

FOREST GROVE DISTRICT 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



Oregon Department of Forestry's Mission Statement

To serve the people of Oregon by protecting, managing and promoting stewardship of Oregon's forests to enhance environmental, economic and community sustainability.



Smokey Bear drove out from Columbia City to raise awareness about Fire Prevention at a Portland Timbers game.

From the Desk of the District Forester

Dear Colleagues,

After 28 years with the Oregon Department of Forestry, including 12 fire seasons as your District Forester, the time has come for me to move on to a new opportunity. I will be transitioning to the Oregon Small Woodlands Association, where I will continue supporting landowners both locally and statewide. It has been both a privilege and an honor to work with all of you, and I look forward to continuing our collaboration in my new role. The district is in a strong position, and I am confident that the next District Forester will build upon the work we have done together. I wish them all the best, as I do each of you.

Reflecting on this past year, it was a challenging fire season across the state. We faced 848 fires burning 321,600 acres, compared to the 10-year average of 919 fires and 110,738 acres on ODF protected ground. Statewide, the total reached 2,039 fires and 1,915,554 acres. Through it all, our staff and firefighting community answered the call, often leaving their families at a moment's notice, spending nights in tents, and breathing smoke. I deeply appreciate and value this culture of dedication—fighting fire aggressively while prioritizing safety above all else.

Locally, the Lee Falls Fire was our most significant challenge. It was a remarkable team effort, with Gaston, Forest Grove, and many assisting agencies working tirelessly to protect Cherry Grove, while ODF, landowners, and operators focused on controlling the wildland fire. The fire started in grass at the base of a hill and rapidly spread, outpacing initial attack resources. Yet, through hard work and dedication, a containment line was established before the heat of the following day. While there were many lessons learned, the experience reinforced the importance of continuous improvement in emergency response. Washington County Emergency Management's ongoing preseason coordination and post-season debriefing efforts will further strengthen our response capabilities.

Beyond fire, the work of our stewardship foresters and small forestland owner foresters continues to be a vital part of our mission. To improve service, we are merging these roles and redrawing boundaries for stewardship foresters. This shift will restore the district's "one-stop shopping" model, ensuring that each landowner has a single point of contact for forest practices, small landowner programs, and other ODF resources. These foresters are committed professionals, and I appreciate their hard work and dedication serving you. On the State Forests front, the agency continues to pursue a Habitat Conservation Plan while fulfilling the requirements of both the old and new forest management plans. One of the most significant challenges has been meeting the stringent sediment requirements. I recognize the effort this demands and appreciate the dedication and success we have achieved in this crucial area.

As I step into this new role, I do so with gratitude for the experiences and relationships I have built over the years. It has truly been an honor to work alongside such dedicated professionals, and I look forward to continuing our work together in a different capacity.

With sincere appreciation,

Mike Cafferata



Fire Protection – Forest Grove & Columbia City

The Forest Grove District fire season officially started on July 1, 2024, and ended October 16, 2024 for a total of 108 days of fire season. Statewide, ODF deployed its Incident Management Teams (IMTs) from July to mid-October. Forest Grove District employees participated actively in those statewide deployments with some staff members being out of district for more than 60 days in a 4 month period.

While 2024 was one of the most active fire seasons in Oregon's recent history, Forest Grove was below average with just 23 stat fires for the season. Interestingly, five of those 23 stat fires were started by lightning which is above average. Those five, lightning caused fires were from two different lightning storms. Of the 23 stat fires 6 were on the Columbia Unit.

This summer the agency implemented a new initial attack pilot project with the Adults in Custody (AIC) crews from South Fork Forest Camp. During moderate and high fire danger South Fork crews were strategically positioned in high fire prone areas and worked close to road systems where they could respond quickly. They also came to the field ready to respond to fires if they were called upon. For the Forest Grove Unit this proved to be a valuable program. The South Fork AIC crews were quick to respond to district fires and the Lee Falls fire was no exception with AIC crews arriving at Lee Falls within an hour of the initial call.

Forest Grove's largest fire of 2024 was the Lee Falls Fire. This fire started on August 8th in a timber unit near the unincorporated community of Cherry Grove. Due to the fire's proximity to Cherry Grove and the jurisdictional boundaries shared by ODF and Gaston Rural Fire Department, the two agencies went into unified command to combat the fire. The first burn period proved to be challenging, but with the help of all the cooperators the district was able to stop the forward movement of the fire, get a fire line around it, and start the mop up process.

