2017 Fire Season Update

Doug Grafe, Chief
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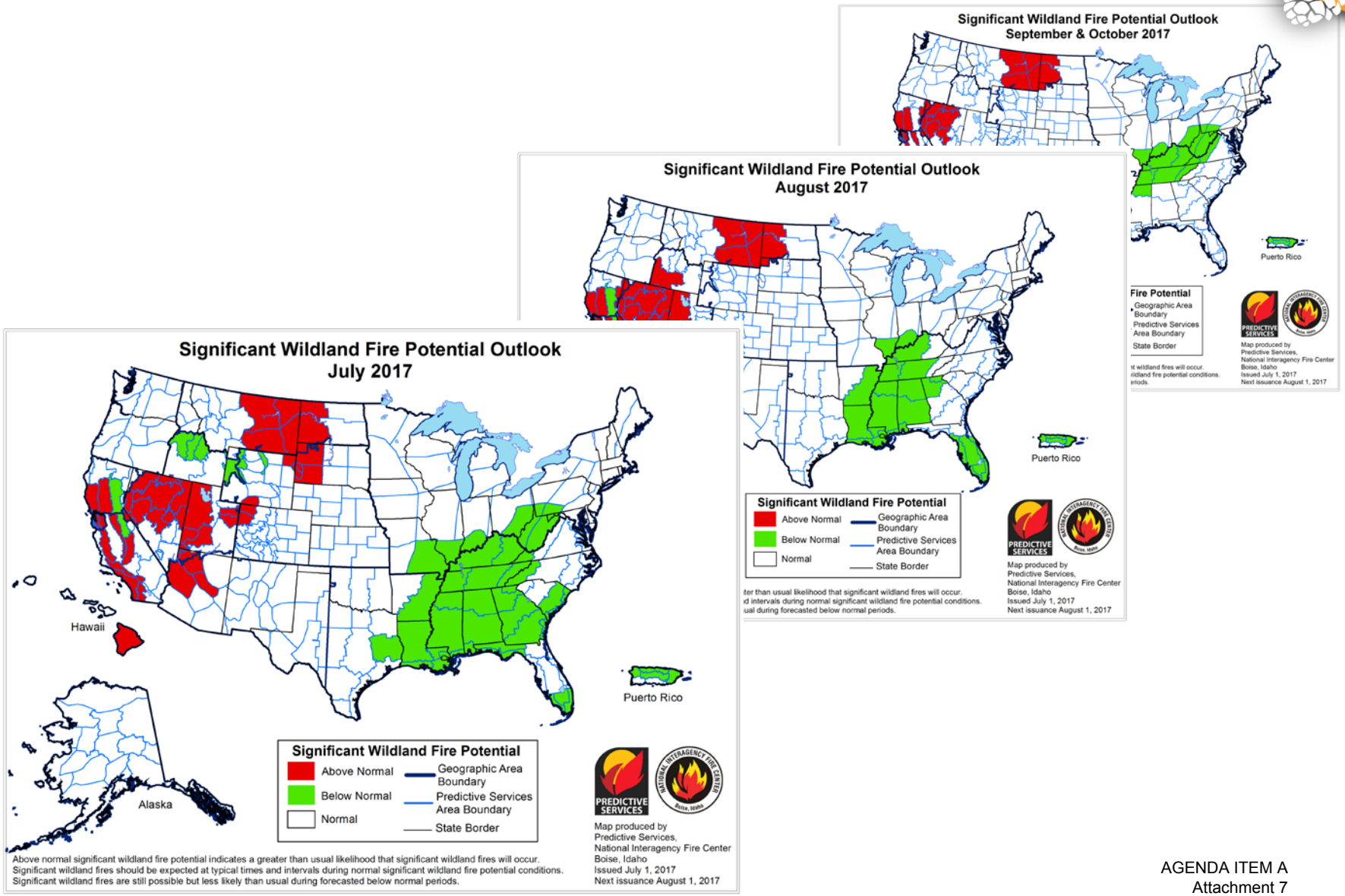
