



News Release

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

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Thousands of DOC inmates contribute to a successful 2014 fire season

Each year the Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) team up to select and train inmates to dispatch to wildfires. Inmates are selected to serve on supervised 10-person crews and have to complete the same nationally certified firefighter training course as their civilian counterparts. They learn the fundamentals of wildfire behavior, firefighting techniques, communication, and safety.

Deployment of DOC fire crews this year began in January and continued through October. During this time, DOC deployed an astonishing 242 staff members and 2,701 inmates to battle 66 fires.

These crews were on the fire line from one to 17 days at a time, depending on the severity of the fire.



Nine of DOC's 14 institutions have active fire crews. These institutions are:

- Deer Ridge Correctional Institution in Madras (responded to six fires)
- Mill Creek Correctional Facility in Salem (responded to 20 fires)
- Powder River Correctional Facility in Baker City (responded to 15 fires)
- Santiam Correctional Institution in Salem (responded to eight fires)
- Shutter Creek Correctional Institution in North Bend (responded to eight fires)
- Snake River Correctional Institution in Ontario (responded to 16 fires)
- South Fork Forest Camp in Tillamook (responded to 31 fires)
- Two Rivers Correctional Institution in Umatilla (responded to six fires)
- Warner Creek Correctional Facility in Lakeview (responded to eight fires)

Each of these institutions plays an important role in assisting ODF with fire season. In addition to fighting fires, inmate camp crews staff mobile kitchens at large fires, serving meals day and night to two shifts of firefighters.

The mission of the Oregon Department of Corrections is to promote public safety by holding offenders accountable for their actions and reducing the risk of future criminal behavior.

As this year's fire season comes to a close, DOC would like to recognize the staff members and firefighting crews who participated throughout the year. Not only does the fire program save the state millions of dollars, it provides DOC's low-risk offenders with the tools they need for future work opportunities, which helps prepare them for re-entry into the community.

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