Though the Lee Falls Fire saw a FEMA declaration made on August 8th, the district was able to manage the fire at a Type 3 incident complexity. The Forest Grove office compound became the fire camp and Incident Command Post (ICP). The logistics personnel did a great job turning the compound into a fire camp with showers, tent areas, and food trucks serving meals. The Finance Team did excellent work in getting local and out-of-area resources signed on agreements and paid in a timely manner. Firefighters and overhead appreciated the visit and supportive words made by NWOFFPA President Kathryn VanNatta during her visit to the Lee Falls fire camp.

Forest Grove extends thanks all of those who worked to prevent and fight fire on the District in 2024.



Northwest Oregon Fire Protective Association Leadership

President: Kathryn Van Natta, Roman V Ranch

Vice President: Rodney Jacobs, Stimson Lumber Company

Secretary / Treasurer: Rebecca Windle, Giustina Land & Timber

Forest Grove District – Fire Season Statistics for 2024

Key Dates

- Fire Season & Regulated Use Start Date: 07/01/2024
- Fire Season & Regulated Use End Date: 10/16/2024

Fire Statistics

Total Fires Calls: 52

Stat Fires: 23

Non-Stat Fires: 6

Non-Fire Crew Actions: 23

Stat Acres Burned: 303.28

Fire Causes

Debris: 6

Equipment: 7

Lightning: 5

Miscellaneous: 4

Recreation: 7

Smoking: 1

Arson: 2

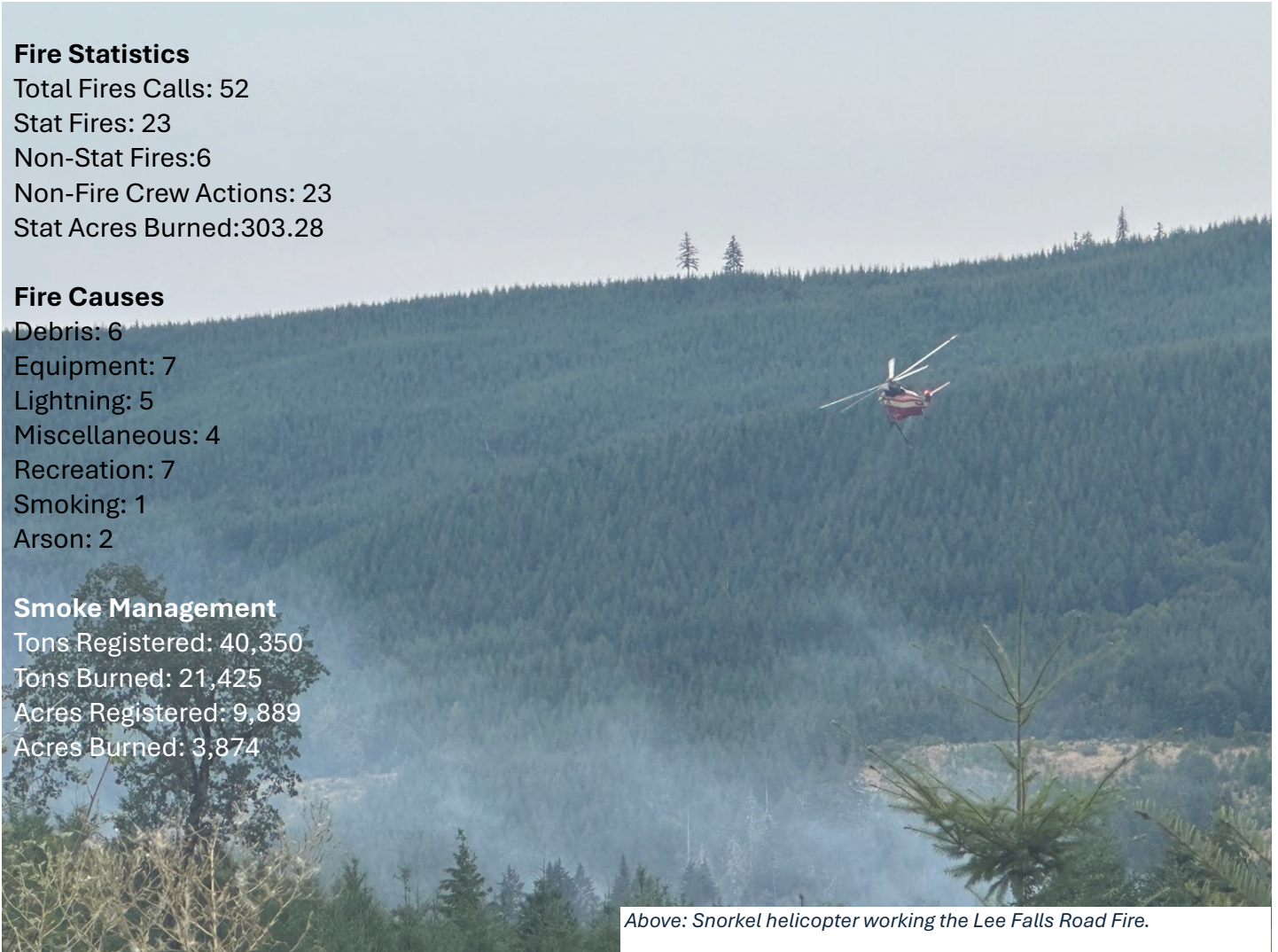
Smoke Management

Tons Registered: 40,350

Tons Burned: 21,425

Acres Registered: 9,889

Acres Burned: 3,874



Above: Snorkel helicopter working the Lee Falls Road Fire.



Firefighters gather around the base of a tree struck by lightning at Scapponia Park.

Below: Briefing at the Lee Falls Road Fire ICP.



Forest Resources – Forest Grove & Columbia City

The new Private Forest Accord (PFA) rules took effect January 1st, 2024. There was a tremendous amount of work to prepare, train, and educate our ODF foresters as well as our forest cooperators, operators, and landowners as the new rules were implemented.

We have five Stewardship Foresters in the District, with an addition of two Small Forest Ownership (SFO) foresters to support the new SFO programs through the PFA. Our current foresters and years in their role are as follows: John Krause (38 years), Brent O'nion (26 years), Kevin Nelson (14), Erik Jacobs (4), Nick Maslen (2), Taylor Johnson (2), and Nicole Howard (1).

