

Agenda Item No.:	D
Work Plan:	Fire Protection Work Plan
Topic:	Ongoing Topic: Rangeland Protection Association Approval
Presentation Title:	Approval to Form the North Pendleton Rangeland Protection Association
Date of Presentation:	March 4, 2026
Contact Information:	Levi Hopkins, Wildfire Prevention and Policy Manager (503) 949-3572, <a href="mailto:Levi.a.hopkins@odf.oregon.gov">Levi.a.hopkins@odf.oregon.gov</a>

**SUMMARY**

The purpose of this agenda item is to obtain Board approval to proceed with bringing specific areas of northern Umatilla County, into the Oregon Protection System.

**CONTEXT**

Rangeland fire protection associations are non-profit, locally governed groups of landowners which have been organized to provide fire protection to crop and rangeland in portions of eastern Oregon. These organizations are formed under the authority of the Board and with assistance from the Department.

Currently, there are 28 Rangeland Protection Associations (RPA) that have previously been approved by the Board of Forestry. The most recent being the Grizzly RPA which was formed in March of 2023. These RPAs protect over 5,224,819 acres of private land and approximately 686,070 acres of state-owned lands. These lands, including federally owned land, combine to encompass over 17.7 million acres.

Several representatives of rangeland owners in Umatilla County have requested the Board hold a public hearing about providing protection from fire for crop and rangelands in the vicinity northwest of Pendleton, Oregon. The Board, on January 7, 2026, authorized a public hearing on the formation request, pursuant to ORS 477.320. A hearing was held at 36788 Kosmos Rd in Stanfield, Oregon, on January 27, 2026.

At the hearing, strong support for the formation of an association was evident in the immediate area. Testimony presented during the hearing indicated a need for organized fire protection, and the local landowners want to assist local wildland agencies with initial attack to prevent more large fires in the area.

These landowners want a way to protect their private property and actively take part in the protection of their lands. The increased level of protection for this area can be achieved by bringing it into the Oregon protection system and forming a rangeland protection association.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Department recommends the Board take the following action when it meets on March 4, 2026:

Approve the inclusion of crop and rangeland in portions of northern Umatilla County into a rangeland protection association and direct the Department to assist with the formation of the North Pendleton Rangeland Protection Association, pursuant to ORS 477.320.

