

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY Southwest Oregon District 2014 Annual Report



Oregon Gulch Fire



Rogue River Drive Fire

District Forester's Comments

By Dan Thorpe

The year 2014 seemed like a repeat of the grueling 2013 fire season. There was little respite over the winter as we continued to closeout 2013 with such things as payment, audits, inventory and replacement, maintenance and repair, and claims, along with the normal off-season routine. Even January brought the challenging 143-acre Alder Creek Fire.

Drought conditions only worsened throughout the winter as testified by the ski area on Mt. Ashland failing to open for the first time in its 50-year history. Early season fires, such as the Modoc Fire, showed a tendency to exhibit unusually active fire behavior.

As the fire season progressed, several fires burned actively at night requiring aggressive nighttime suppression operations. The more significant of these were the Reeves Creek, Salt Creek, Oregon Gulch, and Old Blue Mountain fires.

One ODF Incident Management Team was called for a complex of fires, which included Salt Creek and Oregon Gulch. The other fires during the summer were handled with great success by District personnel and a well-developed Type 3 organization.

The Onion Mountain Fire on the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest threatened ODF protection, and the Grants Pass Unit effectively worked with the Forest and the IMT to achieve a favorable outcome. ODF supported the suppression organization by participating along one flank directly threatening lands under our protection. This was seen locally as a very successful organization.

The District utilized Severity resources assigned locally along with District funding personnel and equipment. These State-funded tools include an air tanker at Medford, a Type 2 helicopter in Grants Pass and, for the first time, two five-person hand crews in Grants Pass. Each of these resources were on many assignments and crucial to successful suppression on the fires they engaged.

Several unique pieces of equipment were used on the District for the first time, including Very Large Air Tankers (DC-10s). They were assigned to the Medford Airtanker Base and the request came from the Oregon Gulch Fire. Single Engine Air Tankers were also used. Locally, the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest used CL-215 and

CL-415 water scoopers for their 790 Fire. All were found cost-effective and will likely continue to find a role in Southern Oregon.

The big news in the Private Forests Program is the transition to electronic notifications. The rollout occurred in October and a process like this will likely be the way business is done for the long term.

State Forests spent the winter frequently on the 2013 Douglas Complex salvaging logging lands burned in the fires. Harvesting is complete and plans are already in motion for reforestation. An effective public outreach effort occurred when Glendale High School students participated in replanting areas affected by the large fires.

Finally, we were saddened by the loss of our colleague and friend, John Wilburn, forester in Grants Pass State Forests Program, who died tragically in a kayaking accident last Spring. We miss him.



Dan Thorpe
District Forester



Fire Protection

By Brian Ballou

The 2014 fire season was, for the second year in a row, very challenging for the Southwest Oregon District. During these times, the district relies heavily on its cooperators and landowners. The industrial forestland landowners came through with much-needed assistance on fire after fire, providing overhead and suppression resources, which supplemented what the district and incident management teams were able to furnish. Industrial landowners and the Medford District of the Bureau of Land Management also provided fire detection patrols, which located new starts before the fires had the chance to become problematic fires.

The District also acknowledges the efforts made by CalFire during the Oregon Gulch Fire, as well as numerous other small fires which broke out along the Oregon-California border during the 2014 fire season.

Southwest Oregon rural fire protection districts pitched in with structural protection assistance on many mutual-aid responses on both lightning- and human-caused fires this past summer. Out-of-area structural protection task forces and strike teams, dispatched to southwest Oregon by the Oregon State Fire Marshal during Conflagration Act deployments, provided invaluable support during the Oregon Gulch and Rogue River Drive fires. Local structural protection task forces were also deployed on the Reeves Creek, Old Blue Mountain and Onion Mountain fires.

Ahead of the 2014 fire season, two consecutive dry winters caused drought conditions across



southwest Oregon, priming the forests and brush lands for fire. The southern Cascade Range and the Siskiyou Mountains had very little snowpack, and many reservoirs were unusually low. To underscore the unusually dry weather conditions, a Red Flag Warning was issued by the National Weather Service in late January 2014 for low humidity and strong east winds. Several fires broke out in the central Coast Range and all along the west slope of the Cascades. One of these fires was Alder Creek Fire that broke out January 23 on the Medford Unit's north end. The fire burned 143 acres of slash.

February and March brought rain relief to southwest Oregon, when 8 inches of precipitation fell during the two-month period. However, little snow accumulated in the mountains and rainfall diminished significantly during April and May. Temperatures occasionally topped the 90-degree mark from late April through mid-May.

