles, two different ways of life."

For those Oregonians looking to Republican-dominated Idaho as their ideological promised land, a famous saying from the late President Ronald Reagan resonates: "The nine most terrifying words in the English language are: 'I'm from the government, and I'm here to help.'"

They believe less government regulation means more personal freedom. They say there should be greater economic opportunity and fewer handouts.

Democrats in the Legislature "have no idea the values we have out here, the work ethic," said Sandie Gilson, who runs a title company in Grant County with her husband.

"We take care of ourselves and our neighbors," she said. "I'll always jump in to help someone whose house has burned down, but I'm reluctant to help people who won't help themselves."

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