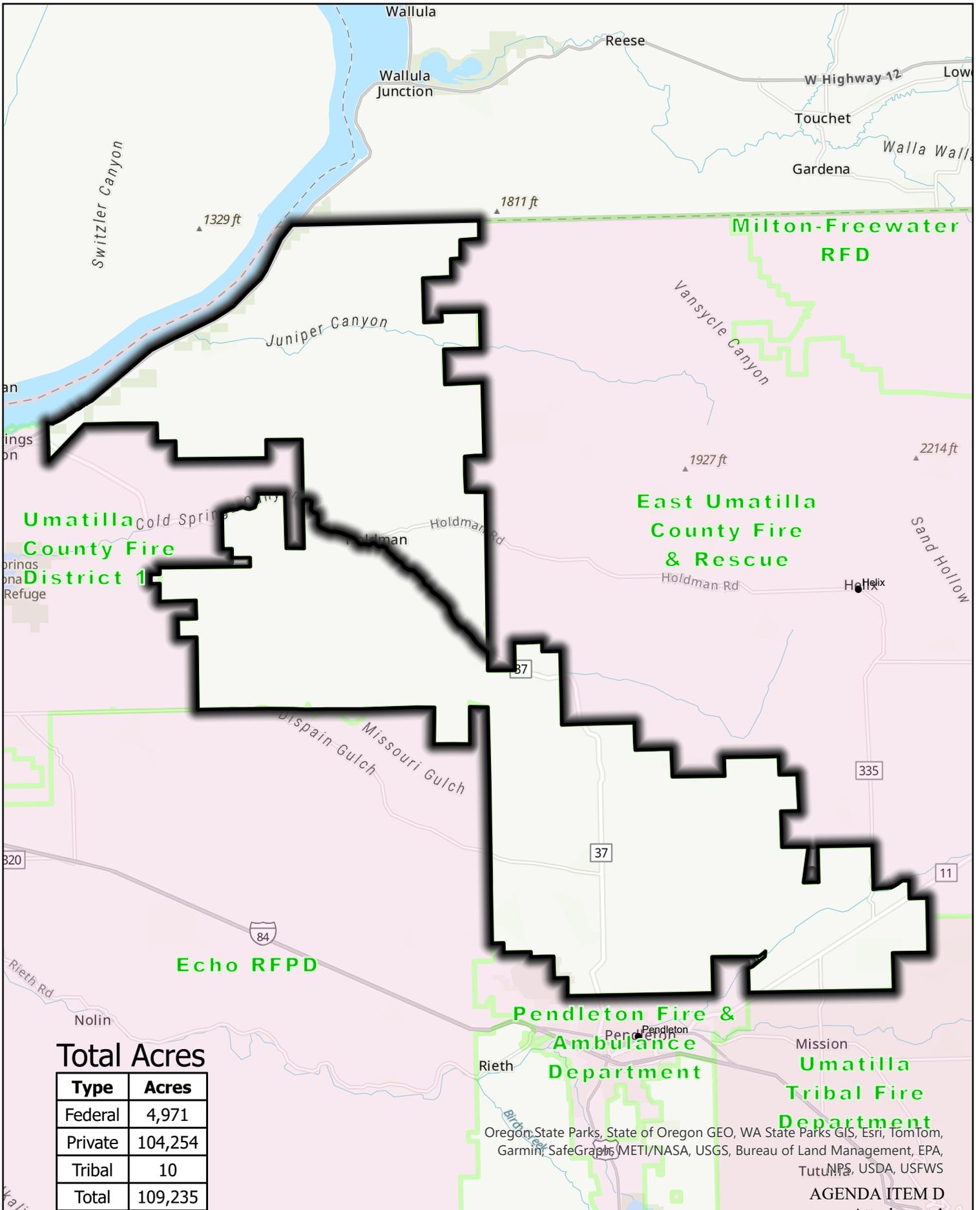
## **NEXT STEPS**

The Department will work with local landowners in the area to form the North Pendleton Rangeland Protection Association. This will include developing mutual aid agreements, providing training as requested, offering FEPP equipment as available, and any other assistance as requested and feasible.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- (1) North Pendleton Rangeland Association boundary map
- (2) North Pendleton Rangeland Association Formation Public Hearing sign-in sheet
- (3) North Pendleton Rangeland Association Formation Public Hearing Report
- (4) Letter of Support

# Proposed North Pendleton RFPA



## Total Acres

Type	Acres
Federal	4,971
Private	104,254
Tribal	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>109,235</b>

Oregon State Parks, State of Oregon GEO, WA State Parks GIS, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, METI/NASA, USGS, Bureau of Land Management, EPA, TutuNPS, USDA, USFWS

**PUBLIC HEARING PARTICIPATION RECORD  
REQUEST TO FORM THE "NORTH PENDLETON RFPA" AREA INTO THE OREGON PROTECTION SYSTEM UNDER ORS  
477.320**

Location: Bracher Farms Shop, 36788 Kosmos Rd. Stanfield, Or 97875 Date: 1/27/26 Time: 4:00 PM

**PLEASE PRINT**

NAME & ORGANIZATION	MAILING ADDRESS	TESTIMONY SUBMITTED	
		WRITTEN	ORAL
Larry Parker	P.O. Box 385 Helix, Or 97835		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Tom Peterson	84223 Wallula Rd Helix Or 97835		
Peter McGovern	↓		
Trent Sorey	411 NW 10 <sup>th</sup> St Pendleton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Tom Sorey	78634 S Cold Spring Rd Pendleton OR 97861		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Jackie Richmond Andrzejewicz	72222 Tuttle Ln Red Bend		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sara Andrzejewicz	X Rupp Ranches		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Luz Rupp	176 Kronikewood St Red Bend 97852		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Garin Newton	82696 Stokemans rd Helix OR		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Paul Brache	80238 Vandyck Rd Helix OR		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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NAME & ORGANIZATION	MAILING ADDRESS	TESTIMONY SUBMITTED	
		WRITTEN	ORAL
Bryan & Kathy Jones Jones & Jones Ranches	81654 S. Juniper Canyon Rd. Helix, OR. 97835		X
Jake Divine	41642 hwy 37 Pendleton, OR 97901		
Randy Zupp	176 Kramwood St Richland wa		X
Andy Spratling Tommy Mentzer	P.O. Box 561 Pendleton, OR 97801 Umatilla National Forest (USFS)		X
Todd Thorne	8775 Hwy 37 Pendleton OR		X
Mike Moore	Umatilla N.F.	X	
Sage Duboy	Umatilla County P.O. Box 1594 Pendleton OR		X
Jason Hill Jake Markgraf	Hill Ranches 75870 Grasswell Rd. Pendleton, OR 97801		X