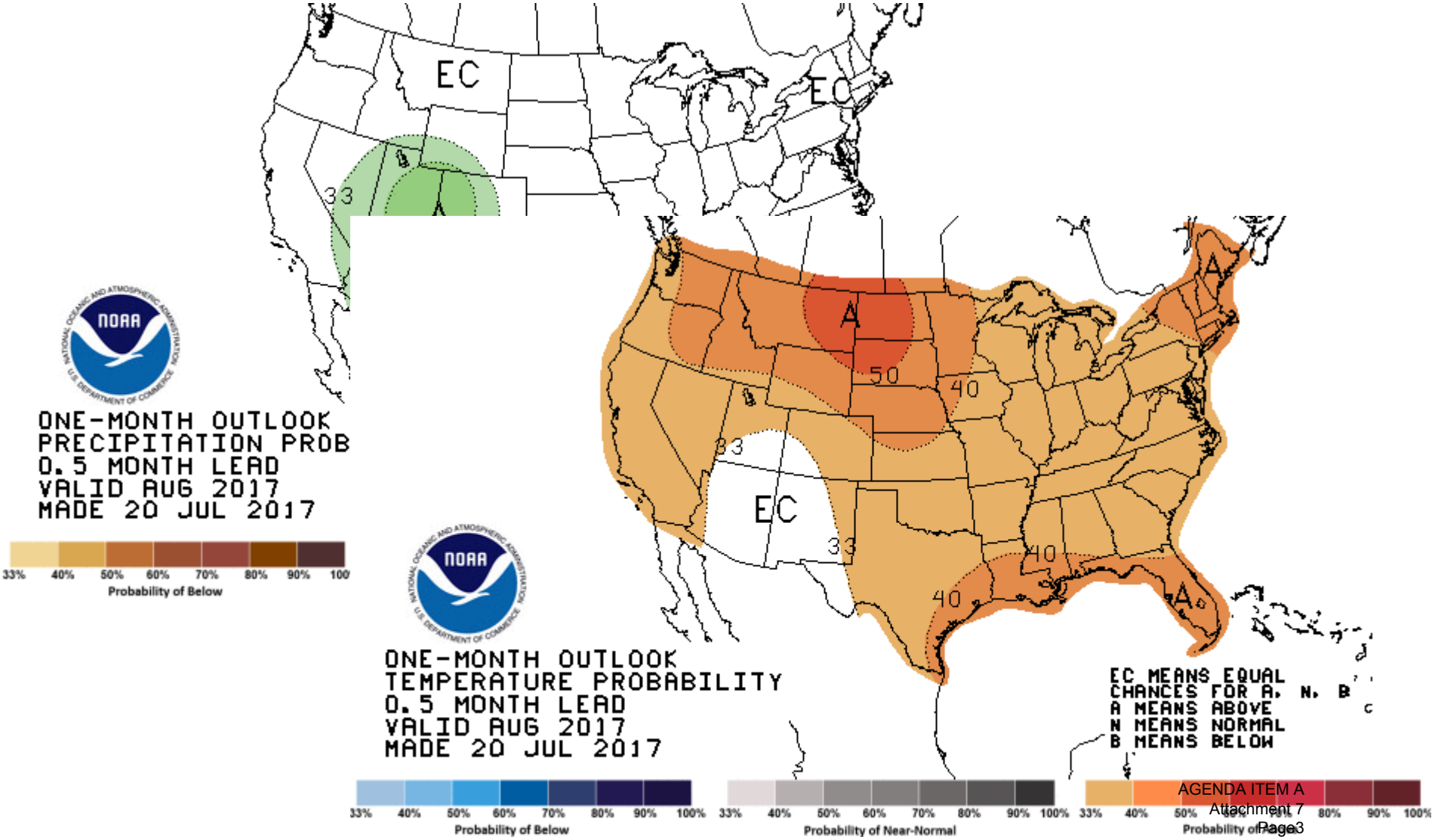
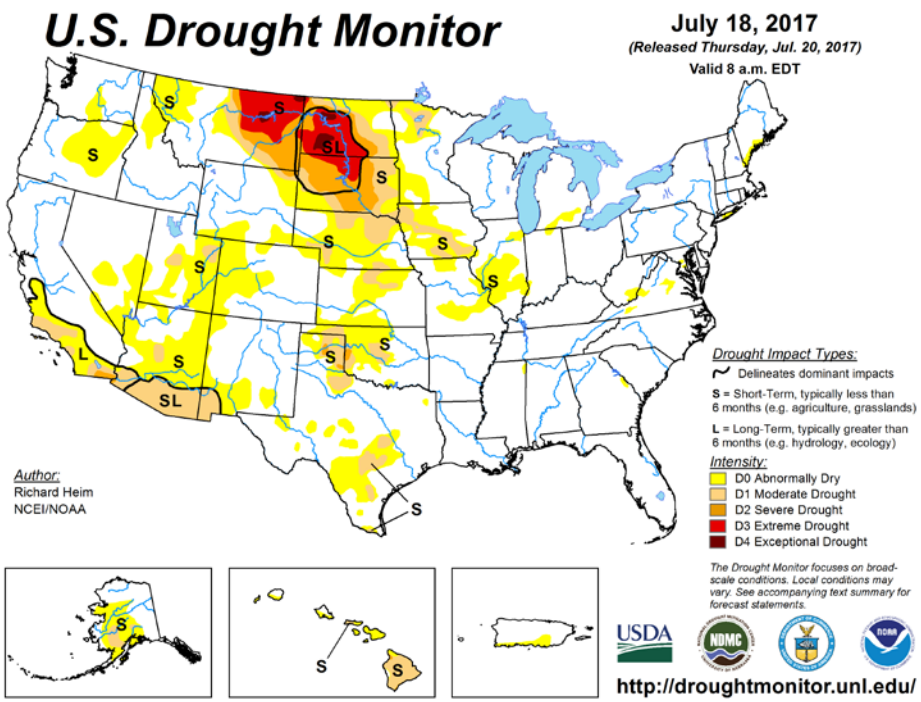
Wildland Fire Potential Outlooks 2017