Fire season started June 2 on the Southwest Oregon District and the first significant fire, the

Modoc Fire, started on June 19 on the Medford Unit. The 42-acre blaze was caused by farm equipment.

June ended with some rain showers but significantly hotter and drier weather settled over the southwest Oregon region in July. The month of July had 25 days where the temperature climbed over 90 degrees, and 13 of those days topped 100 degrees. The hottest day was July 28 when the temperature hit 106 degrees. Most significantly, from a fire weather standpoint, July was the month of thunderstorms.

Red Flag Warnings for July started on the first of the month, and a thunderstorm on July 11 caused the Woodrat Complex, comprised of two small fires in the Medford Unit. Another thunderstorm on July 22 sparked the East Antelope Complex, which scattered 25 fires across the Medford Unit's protection area, and the nine-fire Birdseye Creek Complex in the Grants Pass Unit's area. Most of the fires were contained at 1/10th of an acre or smaller.

On July 28, the 187-acre

Oregon Gulch Fire

Photo by Oregon Air National Guard



Reeves Creek Fire broke out near Lake Selmac in Josephine County. The Grants Pass Unit assembled a Type 3 incident management team and, coupled with Rogue Valley structural fire protection task forces, kept the human-caused wildfire in check and successfully defended dozens of homes.

Then things took a turn for the worse.

The Pilot Rock Complex on July 29 kept the Medford Unit's crews running, chasing down 16 fires that burned a total of 30 acres. The largest fire was the 27-acre Twincheria Fire near Butte Falls. The next day, July 30, a second thunderstorm sparked an additional 24 fires, including the Salt Creek and Oregon Gulch fires, which would soon become two of the district's most significant fires of the season.

The Salt Creek Fire put up a good-size column of smoke in the northwest corner of Jackson County, and was visible throughout the Rogue Valley. The timber fire would soon burn 155 acres, which was also its final size, and Oregon Department of Forestry Incident Management Team 3 was called in. Meanwhile, a second fire put up an even more impressive column of smoke from the southeast corner of the county. This fire was burning in the Oregon Gulch

region inside the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, just a few miles north of the California border and a few miles west of the Klamath County line. It didn't take long to realize the Oregon Gulch Fire was not going to be easily controlled.

It covered 10,000 acres of forest on its first day, 10,000 more acres the second day, and 10,000 more the third day.

Governor Kitzhaber invoked the Oregon Conflagration Act, due to homes being threatened by the Oregon Gulch Fire, and the Oregon State Fire Marshal's Blue Team was mobilized.

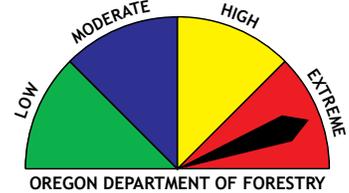
Fire camp for the Salt Creek Fire was set up at TouVelle State Park and the camp for the Oregon Gulch Fire was established at Howard Prairie Campground.

The Oregon Gulch Fire was stopped at 35,129 acres, of which 8,306 acres were on Southwest Oregon District's Medford Unit, 17,359 acres in ODF's Klamath-Lake District's protection area, and 9,464 acres were in California. Six residences were burned by the fire; more than 300 other structures, most of them residences, had been threatened. At its peak, more than 1,700 personnel and 20 helicopters were assigned to the Oregon Gulch Fire.

August started as hot and dry as July had been, hitting 102 degrees on August 1. Industrial Fire Precaution Level III was put into effect August 4 along with a complete shutdown of power equipment use by the public. Then another thunderstorm hit on August 11, starting 11 fires on

Closures 2014

TODAY'S FIRE DANGER LEVEL
KEEP OREGON GREEN



IFPL III

Start of Fire Season,
Moderate Fire Danger Level,
IFPL 1: June 2

High Fire Danger Level:
June 16

IFPL 2: July 14

Extreme Fire Danger Level:
July 19

IFPL 3: August 4

IFPL 2: August 18

IFPL 3: August 26

IFPL 2: September 18

High Fire Danger Level,
IFPL 1: September 24

Moderate Fire Danger Level:
September 26

Fire Season Ends: October 15

the Medford Unit and two on the Grants Pass Unit.