The biggest change in the Forest Resources program for the District was the retirement of John Krause. During his career, John had a huge impact on the state of Oregon and Columbia County. Over the years, John helped train and provide guidance to many new Stewardship Foresters, not just in Forest Grove but across the State. His wealth of knowledge and his eagerness to share it will be sorely missed. One of John's last notable projects was nominating R.D. Reeves Construction Inc. (Clatskanie, Oregon) for the 2024 Operator of the Year Award. Up against very notable nominees, R.D. Reeves was selected for and received the Operator of the Year Award for the Northwest Oregon Area. In January, John attended the Board of Forestry meeting and had the dual honor of presenting the Operator of the Year Award and receiving from the Board his ODF 45-year service award. Congratulations, John!

Forest Grove District Forest Resources Statistics

Combined statistics for the Forest Grove and Columbia City Offices

January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024

- FPA Inspections: 688
- Fire Inspections: 58
- Notifications: 1,255
- Complaints Investigated: 10
- Unsatisfactory Conditions: 5
- Citations: 14

*John Krause and
Jasen McCoy visit
with a representative
from Gwinn and Sons
Logging, Inc.*



State Forests – Fiscal Year 2024 (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024)

Marketing Unit

- Advertised Timber Sales: 16
- Modified Clear Cut Acres: 1,337
- Partial Cut Acres: 366
- MBF Advertised Volume: 62,333
- **Bid Value Revenue: \$40,455,584**

Reforestation Unit

- Herbicide Release: 323 acres
- Mechanical Release: 463 acres
- Aerial Site Prep: 688 acres
- Herbicide Site-Prep: 175 acres
- Noxious Weed Mgmt.: 270 acres
- Surveys: 3,269 acres
- Tree Protection: 1,466 acres
- Initial Tree Planting: 1,449 acres
- Inter-Planting: 483 acres
- **Trees Planted: 745,362 seedlings**

Roads Unit

- Roads Maintained: 36 miles
- Roads Improved: 63.7 miles
- Roads Constructed: 6.73miles
- Roads Vacated: 1.5 miles
- Rock Volume Crushed: 15,000cy
- **Total Project Work: \$1,708,937.00**

Small Forest Products

- 628 permits sold = \$62,800
- Commercial Firewood Permits: 1
- Woodcutting Permits: 546= \$10,920



The Forest Grove District manages 116,790 acres State Forest lands across Yamhill, Washington, Columbia and Clatsop counties. This acreage is split between 116180 acres of Board of Forestry (BOF) land and 610 acres of Common School Land (CSL, owned by Department of State Lands).