Precipitation and Temperature Outlooks
1-Month Outlook for July 2017

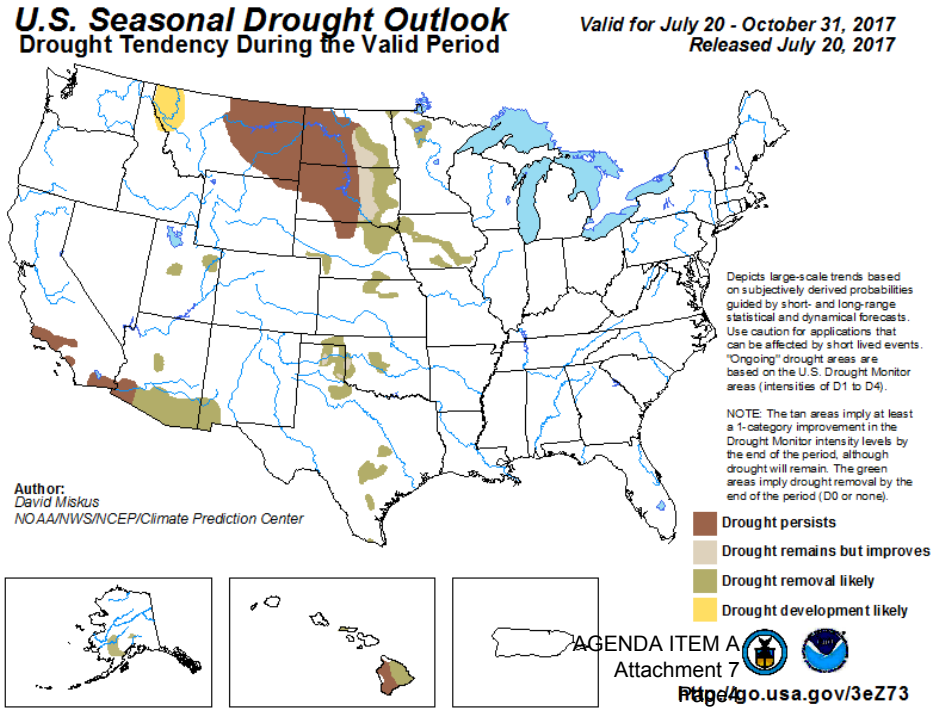


Drought Monitor and Outlooks July 2017



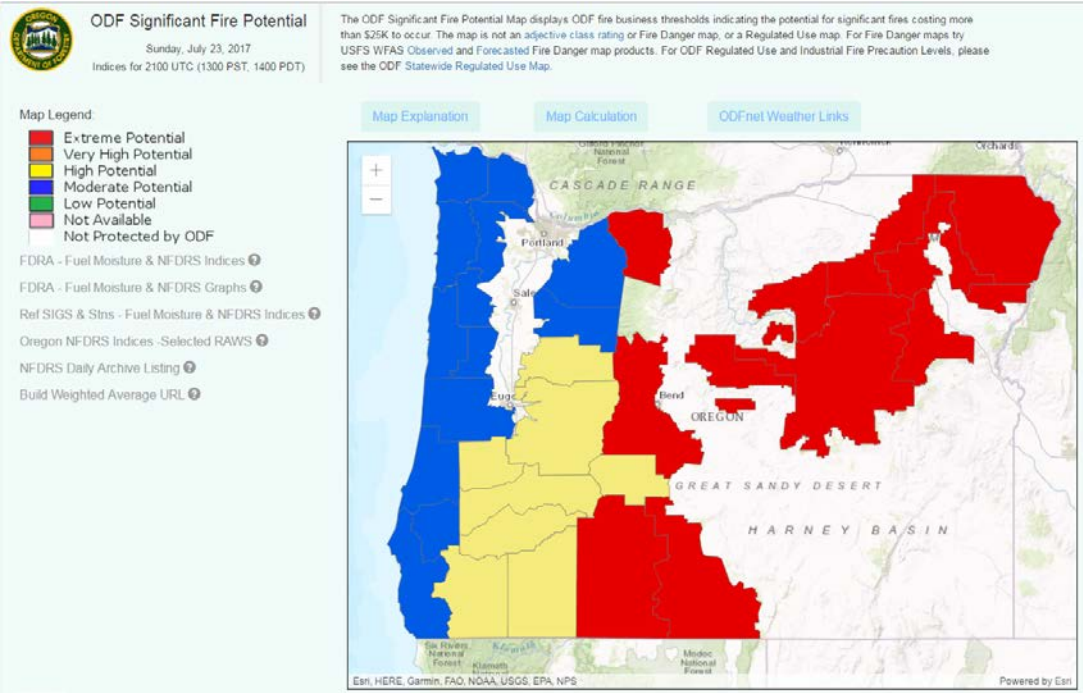
Intensity:

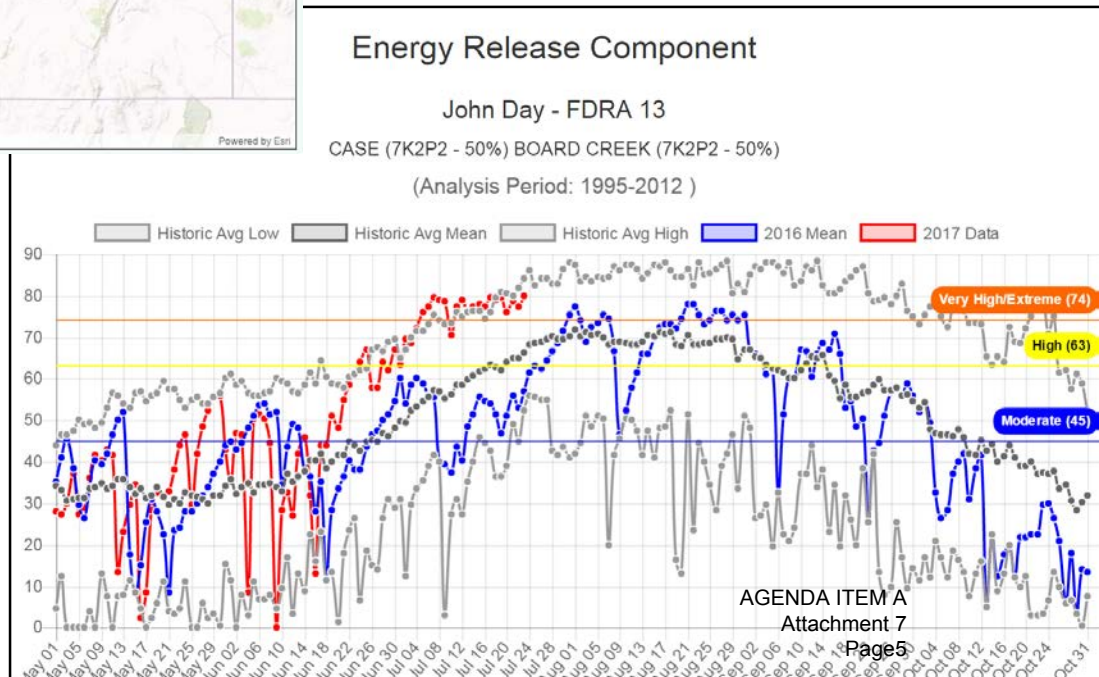
- D0 - Abnormally Dry
- D1 - Moderate Drought
- D2 - Severe Drought
- D3 - Extreme Drought
- D4 - Exceptional Drought



http://go.usa.gov/3eZ73

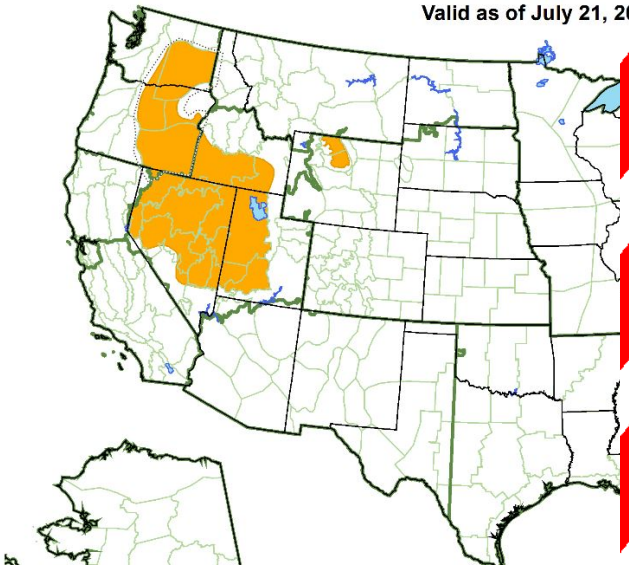
ODF Significant Fire Potential 7/24/2017





Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory – July 21, 2017

-- Eastern WA and Eastern OR Rangelands



Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory

Rangelands in Eastern Washington and Eastern Oregon

7/21/2017

Subject: **Potential for extreme fire spread rates, significant fire spread and increased resistance to control due to increased loading and continuity of grasses in rangelands in Eastern Washington and Eastern Oregon.**

Discussion: Optimal growing conditions this spring created an above normal grass crop. Many locals are reporting the most grass they have seen and monitoring data show 2 to 3 times the normal grass load. Some locations are reporting grasses that are taller than the shrubs around them.

Extended dry conditions have caused live and dead fuel moisture to rapidly decrease. Most grasses are cured at this time but partially green grasses are deceptive and are burning rapidly with the additional cured grass load. Shrubs are at critical moisture levels in many places and are contributing to increased fire intensity and prolific short range spotting. Extreme rates of spread and continuous spread have been observed on recent fires.

Resistance to control is greatly increased. Recent fires have reported:

- Extreme rates of spread and continuous spread even with moderate winds
- Areas with green that would normally slow fire spread are not slowing fire spread
- Normal retardant coverage for grass fires is not stopping fires as it normally would
- Increased potential for the fire to rekindle after it has been knocked down
- Prolific short range spotting in brush

Conditions across the area are likely to get worse as grasses and shrubs continue to cure and dry out.

Difference from normal conditions: Recent fires are spreading faster than expected, more intensely and typical firefighting tactics are less effective, even with moderate winds. ERC's are above average August values.