The biggest blaze from the August 11 storm was the 460-acre Rogue River Drive Fire, near Shady Cove. Once again, Governor Kitzhaber invoked the Conflagration Act and an OSFM incident management team was mobilized. The Medford Unit assembled a Type 3 incident management team to put the wildfire to bed. Fire camp was set up (again) at TouVelle State Park. Fortunately, the threat to

Southwest Oregon District 2014 Fire Statistics

Cause	Number of Fires			Acres Burned		
	2014	Historic: 2004-2013	Percent of historical average	2014	Historic: 2004-2013	Percent of historical average
Lightning	98	57	173%	9,071	4,821	188%
Railroad	0	1	0%	0	3	0%
Equipment Use	63	63	100%	107	573	19%
Recreationist	15	18	83%	22	25	89%
Smoker	22	15	146%	3	9	31%
Debris Burning	36	27	133%	160	39	405%
Arson	5	8	60%	1	29	3%
Juveniles	4	9	47%	1	20	4%
Miscellaneous	36	27	133%	193	91	212%
Under Investigation	2			1		
Total Lightning	98	57	173%	9,071	4,821	188%
Total Human-Caused	183	168	109%	488	790	62%
Grand Total	281	225	125%	9,559	5,611	170%

Number of Non-Stat Fires: 44

Percent of Fires 10 Acres or Less: 96.1%

Total NFCAs: 929

structures was quickly staunched and the OSFM team, along with out-of-the-area structural fire protection resources, were released. The weather also assisted by dumping more than a half-inch of rain on the fire August 12-13.

But the rainstorm didn't extinguish fire season. On August 18, another thunderstorm started two new fires on the Medford Unit and seven on the Grants Pass Unit. The largest was the 78-acre Old Blue Mountain Fire. A local Type 3 incident management was placed in charge of the Old Blue Mountain Fire, while structural fire protection forces from Applegate Valley Fire District 9 kept watch on homes along Humbug Creek Rd., sitting downslope just south of the fire.

During July and August, the Medford Airtanker Base sent 118 loads of retardant — nearly 330,000 gallons — to Southwest

Oregon District fires. Thirty-six of those loads were dropped on the Oregon Gulch and Salt Creek fires in one day — July 31.

After 25 days of 90-degree-plus temperatures in August, September didn't provide much relief — for a while. Sixteen days in September topped 90 degrees and the mercury hit 100 on September 20. In the midst of the late-summer heat, a human-caused fire broke out September 13 on Onion Mountain inside the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest in Josephine County. While the fire never left the national forest, it threatened a section of Common School Land and private lands located

off the fire's northeast flank. Grants Pass Unit crews cleared some old roads and turned them into contingency fire lines that, fortunately, were never tested.

Rain fell on the Onion Mountain Fire on September 17, and a stronger rainstorm hit on the 24th, bringing more than an inch to most of southwest Oregon.

Fire season ended on ODF-protected lands in the Southwest Oregon District on October 15.



Air Operations

By Lee Winslow

The year 2014 was a year of notable accomplishments and firsts on the Southwest Oregon District. Over 600 ROSS orders for aircraft were placed during the 2014 fire season, similar to the high rate of use seen in 2013. The District utilized every type of nationally available airtanker, including the DC-10 Very Large Airtankers (VLATs) for the first time, as well as Single Engine Airtankers (SEATs) for the first in a long time. The District also utilized the Oregon Air National Guard for the first time since Timbered Rock Fire in 2002, and a stick of Redmond Smokejumpers on a pair of fires on the top of Grayback Mtn. District aircraft flew for over 460 flight hours in 2014, and call-when-needed (CWN) helicopters flew over 550 flight hours (Airtankers, lead planes, relief air attacks, and the Oregon National Guard flight hours not included). With another year of a high-level use, the District maintained another aviation accident-free fire season.

The District had three exclusive-use contracts with aircraft operators in 2014, ranging 60-75 days on standby during the peak of fire season. The first of the aircraft arrived on July 4, two weeks earlier than usual, and the last left one left for home on Sept. 26. Below is a rundown of the District's exclusive-use aircraft.

- Type 3: 84CK -- a Bell BIII JetRanger helicopter from Croman Corp., based in White City;
- Type 2: 17N -- a Bell UH-1H++ from Airlift Helicopters, Inc., based in Reno, Nev.;

- Fixed-wing aerial detection and air attack platform: 52U -- a Cessna 206 Sky Wagon operated by Skinner Aviation, based in Ashland.

The District also used a Special Purpose Appropriation (SPA) helicopter to supplement initial attack aerial resources. This helicopter, 68U, a medium-lift (Type 2) Sikorsky S-58T owned by Heli-Flite, Inc. and based in Hollister, Calif., was stationed at the Grants Pass Unit. The helicopter was managed by Jerry Messinger, who did an outstanding job getting that aircraft spooled and going.

In December 2014, Jerry was hired by the USFS Region 6 aviation program as an ATGS based in Redmond. He will be a huge asset to their program, and will surely be missed by the District.

