

Agenda Item No.:	G
Work Plan:	Fire Protection
Topic:	Annual Topic: Approval of Rangeland Fire Protection Association Budgets
Date of Presentation:	June 3, 2026
Contact Information:	Boone Zimmerlee, Wildfire Prevention & Policy Manager Fire Protection Division 971-375-8921; boone.w.zimmerlee@odf.oregon.gov

SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda item is to obtain Board approval of the annual budgets of the Rangeland Fire Protection Associations currently operating in Eastern Oregon.

CONTEXT/BACKGROUND

Rangeland fire protection associations (RFPA) are nonprofit, locally governed, and operated landowner associations organized to provide fire protection on rangeland areas of Eastern Oregon. These geographic areas are outside both forest protection districts and rural fire districts. State statutes ORS 477.315-325 provides for the formation of these associations under the authority of the Board and with assistance from the Department. After formation, ORS 477.325 requires that the Board review and approve the rangeland fire protection associations’ annual operating budgets.

In 2025, RFPAs provided initial attack fire protection for 17.7 million acres in eastern Oregon, with 1,284 volunteers and 870 pieces of firefighting equipment spread out across nine counties. They responded to 290 fires within their associations, 58 more than in 2024. A total of 168,272 acres burned within RFPA boundaries, far less than in 2024. For the first time, the forecasted RFPA fiscal year income exceeds \$1,000,000. This is in large part due to the passing of HB 3349, as well as increased grant opportunities. Also, projected income exceeds expected expenditures, unlike fiscal year 26. In 2025, RFPAs also contributed 27,962 hours working on 16 extended attack incidents with incident management teams. Many people describe this as “neighbors helping neighbors” model. RFPA funds go toward administrating guidance, fire suppression training, facilitating access to federal grants and surplus firefighting equipment, as well as some administrative cost reimbursement. RFPA fire prevention and suppression help conserve habitat as well as safeguarding local economic resources.

The Board’s approval will assist these associations of landowners in building partnerships, investing in their community, and providing their own local wildfire protection.

RECOMMENDATION

The Department recommends the Board approve the fiscal year 2027 budgets of the Ashwood-Antelope, Bakeoven-Shaniko, Blue Mountain, Brothers Hampton, Burnt River, Crane, Fields-Andrews, Frenchglen, Gateway, Greater Pine Valley, Grizzly, High Desert, Ironside, Jordan Valley, Juntura, Lone Pine, Lookout Glasgow, Lower Bridge, North Harney, North Pendelton,

Petersburg, Post Paulina, Silver Creek, Twickenham, Vale, Wagontire, Warner Valley, WC Ranches, and Wheeler County Rangeland Fire Protection Associations.

ATTACHMENTS

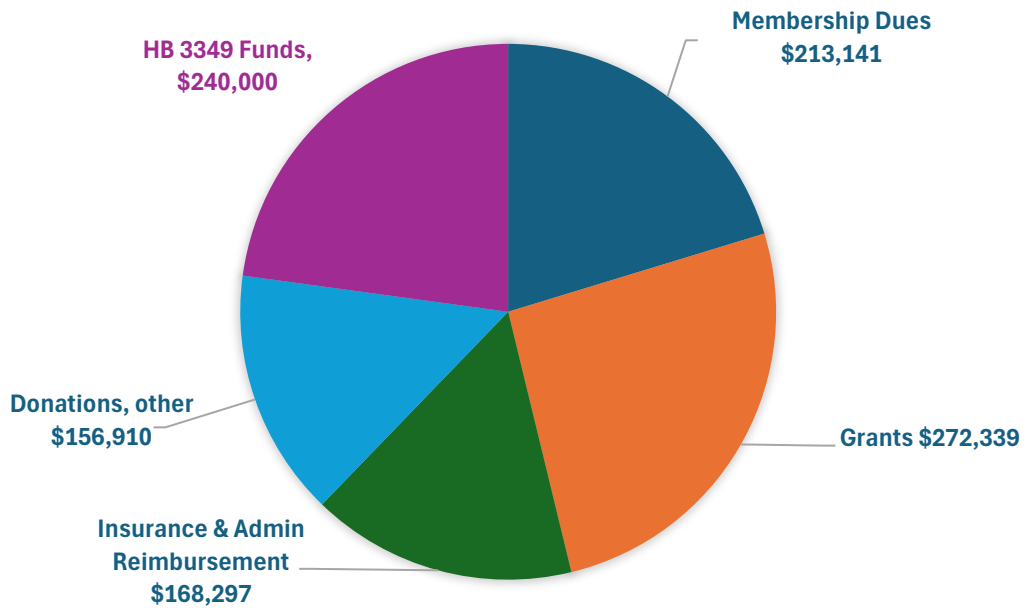
- (1) Fiscal Year 2027 Rangeland Fire Protection Associations Budgets
- (2) 2025 Annual Report Statistics
- (3) Total Acres Protected by Year List
- (4) Rangeland Fire Protection Associations 2025 Annual Newsletter

Rangeland Forest Protection Association Budget Summary
July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027