Concerns to Firefighters and the Public:

- Extreme rates of spread with moderate winds can exceed firefighter production rates, and put firefighters and the public at risk. Anticipate rapid rates of spread, even in the absence of slope and wind.
- Fires will be easier to start and spread and spotting will be more problematic with the increased grass continuity.
- Anticipate dust devils and fire whirls to develop in hot, dry and unstable conditions, especially in fine flashy fuels, that may jeopardize control lines and contribute to erratic fire behavior.
- Additional effort is needed to ensure wet lines and retardant lines are secure.
- Fire behavior can change rapidly with changes in relative humidity, wind speed and wind direction.
- Thunderstorms may produce strong outflow winds that may rapidly increase fire behavior and change spread direction.

Mitigation Measures:

- Brief incoming resources about conditions, especially out of area resources not familiar with grass fires
- Increased emphasis of Lookouts, Communications, Escape Routes and Safety Zones is needed.
- Modify tactics to account for potential high rapid rates of spread and high resistance to control. Plan for larger safety zones and plan to escape to them sooner.
- Ensure firefighters have good anchor points and are keeping one foot in the black.
- Indirect tactics may be the most effective, but increased emphasis needs to be placed on LCES.
- Establish trigger points and constantly re-evaluate tactics/weather/fire behavior to ensure safety.
- Always be aware of the latest weather and fire danger information.

Area of Concern: Rangelands in Eastern Washington and Eastern Oregon.

Potential for extreme fire spread rates, significant fire spread and increased resistance to control due to increased loading and continuity of grasses in Eastern Washington and Eastern Oregon rangelands.

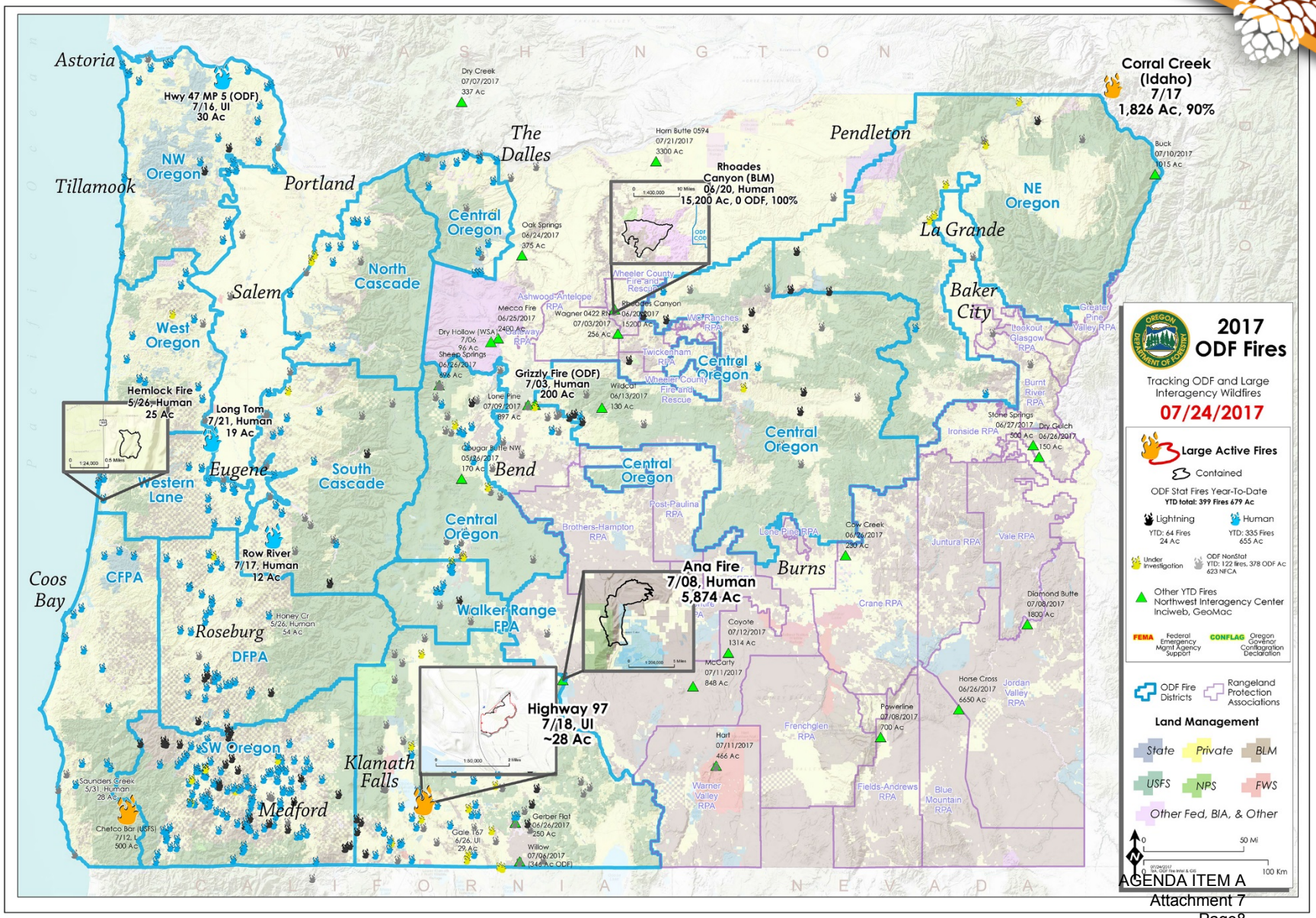
Current Fire Activity Stats – July 24, 2017