At the Medford Air Tanker Base (MATB) again this season was Tanker 62, the red and white DC-7 piloted by Capt. Larry Kraus. The airtanker is owned by Erickson Aero Air, and prepositioned at MATB under the statewide SPA program.

ODF's MATB manager Harry Kelley and assistant/dispatcher Tyler Hoffer were huge contributors to our firefighting success on many fires locally and statewide this year (as were our federal partners at MATB).

The Rogue Valley International Airport and the MATB facilities were upgraded and approved for Dept. of Defense aircraft used in the Modular Airtanker Fire Fighting System (MAFFS), employing C-130H aircraft, and DC-10 Very Large Airtankers (VLATs)

operations in 2014. The reload base for MAFFS and VLAT aircraft was set up on across the runway from the MATB facility. These aircraft were deployed on 11 initial attack fires, three district wide lightning complexes, four Type 3 fires, and two Type 1 fire campaigns.

In 2014, the MATB pumped 330,000 gallons of retardant for District fires and a record-breaking 1.6 million gallons for ODF, Cal-Fire and the USFS fires combined. On one day alone, 36 loads flew out of the MATB to the Salt Creek and Oregon Gulch fires.

In preparation for and throughout the 2104 fire season, the District provided aviation-related training for both operations and dispatch personnel. Air Attack personnel received refresher training and hands-on "Pinch Hitter" training on landing light fixed-wing aircraft in emergency situations. During fire school, a Helicopter Crewmember short course and a refresher A-219 provided hands-on training for longline and passenger transport operations. Several aircraft dispatchers, tanker base personnel, helicopter/helibase managers, and crewmembers either completed, furthered, or initiated task books related to opportunities and experience received during the season.

It is due to the hard work and commitment of the District's aviation operations and dispatch center personnel working together that keeps aircraft safely in the air. These professionals EXCEL in their efforts to maintain constant coordination among other incidents, changing weather, and the changing priorities while fighting fire from the air.

A HUGE thank you to each and every one of you.

The 2014 fire season started earlier than in recent years, beginning June 2nd. The Medford Detection Center was fully staffed starting June 30th, 2014. This fire season the detection center had 4 camera locations, each location has 2 cameras, giving the detection center an advantage when looking at a location for smoke. The cameras in the detection center include Manzanita, Tallowbox, Sexton, and Old Baldy.

The Medford Detection center trained 6 new dispatchers as well as Community Emergency Response Team members to help monitor the cameras during this very busy fire season. The Southwest Oregon District had 18 days of lightning during the 2014 fire season causing 98 lightning fires within the District, 80 were on the Medford Unit. The cameras helped us to locate some of these fires. The detection center staff was able to direct crews into the fire while monitoring the behavior and

The start of the 2014 burning season in January will be remembered as foggy and unusually dry. A strong surface inversion lead to dense fog and freezing fog in the valleys, with higher elevations being dry enough to warrant a red flag warning for dry fuels in January. The remaining winter and spring months saw some precipitation but fuel conditions remained dry enough that burners were hesitant to continue burning due to the threat of landings and piles spreading.

Fall burning season in 2014 started off great with the latter half of October into November seeing wet and warmer conditions. This created numerous days with good mixing heights and burning opportunities to get caught up

Fire Detection

By Matt Fumasi

size from the cameras. Due to the number of fires in the valley during August, camera detection was severely hindered as the smoke made it nearly impossible to detect additional new smoke in the valley.

Throughout the fire season there were 13 total alarms logged in the detection center, 5 of the alarms were of significance including the Ben Fire. Other significant alarms included a report of smoke relayed to the USFS, as well as smokes spotted on Galls Creek and East Evans. The Medford Detection Center has been a positive addition to the Southwest Oregon District since first being added in 2009. The cameras have helped dispatchers to be proactive in spotting fires prior to them getting out of control as well as provide monitoring to ongoing



fires in the valley. We look forward to what the cameras will help us detect next fire season.

Smoke Management

By Shelly Hoffer

2014 Accomplishments	Units	Acres	Tons
Medford District BLM	150	4,170	27,597
Private/State	103	6,440	39,103
2014 Totals	253	10,610	66,700
	Units	Acres	Tons
9 year Average Accomplishments	241	10,097	77,300

on burns held over from the previous season. The year ended as it began, with air stagnation advisories in the valleys, no rain and decreased burning opportunities.

We did see a small increase of burning in 2014 vs. 2013 primarily due to harvesting burned areas from the 2013 fire

events to the weather being a bit more cooperative. During the early side of fall we did see a short lived smoke intrusion into the Medford smoke sensitive receptor area, which was caused by a mixture of different agencies burning simultaneously and a weather switch.