Revised 20100301

**Date:** January 28, 2026

**To:** Oregon Board of Forestry

**From:** Allison Rayburn, ODF Rangeland Fire Program Coordinator

**Subject:** Hearing Officer's Report on North Pendleton Rangeland Fire Protection Association boundary expansion ORS 477.320(1)

### Hearing Information

**Proposed Area:** 109,235 acres northwest of Pendleton, Oregon in Umatilla County  
**Hearing Date & Time:** January 27, 2026 @ 4:00 PM  
**Hearing Location:** Bracher Farms; 36788 Kosmos Rd. Stanfield, Oregon  
**Written Comments Due:** January 27, 2026 4:00 PM  
**Hearing Authorized:** Board of Forestry meeting, January 7, 2026  
**Hearing Officer:** Allison Rayburn, ODF Rangeland Fire Program Coordinator

The Public Hearing on the proposal to form the North Pendleton RFFPA and bring those lands into the Oregon Protection System was formally convened at 4:16 PM. at the Bracher Farms shop, after a discussion regarding the proposal. Registration forms were available for people who wished to provide oral comments on the proposed formation. The hearing was closed at 4:30 PM.

30 members of the public representing the area landowners attended the hearing. 15 people who signed the Public Hearing Participation Record form provided oral comments. One provided written testimony. There was a discussion before the hearing to obtain further information on how the RFFPA is funded and the agreements they have in place to work with the Wildland fire agencies.

### Summary of Oral Comments

- Larry Parker, landowner, fully support forming a RFFPA.
- Trent Sorey, landowner, fully support forming a RFFPA.
- Tom Sorey, landowner, fully support forming a RFFPA.
- Jack Remillard, retired Pendleton Fire assistant chief/Fire Marshal/Emergency Manager, fully support forming a RFFPA, did recommend looking into forming a rural fire district.
- John Androlewicz, landowner, fully support forming a RFFPA.
- Luz Rupp, landowner, fully support forming a RFFPA.
- Gavin Newtonson, landowner, fully support forming a RFFPA.
- Paul Bracher, fully support forming a RFFPA , commented that this will help with communication and safety.
- Bryan Jones, landowner, fully support forming a RFFPA.
- Kathy Jones, landowner, fully support forming a RFFPA.
- Randy Rupp, landowner, fully support forming a RFFPA.
- Andy Spratling, landowner, fully support forming a RFFPA.
- Todd Thorne, landowner, fully support forming a RFFPA, commented that this will help with communication and safety.
- Sage DeLong, Umatilla County Emergency Manager, fully support forming a RFFPA, commented it will help with communication and safety and be a benefit to the county.
- Jason Hill, Landowner, fully support forming a RFFPA, wanted to thank the Bracher's for their work in getting the RFFPA started.

### Summary of Written Comments

- Mike Moore, Umatilla National Forest District Fire Management Officer, submitted a letter of support for the establishment of the North Pendleton RFPA.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Allison Rayburn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Allison Rayburn  
ODF Rangeland Fire Program Coordinator  
Eastern Oregon Area

November 17, 2025

To: Oregon Board of Forestry

RE: Letter of support for the establishment of the North Pendleton RFPA

The Umatilla National Forest has a long standing agreement with the Bureau of Land Management, Vale District for initial attack response on their land that is adjacent to the Forest. This agreement has primarily been managed by the Walla Walla Ranger District due to our proximity to the BLM lands in the proposed North Pendleton RFPA.

As the District Fire Management Office of the Walla Walla Ranger District, I support the establishment of the North Pendleton RFPA. This establishment will allow access to firefighting equipment & clothing, radios for communication, training and an opportunity to improve coordination and support through mutual aid agreements.

It's understood that this will take some time to fully implement but I feel there's a strong desire from the land owner group to make this happen as efficiently as possible. The formation of this RFPA will be another step towards contributing to a more coordinated fire response with state and federal partners in this area.

Sincerely,



MIKE MOORE  
District Fire Management Officer

