

State Forest protects Oregon with use of Lightning Detection System

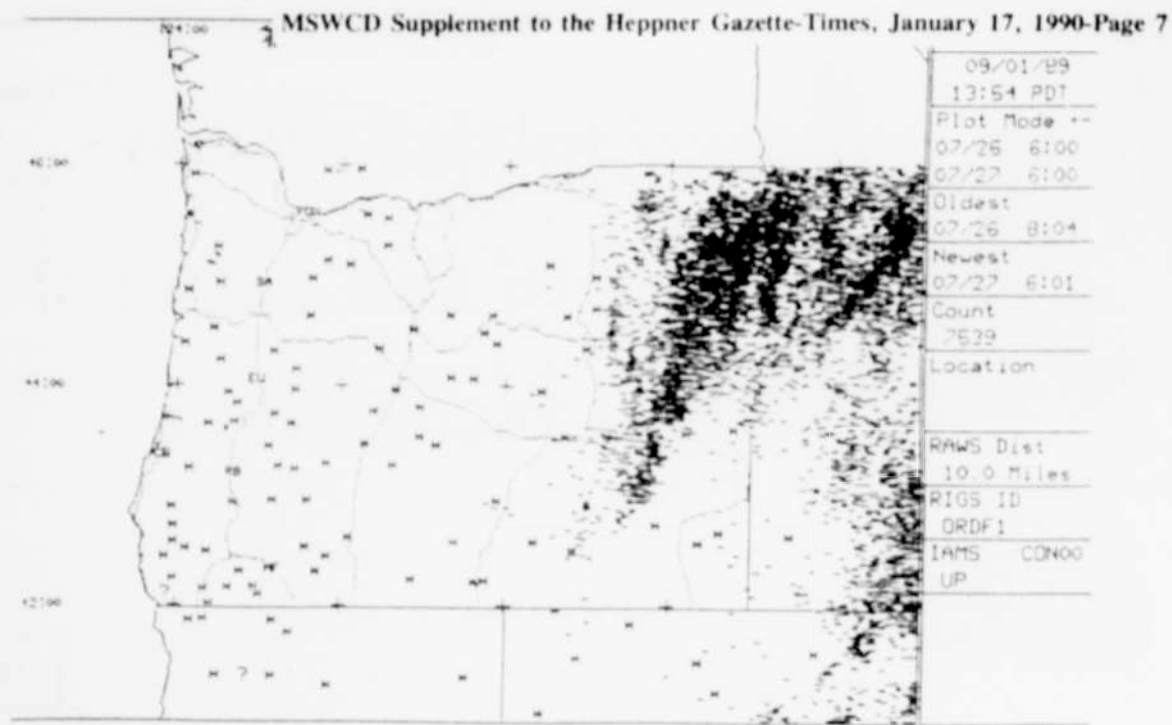
Lightning is one of mother nature's most powerful destructive forces. It is responsible for hundreds of forest fires in Oregon each summer, destroying valuable resources. Lightning causes an average of one third or 300 of the total number of wildfires annually on state protected forest lands in Oregon.

To combat the lightning the State Forestry has developed a lightning detection system to help attack and control lightning-caused fires that are small and further reduce fire suppression costs.

The Automated Lightning Detection Systems (ALDS) was initiated in 1985 and has provided the Department of Forestry valuable detailed information on location of individual lightning strikes accurately to several hundred feet.

Eight remote lightning sensors are strategically located throughout Oregon and Washington. These sensors detect 99% of cloud to ground-lightning strikes by the electric charge generated during lightning activity.

Information from sensors is



Bureau of Land Management : Initial Attack Management System

TITLE: OREGON
transmitted to the National Inter-agency Fire Center (NIFC) in Boise, Idaho, where it is plotted, recorded, and displayed on computer terminals in land management agencies across the Pacific NW, including Department of Forestry offices in Salem, Prineville and Lakeview.

This entire process from lightning strike to geographic positions on the computer display takes less than 1

second
SCALE: 100 MILES

State Forestry personnel believe ALDS has saved time and money as it has helped us locate fires quickly. ALDS provides as much as 2-3 hours lead time which can make a difference in gearing up for a fire.

When a lightning storm moves through an area, ALDS narrows the field of vision for detection as it shows which areas were hit and which were not. Fire managers can

streamline their detection efforts by scheduling observation flights only for those areas.

The system also allows department fire managers to pre-position equipment based on the track of the storm, both from statewide and a local perspective.

ALDS is considered the single-most productive fire prevention method used by the Oregon State Forestry.

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