Approximately two-thirds of the revenue from Board of Forestry Lands are distributed to the counties in which the lands are situated for distribution to local taxing districts. The State retains about one-third of the revenue to cover land management costs. Revenue from CSL land goes into the State Common School Fund.

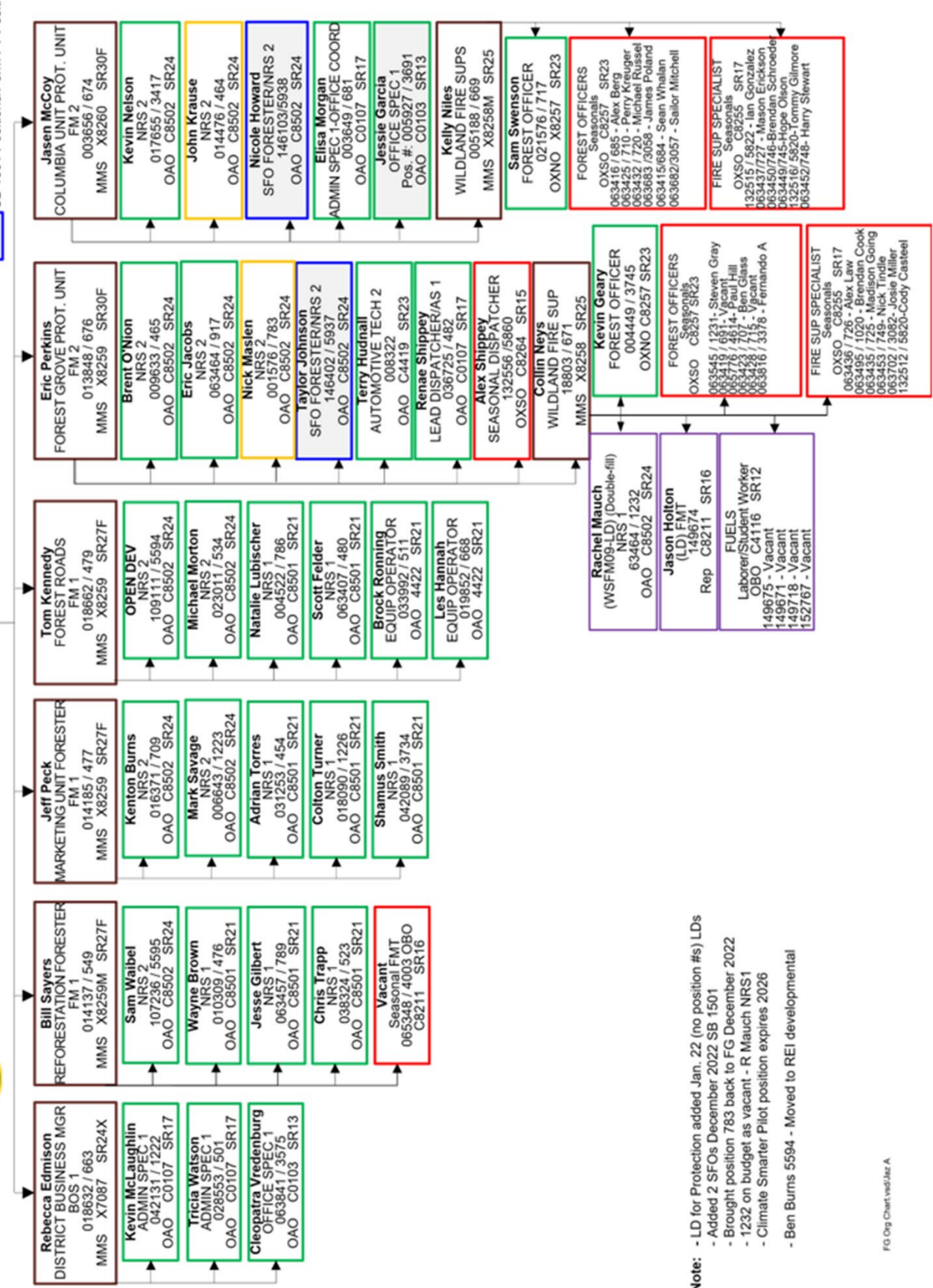
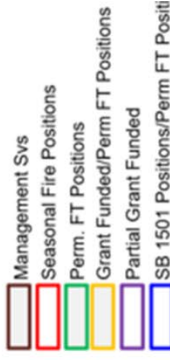
These forested acres are managed to provide a full range of social, environmental and economic benefits including: sustainable and predictable forest products, native wildlife habitat and natural resource based recreation opportunities as well as providing revenue to the counties.

