

Agenda Item No.:	E
Work Plan:	Fire Protection Work Plan
Topic:	Ongoing Topic: Rangeland Protection Association Formation
Presentation Title:	Hearing request to Expand Silver Creek RFPA Boundary
Date of Presentation:	June 4th, 2025
Contact Information:	Stacy Savona, Wildfire Prevention and Policy Manager 971-374-3351, stacy.savona@odf.oregon.gov

**SUMMARY**

The purpose of this agenda item is to obtain Board approval to proceed with a public hearing on the subject of expanding the current boundary for Petersburg Rangeland Protection Association to include additional rangeland not currently protected.

**CONTEXT**

This is part of the Department's ongoing effort, pursuant to ORS 477.320, to assist rural communities in eastern Oregon to develop wildland fire protection coverage in areas that are currently unprotected.

Rangeland owners in Wasco County have provided a letter (Attachment 1) requesting the Board to hold a public hearing on the subject of providing protection from fire for rangelands by expanding the current boundary of the Petersburg Rangeland Protection Association (Attachment 2).

**BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS**

Rangelands in eastern Oregon present a concern to Forest Protection Districts because of the lack of fire protection. Fires starting on these lands, left uncontrolled, have frequently threatened or spread to forestlands protected by the Department. This creates a dilemma for the district and potential use of district resources on unprotected lands that do not financially support the protection district.

The 2004 Fire Program Review identified assisting local communities in developing fire protection on unprotected lands as a high priority. Rangeland Protective Associations have been formed in Ash Butte, Blue Mt., Brothers Hampton, Burnt River, Crane, Fields-Andrews, Frenchglen, Gateway, Ironside, Jordan Valley, Juntura, Greater Pine Valley, Lookout Glasgow, Lone Pine, Post Paulina, Silver Creek, Twickenham, Vale, Warner Valley, Wagontire, WC Ranches, and Wheeler County.

The area the private landowners are considering for fire protection is interspersed with other land management agencies.

Although the emphasis is protection of private lands, opportunities will exist for partnerships and mutual aid agreements with other entities to strengthen wildland fire protection throughout the area.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Department recommends the Board approve the landowners' request to hold a public hearing on the subject of providing protection from fire for rangelands in Wasco County, Oregon.

**NEXT STEPS**

The Department will hold a public hearing and determine the support for providing fire protection in Wasco, Oregon. If there is sufficient support, a request will be made from the landowners to the Board to determine whether the rangeland should be included within a protection system.

If the Board determines that the rangeland should be included in a rangeland protection system, the Board, in cooperation with interested persons, will establish the extent and type of protection to be provided. Such protection shall be commensurate with the values and uses of the rangeland to be protected.

**ATTACHMENT**

- (1) Letter from Petersburg Rangeland Protection Association
- (2) Map of the proposed boundary expansion of the Petersburg Rangeland Protection Association

# Petersburg Rangeland Fire Protection Association

**Dave Wagenblast**  
Treasurer  
P.O. Box 308  
The Dalles, OR 97058  
541-993-1565

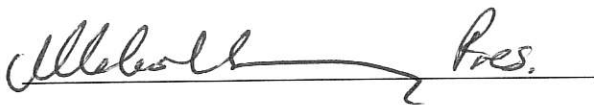
Oregon Department of Forestry  
Salem Headquarters  
2600 State Street  
Salem, OR 97330