State Forests

By Chris Rudd



SWO District State Forests staff: Chris Rudd, Don McGlaughlin, Curtis Clark and Joanna Deegan.

It was a good year and a bad year.... After the fires of 2013, we set about replanting and salvage harvesting. Those fires severely impacted about 200 acres of Board of Forestry and Common School Lands forest; half was not recoverable in salvage. The final two of three salvage sales were logged in calendar year 2014. About 70 acres were reforested. We offered timber sales, did some community outreach through tree planting and field days. And we lost a good young man and forester in an accident.

Timber

While sales value dipped in fiscal 2014 from highs in the last two years, the revenue was spread evenly between counties and funds. We started to see salvage logging from the Douglas Complex fires in the fall

following the summer of 2013 fires, shown in the table below as "Quartz Salvage." It was logged by ODF personnel and sold to a self-loader truck driver. Two additional salvage units were logged in calendar year 2014. The two salvage units added 689 MBF on 113 acres and revenues of \$169,088 for the Forest Development Fund (only the Quartz Salvage shows in FY14).

Reforestation

During the 2013 fire season, a large wildland fire burned into Board of Forestry land in the Perkins Creek drainage and resulted in stand replacement level of fire activity. This left over 150 acres deforested and in need of planting. With the available trees, about 70 acres and 27,377 trees were planted in February of 2014. These trees were paid

for by a donation from the National Arbor Day Foundation. Mountain View Reforestation LLC was awarded the tree planting contract at \$82.94 per acre.

In addition, 1,000 trees were obtained on the open market and about half of those were used in a tree planting and educational day with the Glendale High School. Around 50 students came out for the tree plant. The trees left over from the high school tree plant were planted in-house at Quartz Creek on a piece of CSL land also burned in a wildland fire in 2013.

Work to suppress the spread of Scotch broom, an invasive weed, continues in the Windy Creek drainage. Thirty-five acres were treated with big game repellent in the Windy Creek drainage.

Public Outreach

On February 27, 2014, Glendale High School students planted trees in the Dad's Creek Fire area. The fire camp for the Douglas Complex was located in their school, so planting these trees was meaningful for kids who experienced the fire and smoke first-hand. There was also a forestry field day with professional volunteers from other agencies. Children from the Glendale Middle School participated in small group sessions learning about topics such as tree height calculation, reforestation plots, fish, wildlife, and soils. Many volunteers

County	Fund	Sale Name	Purchaser	VOL BOF	Vol C SL	Val BOF	Val C SL
Douglas	CSL	Quines Run #2	Boise Cascade	0	9.11	\$0.00	\$2,613.21
Douglas	BOF	Middle Windy Bear	Murphy Company	720.14	0	\$212,120.23	\$0.00
Douglas	BOF	Rockpit ROW	Bud Van Norman	46.57	0	\$15,302.27	\$0.00
Jackson	CSL	Cottonwood Ck Thin	Four Corners Forestry	0	488.4	\$0.00	\$117,449.35
Josephine	CSL	Quartz Salvage	HW Trucking	0	27.62	\$0.00	\$9,041.31
Grants Pass			District Totals	766.71	525.13	\$227,422.50	\$129,103.87



Students from Glendale schools planted trees in the Dad's Creek Fire area. Below, John Wilburn (left) and students at the tree planting site.



helped to plan and organize these events. We were especially thankful for the help of District Superintendent Bernyl Swanson, Clay Dickerson (former ODF unit forester) and Doug Thackery (forester for Plum Creek Timber).

Personnel

The unit is staffed with two full time foresters, a unit forester and a sale prep/admin forester. In the winter, a forest officer moves into a State Lands role doing primarily reforestation work. An equipment operator is partially funded in the winter, and GIS support is provided by

our district systems administrator. This year the unit hired Joanna Deegan, a forester with many life experiences: tagging and wrestling bears, studied in Germany and chasing red deer, reforestation in Africa, forestry in Wisconsin and Colorado.

On March 9, 2014, ODF forester John Wilburn died while Kayaking the Smith River. John was an adventurous soul who enjoyed the outdoors, forestry, and working with kids. John is survived by his wife, Erin, who has set up an adventure scholarship for kids who wish to learn and enjoy nature in safety.

Fleet

The Southwest Oregon District fleet comprises nearly 18 percent of ODF's state vehicles. There are a variety of rigs from sedans and ½-ton 4x4s to bulldozers and the transports that carry them. Fire engines are the fleet's main focus and the district runs 26 pieces of apparatus divided between the Medford and Grants Pass units. In all, the district has more than 80 vehicles that, in 2014, travelled nearly 460,000 extremely safe miles.