These goals are accomplished through the combined efforts of the district's State Forests staff in the Marketing, Forest Roads, Reforestation units in partnership with the Salem Planning unit and the Area program.



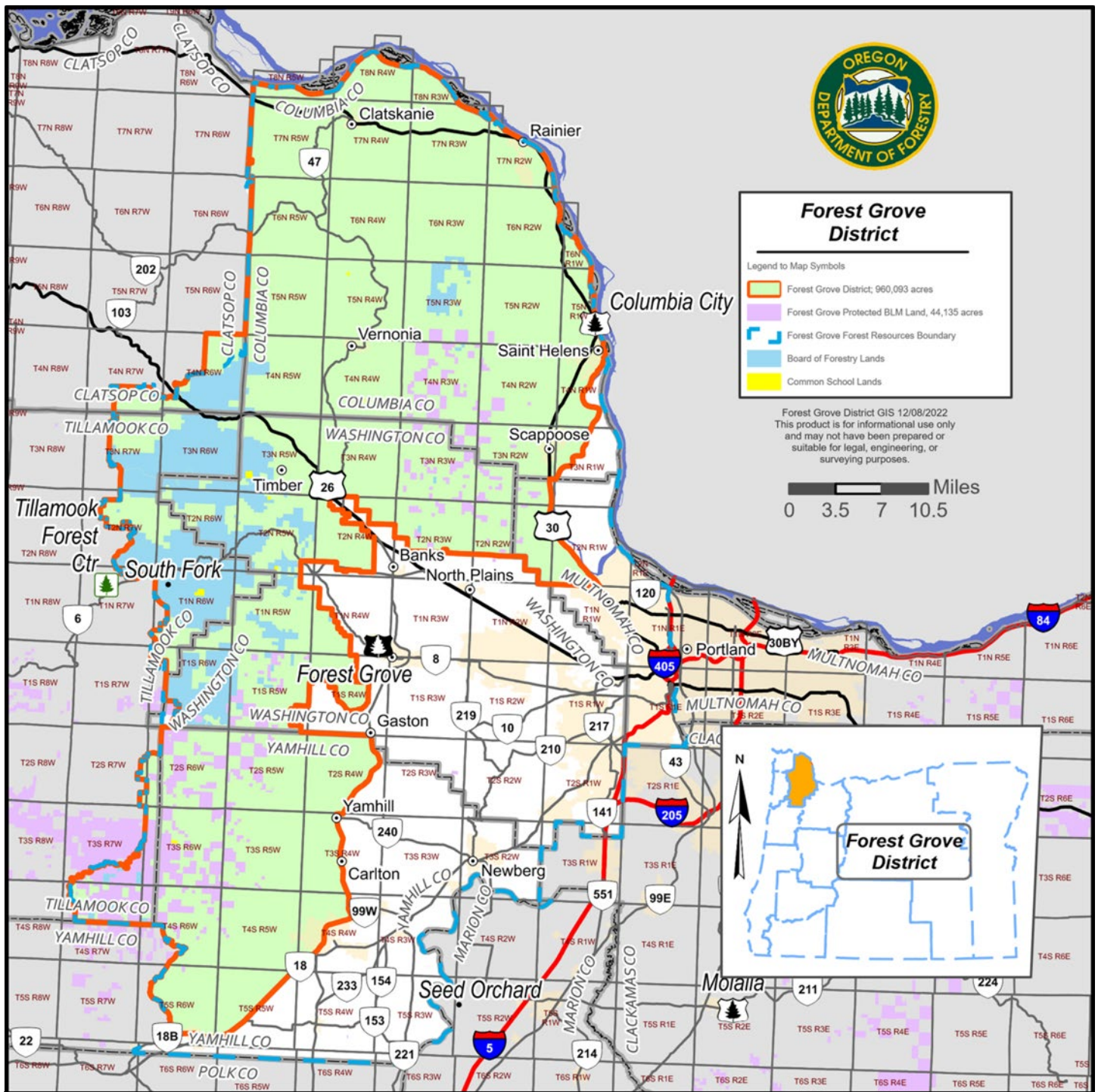
Forest Grove District

May 23, 2024



Note:

- LD for Protection added Jan. 22 (no position #s) LDs
- Added 2 SFOs December 2022 SB 1501
- Brought position 783 back to FG December 2022
- 1232 on budget as vacant - R Mauch NRS1
- Climate Smarter Pilot position expires 2026
- Ben Burns 5594 - Moved to REI developmental



Contact Us

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