March 12, 2025

Dear Board of Forestry,

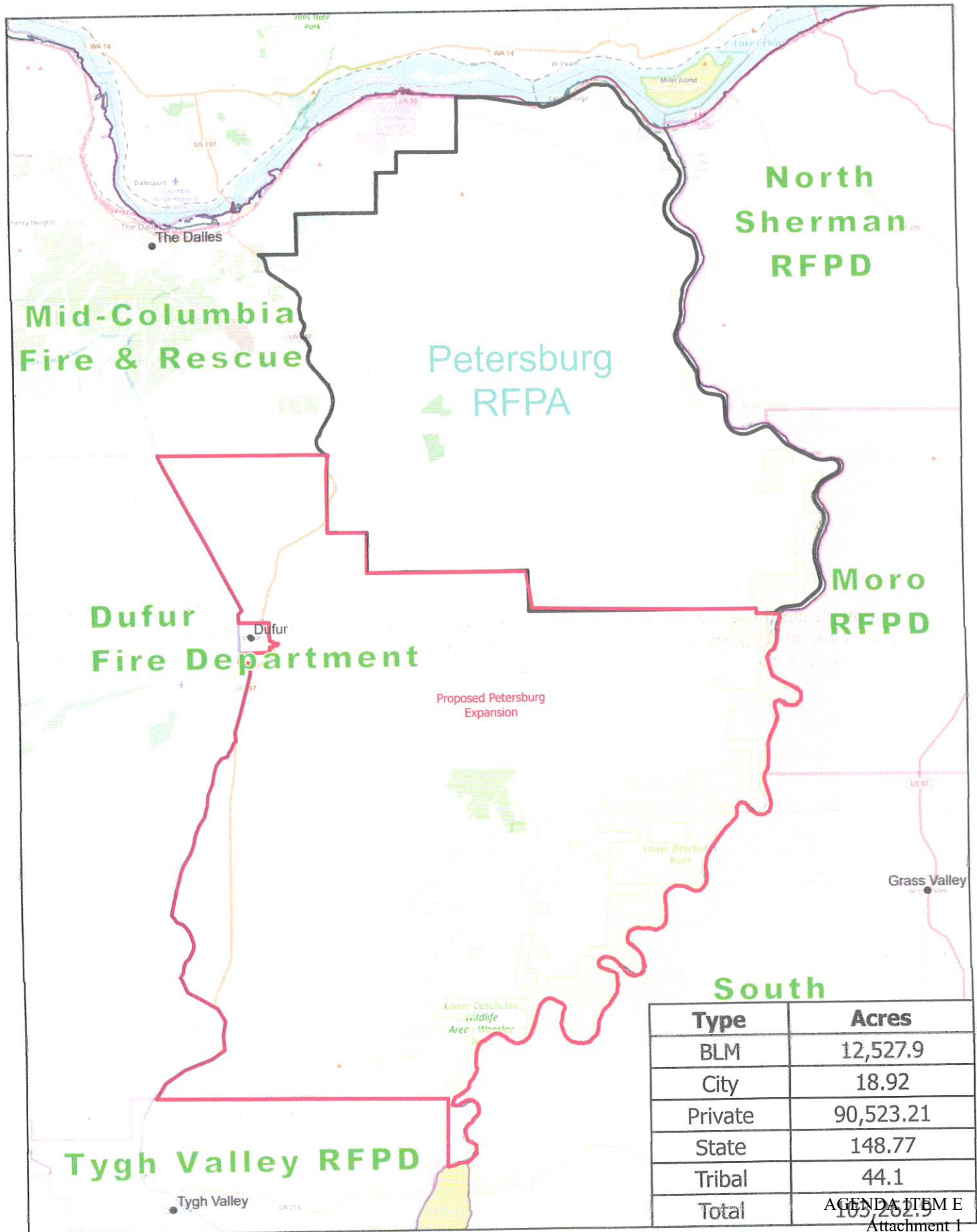
The Petersburg Rangeland Fire Protection Association would like to hold a public meeting to expand our protection boundaries to the south of our current area. We would be adding 12,528 BLM acres, 19 city acres, 90,523 private acres, 149 Oregon state acres, and 44 tribal acres for a total of 103,263 acres. Most of the land we would be expanding into are not protected at this time.

Please see attached map of current area protected by our RFPA and the proposed expansion.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Urness", followed by a horizontal line and the word "Pres." written in cursive.

Mike Urness, Petersburg RFPA President

# Petersburg RFPA Boundary Expansion



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