The district has its own in-house fabrication shop, run by Doug Burkhart, in which the fire engines are constructed to demanding standards very cost effectively. Doug is also the Medford Unit's dozer operator.

The district's fleet maintenance shop, run by Paul Blankenship, is actually two shops. The Grants Pass and Medford units each have bays set up for maintenance and repairs. Paul splits his time between the two units and is quite effective at repairing broken equipment with a minimum of down time. This is important during fire season when 100 percent fleet operation is critical.

A highly trained workforce is required to operate all this equipment safely. To this end, driver's training is conducted during fire school each year with refreshers required at 5-year intervals. Accidents while driving is potentially the #1 cause of firefighter injury. The exposure rate is so much higher than any other job they do. To combat accidents, the district fosters a safety mindedness attitude, providing training and keeping the fleet in tip-top condition.

Wildfire Protection Act Crews

By Tim Swink

The Wildfire Protection Act Crew is a pilot program that the Grants Pass Unit participated in during the 2014 fire season. Severity funds through the Act provided \$135,000 for the Southwest Oregon District to assemble two five-person hand crews. The goal was to produce a professional, highly effective team that would be available for initial and extended attack.

The crews started off the fire season with eight crewmembers who were completely new to wildland fire fighting, and they were led by two experienced Forest Officers. Splitting the crew into two five-person crews provided flexibility for either working them separately covering multiple fires, or combining them into a ten-person crew for larger fires, and having coverage seven days a week. Having the crews working together each day created a cohesive team with a solid work ethic.

During the 2014 fire season, the crews attended 3½ weeks of fire school, took action on approximately 50 fire assignments, and assisted in the rehabilitation of five fires.

The crews spent two weeks on the Reeves Creek Fire and one week on the Old Blue Mountain Fire, averaging 14-hour days containing and mopping up these fires.

On three lightning complexes with numerous fires, the crews averaged 16-18-hour days.

The crews spent four 14-hour days on the Onion Mountain Fire assisting with building contingency line. The crews also spent four days on mutual aid fire assignments with the Rogue



River-Siskiyou National Forest and Grants Pass Fire-Rescue.

Between fire assignments, the crews spent days training and working on other projects.

Both crews were crucial to the District's success with keeping 96.1 percent of all fires at ten acres or less. During initial attack, the extra five-to-ten people on these fires made a significant difference. On multiple occasions the crews worked on constructing hose lays and digging hand line to stop the forward progression of a fire perimeter, resulting in saving acres which in the end was a large cost savings. Also, having the two extra resources

for lightning complexes lasting multiple days was a benefit, particularly when there are no extra resources available due to other fires throughout the state or nation.

In the Southwest Oregon District if there is one initial attack call there is a very high chance of getting a second call. These crews not only helped the District's initial attack engines to contain fires quickly, but allowed the engine crews the time to quickly restore their engines and get back to their patrol areas. The crews helped the District to maintain a higher degree of initial attack protection.



The year 2014 was very busy for Private Forests staff supporting the District and State with fire suppression assignments. Fortunately for the Grants Pass Unit, there was no change in staffing. Medford office went through several changes in the Office Specialist position due to Caitlin Goins getting a promotion and her administrative skills and support to the program will be missed.

The biggest change that affected both units was the development, testing and implementation of E-notification, the online Forest Activity Notification process. Not unlike most large-scale technological changes, the testing and implementation were not without challenges and opportunities to enhance the program. The new program gave operators and timberland owners the flexibility of filing their notifications from their home or office, and the ability to receive copies of their notifications and inspections via email.