2017 Year To Date		
	Fires	**Acres**
Lightning	64	24
Human	335	655
Total	399	679
2016 Year To Date		
Lightning	49	2,217
Human	322	398
Total	371	2,615
10-Year Average 2007-2016 Year To Date		
Lightning	103	5,391
Human	305	2,064
Total	408	7,456

2017 YTD
number of fires caught at 10 acres or less:

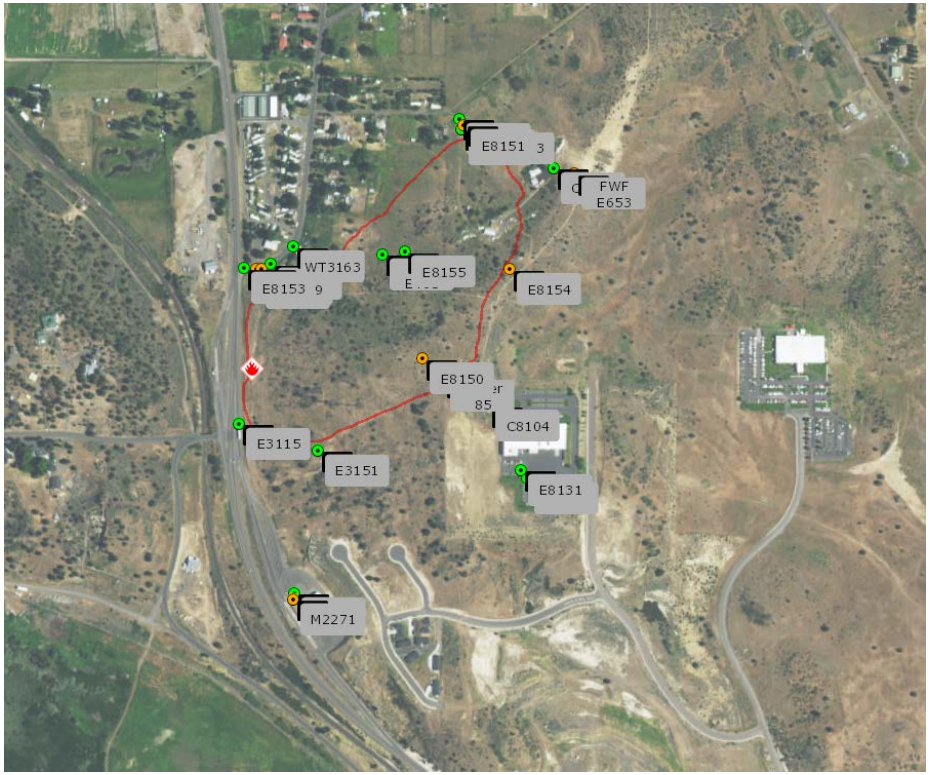
98%

ODF Large Fire Tracking Map – 7/24/2017



The Hemlock Fire south of Florence, Ore., burned during the last weekend in May. It was stopped after burning 25 acres. (Photo by A.J. Hudgik, ODF)

