

# The Blue Mountain EAGLE



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## Two resident wolves confirmed near Long Creek

Blue Mountain Eagle

A new area of wolf activity has been designated for the Northside group of wolves in Grant County.

Two wolves were confirmed to be using the area in the Northside Wildlife Management Unit near Long Creek in June, according to Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Monitoring is ongoing to learn more about these wolves.

ODFW designates these areas when it has evidence of resident wolves, not just dispersing wolves.

Livestock producers in the area are encouraged to be aware of this wolf activ-

ity and take certain preventative measures. Though not required, nonlethal measures are important to reduce depredation. If depredation becomes chronic and lethal control become necessary, ODFW's ability to lethally remove depredating wolves will be dependent on the extent that nonlethal measures have been used and documented.

Wolves are on the federal Endangered Species List west of highways 395, 78 and 95 with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as the lead management agency. While the newly designated area includes areas west of this boundary, so far all of the documented locations for these wolves are east of Highway 395 in state-managed areas.



The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife has designated a new Area of Known Wolf Activity near Long Creek.

Contributed photo/ODFW

## Walden outlines bills at town hall meeting

By Richard Hanners  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Rep. Greg Walden, R-Hood River, held 20 town hall meetings in the first three months of 2019, visiting every county in Oregon's Second Congressional District. He visited the Mt. Vernon Community Hall on July 2.



Rep. Greg Walden

Walden updated voters on bills relating to forest management, stopping robocalls and addressing health care costs.

### Forest management

Grant County Commissioner Sam Palmer thanked Walden for his support of new forest management legislation. Walden said he could use more help from Oregon's U.S. senators and the governor to reduce forest fuels and air pollution caused by wildfires. The 68 million tons of carbon dioxide emitted in last year's fires in California was equivalent to the amount emitted by electrical generators in the state for a whole year, he said.

The 2018 Farm Bill extended a 3,000-acre categorical exclusion for insect and disease treatment and created a 3,000-acre categorical exclusion for hazardous fuels reduction projects. This would allow smaller forest projects to proceed without the delays and paperwork associated with full National Environmental Policy Act review.

The Farm Bill also increased funding for the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program, which funds stewardship projects on the

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Contributed photo/Chris Carlin  
Children compete in games at the Monument Fourth of July Fun Festival.

# CELEBRATING THE FOURTH

## Small towns host big festivities on INDEPENDENCE DAY

By Richard Hanners  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Across Grant County, families and friends gathered along main streets on the Fourth of July to watch parades or in city parks to compete in games, admire classic cars and enjoy picnic barbecues.

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Contributed photo/Ruthie Moore  
Piper Swagger, 8, of Redmond helps display the baked goods during the baked goods auction benefiting the renovation of the community hall at Dayville's Fourth of July celebration.

**FOURTH OF JULY PHOTOS FROM AROUND GRANT COUNTY | PAGE A9**



## Type 3 team managing Blue Ridge Fire

By Richard Hanners  
Blue Mountain Eagle

A Type 3 firefighting team with about 125 personnel responded to a lightning-caused fire about 4 miles northwest of the Flagtail Mountain Lookout over the Fourth of July weekend.

Forest Service officials chose to manage the Blue Ridge Fire in a similar way to prescribed burning in spring as a way to reduce dead and downed fuels, according to a press release.

The fire was first identified on July 3 around 10:15 a.m. and had grown to about 667 acres by July 9. Four Type 2 crews, one helicopter, nine Type 6 engines and one water tender were assigned to the fire.

Fire crews reported moderate backing, some single-tree torching and creeping on July 7, as efforts continued to prepare fire lines. Aerial ignition efforts took place inside the containment lines.

All lines were still holding the



The Eagle/Richard Hanners

Smoke from the Blue Ridge Fire as seen from the Aldrich Lookout on July 6.

next morning. A helicopter was available, but no additional aerial ignitions were planned. Mop-up work was expected to continue through the week, with containment expected by July 12.

Allowing the fire to burn in a managed way is expected to both

reduce the risk of larger and catastrophic wildfires and restore overall health for Forest Service lands.

"Fire is an essential, natural process, having shaped the landscape for thousands of years, releasing, and recycling nutrients from vegetation, duff, and soil layers, improv-

ing the overall health of plants and animals," the Forest Service said in a press release.

Crews safely and successfully treated about 13,450 acres on the Malheur National Forest through prescribed fire operations in fall 2018 and spring 2019.

"These burnout operations will reduce surface fuels (including needle litter and dead and down wood), increase the height of some canopy, reduce small tree densities and help promote fire resilient trees, thereby improving our ability to protect communities from wildfire," the Forest Service said.

The Forest Service warned about the potential for light smoke impacts to the cities of Seneca, John Day and Prairie City. To ensure public and firefighter safety, some roads, trails and areas were closed temporarily.

For more information, visit InciWeb online. To report a wildfire, call 911 or 541-575-1321.