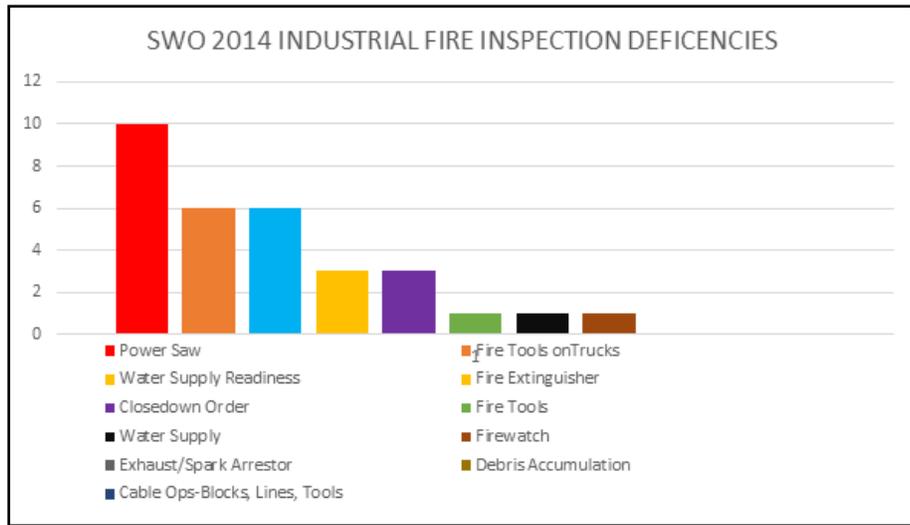
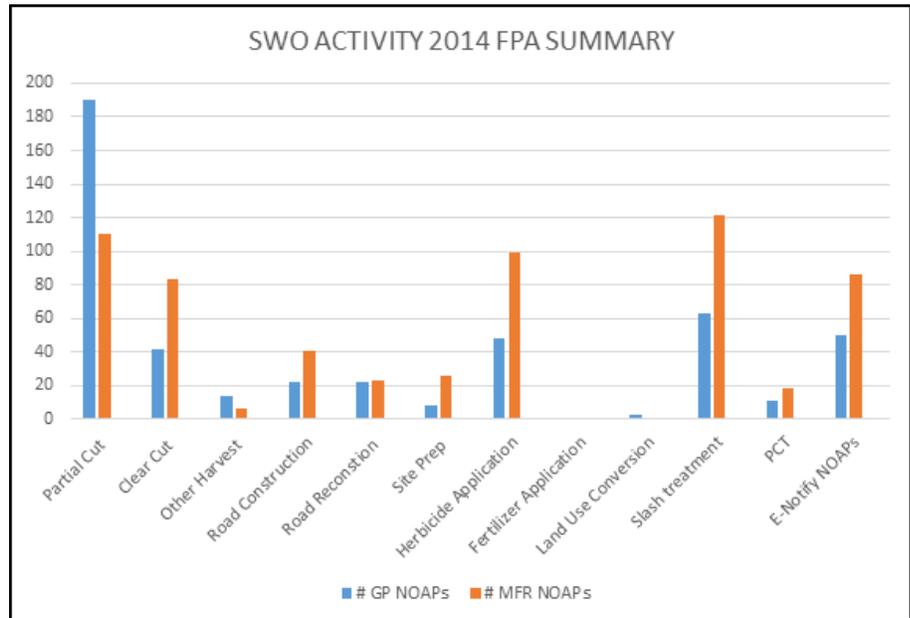


Harvesting was very busy throughout the District especially on the northern portion of the Grants Pass Unit due to fire salvage from the 2013 and 2014 fires. There were several Plan for Alternate Practices approved to exceed the 120-acre contiguous clearcut size limitation to facilitate the fire salvage. A total of 1,086 notifications were filed for forest management activities on the district, 473 being on the Grants Pass Unit and 613 on the Medford Unit. Additionally, 312 Power Driven Machinery permits were issued with 134 being on the Grants Pass Unit and 178 on the Medford Unit.

A total of 106 industrial fire inspections were conducted on the District, with 31 deficiencies being observed and corrected and four warning citations issued.