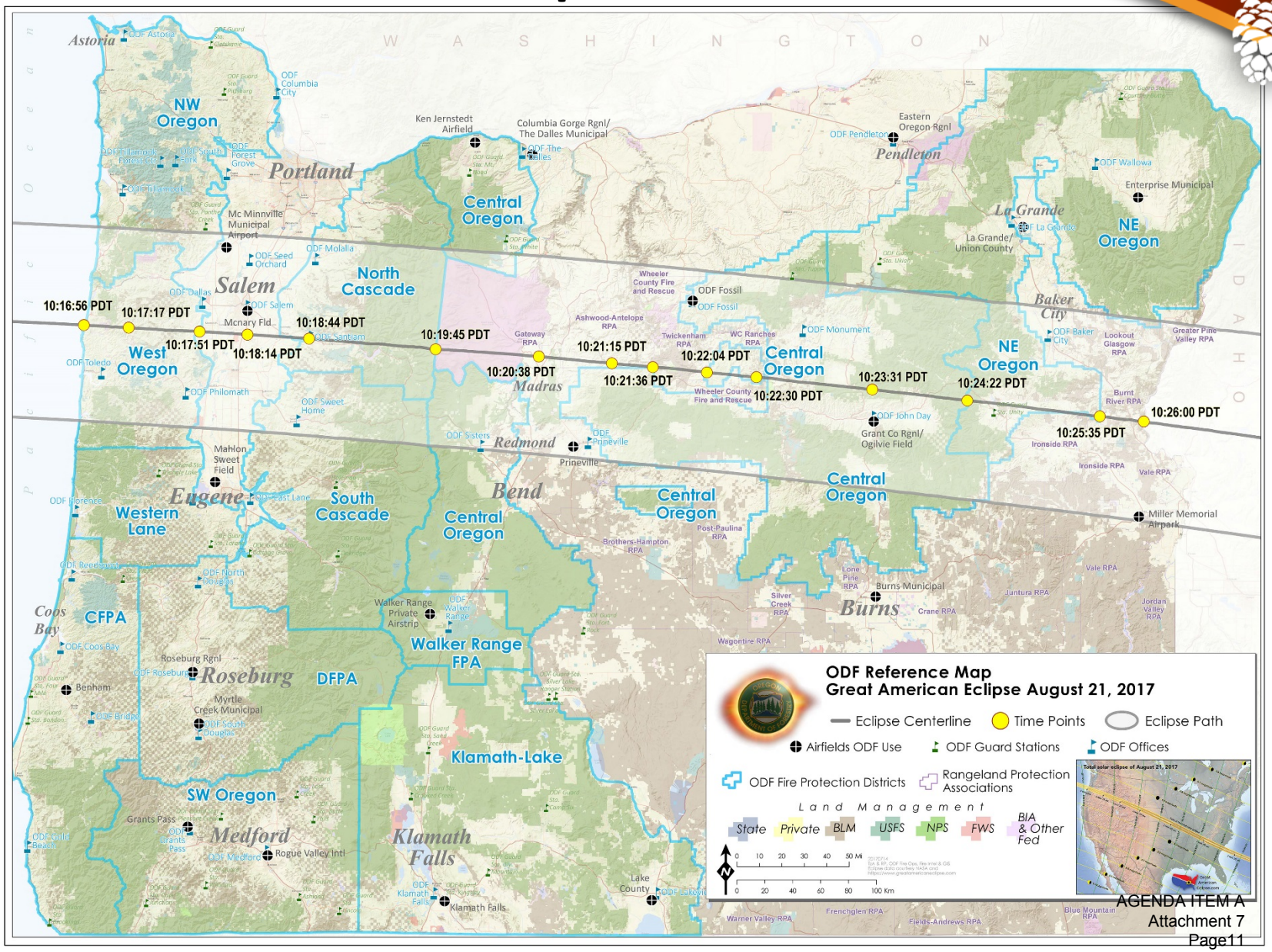
Hwy 97 Fire: 7/18, 27.6 ac



"The Highway 97 Fire, which was sparked late Tuesday morning near milepost 272 on Highway 97, grew dangerously close to structures in Northern Klamath Falls and forced evacuations of multiple buildings."

http://www.heraldandnews.com/news/highway-fire-fully-contained/article_50a2405d-ffbd-5c64-b978-d55530070a85.html