Private Forests

By Steve Wetmore

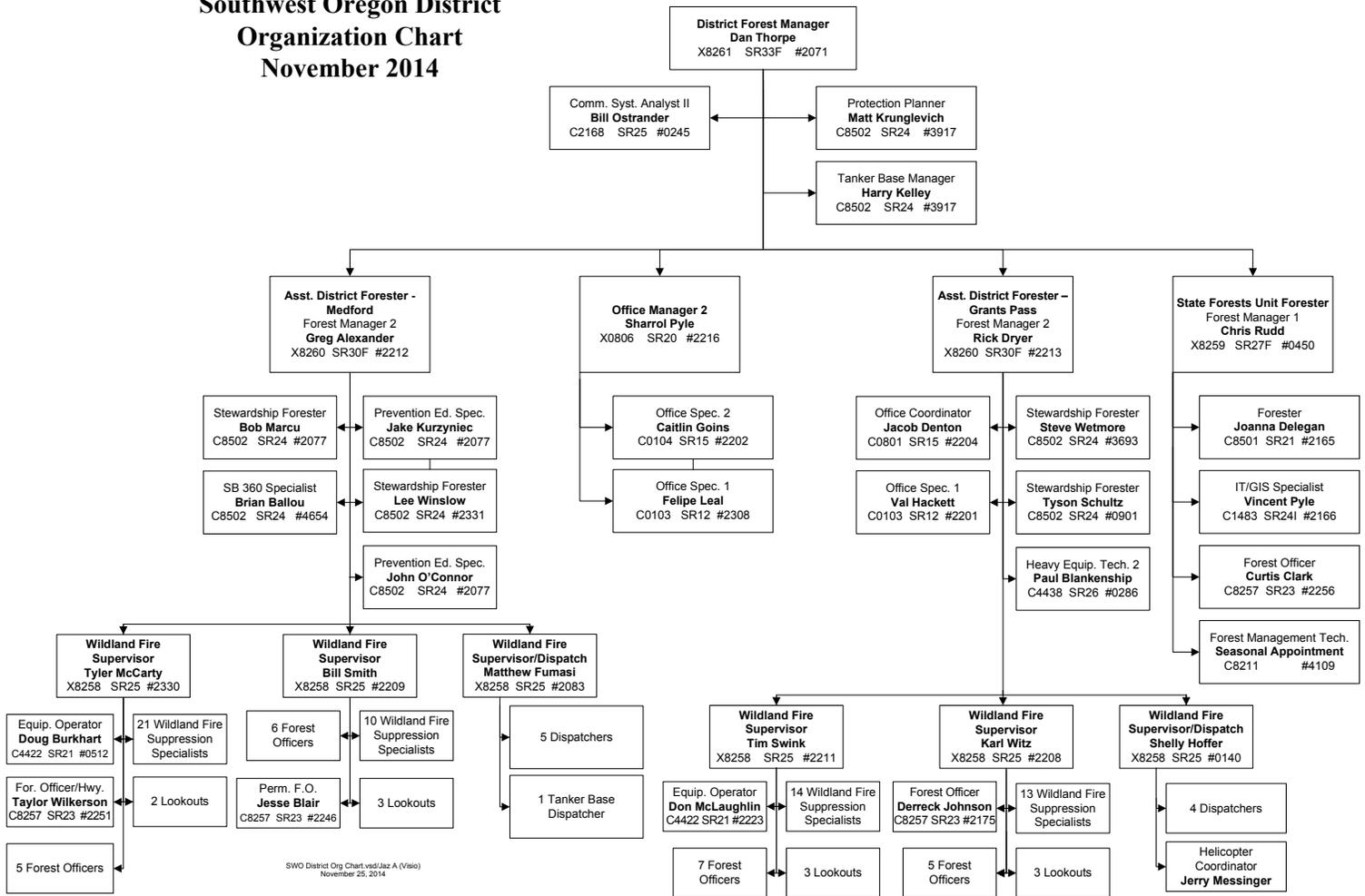


The Grants Pass Unit Private Forest Staff spent a considerable amount of time preparing and participating in two administrative hearings for six Forest Practices citations issued in 2013 involving logging and mining vs. the Oregon Forest Practices Act. Key decisions made by the Administrative Law Judges and the Board of Forestry were 1) OR FPA applies to mining activities if logs are sold, bartered or traded, and 2)

a Plan for Alternate Practice is required to convert forestland to mining and to be exempt from the reforestation requirement.

The year marched on rather quickly, but all of the Stewardship Foresters and the Office Specialists on the District look forward to another busy year as E-Notify continues to bring ODF into the 21st century, and we are preparing for what appears to be possibly another busy fire season.

**Southwest Oregon District
Organization Chart
November 2014**



SWO District Org Chart v09/2014 (V150) November 25, 2014

Southwest Oregon District • 5286 Table Rock Rd. • Central Point, OR 97502 • (541) 664-3328

Grants

The 2014 grant season in Southwest Oregon was very successful. We assisted in completing 202 acres of fuel reduction and have over 300 obligated. The demand for our professional fuels and fire knowledge continues to grow and we have secured additional diverse grant funding help out.

There continues to be mix of landowners new to the area, and experienced woodland owners. SWO District continues to lead the state in our Partnership Development Program allowing landowner assistance with fuel reduction and education.

This year we grew the Firewise program and have over 10 new communities in the district. The program is planned to continue through at least 2015, and we are continually exploring new opportunities to seek grant funding.

We continue to look forward working with our cooperators in education and fire safety.

Information Technology

The Southwest Oregon District has one of the largest and most varied computer networks of all ODF Districts.

Our inventory includes nearly 70 computers (desktops &

laptops), about 30 printers, and four separate networks.

One of the networks that is used by our ForestWatch smoke detection system stretches for almost 100 miles across Jackson and Josephine counties, to reach 11 cameras that are mounted on 6 mountaintop sites across the District.

Within the past three years we have migrated away from Windows Mobile devices to operating over 20 iOS devices (iPads & iPhones) across all District activities such as: Initial Attack, Fire Investigation, Aviation, Stewardship Forestry, Dispatch, State Forests, and Outreach & Education.