The Great American Eclipse August 21, 2017



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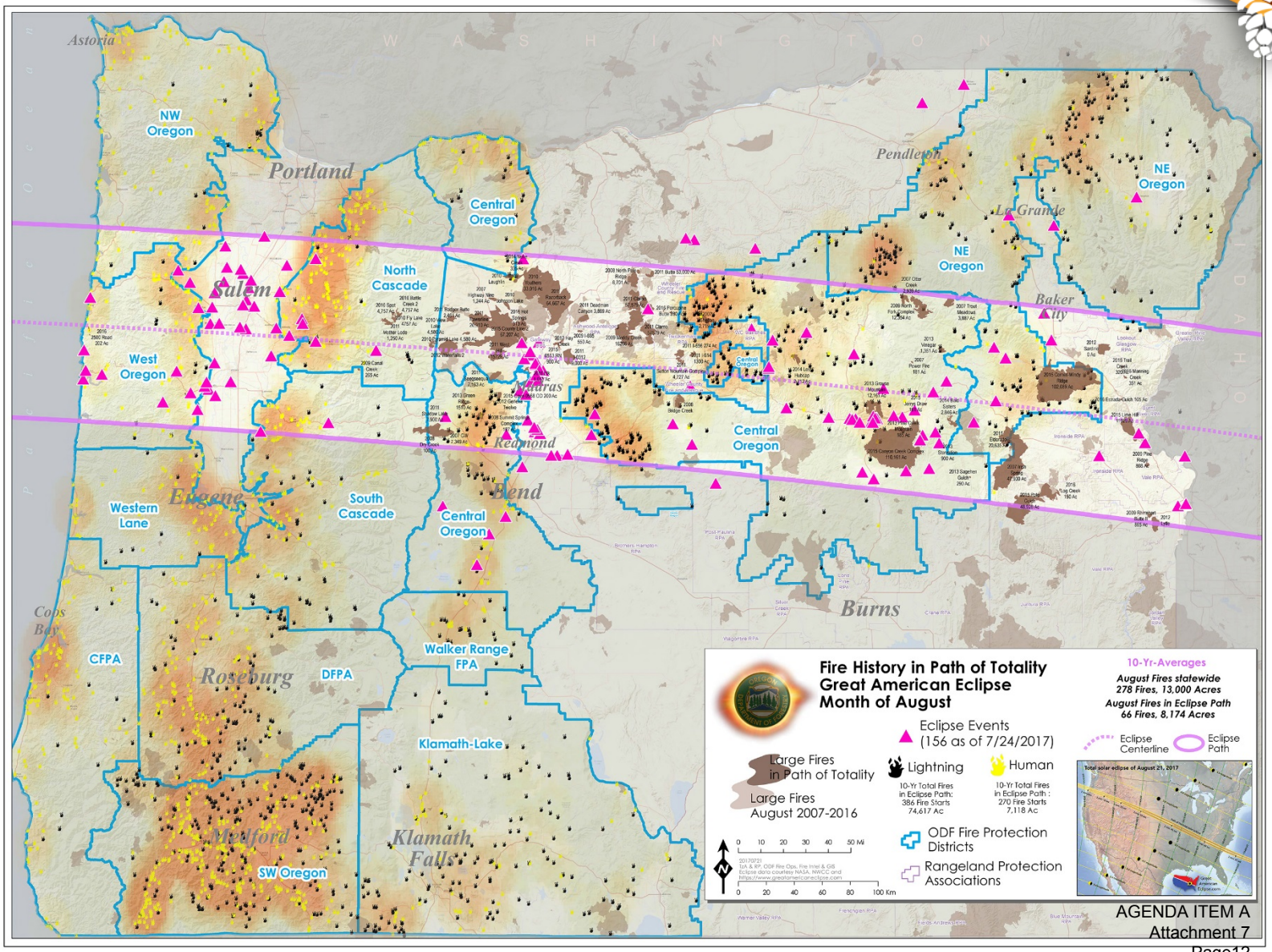
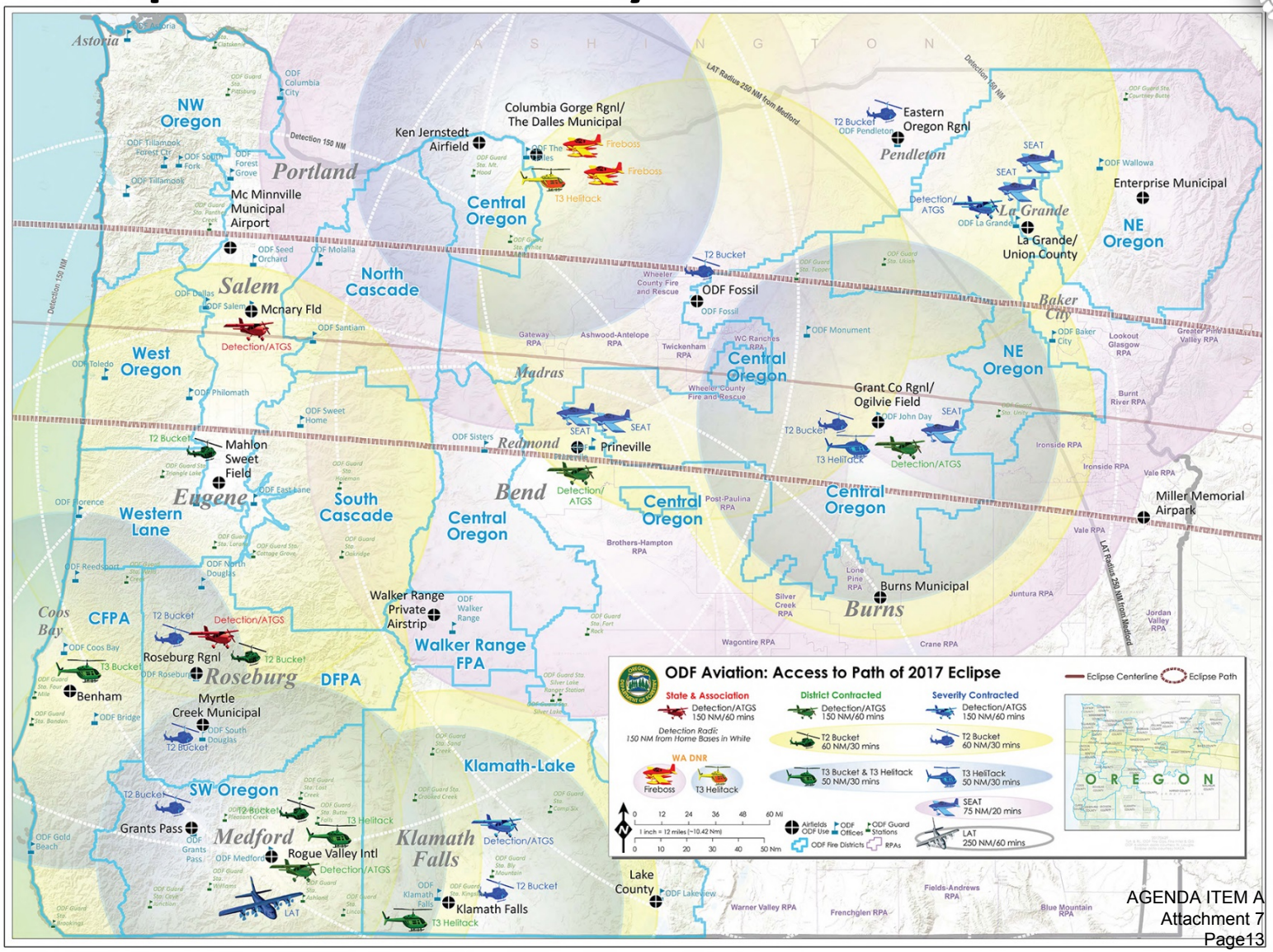


AGENDA ITEM A
Attachment 7

ODF Aviation – Flight Distance Capabilities Across Eclipse Path of Totality



Oregon's Complete & Coordinated Fire Protection System

Thank you

Doug Grafe, Chief

Ron Graham, Deputy Chief

Fire Protection, Oregon Department of Forestry