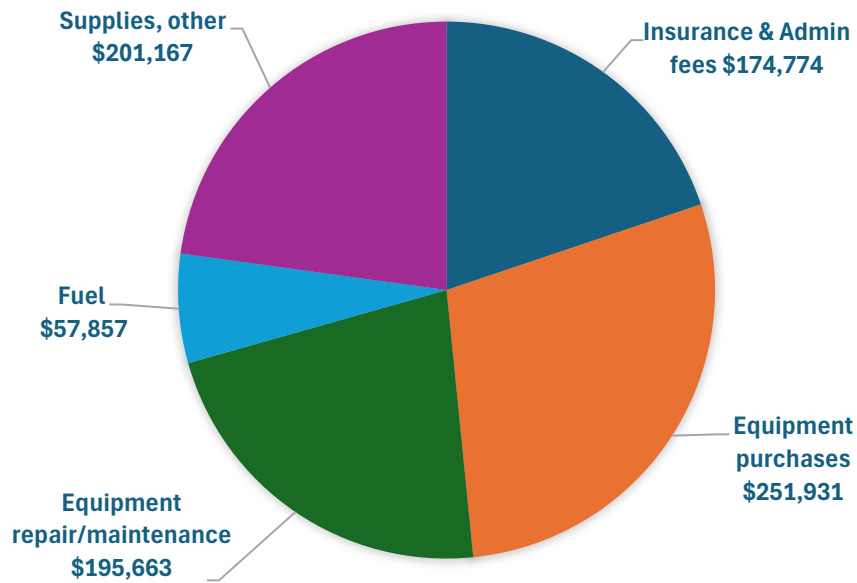
Fiscal Year 2027 Rangeland Fire Protection Association Budget Summary

RFPA	Income							Expenses										Reserve Account
	Membership Fees	Donations	House Bill 3349 Funds	Grants	Reimbursed Expenses	Other	Total Income	Insurance	CPA & Non-profit Filings	Equipment Purchases	Equipment Repair/Maintenance	Fuel	Supplies For Fire Suppression	Communications Equipment & Repair	Office Expenses (Supplies, Postage, etc.)	Other	Total Expenses	
Ashwood-Antelope	12,000	0	8,000	10,000	7,000	2,200	39,200	7,500	500	3,500	10,000	2,500	750	3,000	500	3,200	31,450	28,490
Bakeoven-Shaniko	9,000	5,000	8,000	10,000	5,000	25,000	62,000	5,000	1,000	10,000	7,000	1,500	10,000	1,000	200	5,000	40,700	330,000
Blue Mountain	1,400	3,500	0	0	4,200	0	9,100	4,000	500	0	1,000	0	0	0	0	0	5,500	
Brothers-Hampton	3,400	300	8,000	10,000	6,525	2,000	30,225	6,000	125	7,000	6,000	2,000	2,400	5,000	300	1,400	30,225	15,940
Burnt River	8,000	0	8,000	15,000	6,500	0	37,500	5,800	0	20,000	10,000	5,000	2,500	3,500	500	0	47,300	80,492
Crane	30,000	2,500	8,000	15,000	12,500	30,000	98,000	12,000	500	45,000	20,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	1,500	4,000	98,000	20,000
Fields Andrews	4,200	2,800	8,000	0	0	0	15,000	5,825	1,000	12,000	5,000	1,500	2,500	0	400	0	28,225	
Frenchglen	6,000	0	8,000	0	3,625	500	18,125	3,500	625	4,000	3,000	2,800	1,000	200	250	2,750	18,125	18,462
Gateway	1,000	1,000	8,000	5,000	4,000		19,000	3,500	0	2,000	5,000	1,000	1,000	500	100	500	13,600	41,000
Greater Pine Valley	600	0	8,000	0	1,037	0	9,637	2,103	70	0	353	275	0	0	82	218	3,101	4,740
Grizzly	3,000	0	8,000	10,000	10,000	5,000	36,000	3,000	0	3,000	5,000	1,000	2,000	1,000	500	0	15,500	25,000
High Desert	16,000	8,000	8,000	0	10,711	0	42,711	11,500	100	6,000	5,000	4,500	1,000	1,200	400	0	29,700	8,000
Ironside	4,200	1,500	8,000	15,000	3,700	0	32,400	4,300	100	19,100	3,000	1,000	1,000	3,000	1,000	0	32,500	23,155
Jordan Valley	15,000	0	8,000	0	5,950	10,670	39,620	5,900	600	5,000	20,000	0	2,500	5,000	300	0	39,300	25,500
Juntura	5,500	500	8,000	10,000	5,767	0	29,767	5,567	200	0	5,000	1,000	5,000	0	150	0	16,917	38,007
Lookout-Glasgow	2,000	3,500	8,000	0	4,150	5,000	22,650	4,000	150	10,000	2,000	2,500	2,000	1,000	100	0	21,750	37,270
Lone Pine	6,000	0	8,000	13,231	4,140	0	31,371	3,700	440	3,231	17,710	550	500	0	301	3,091	29,523	5,024
Lower Bridge	17,000	2,500	16,000	15,000	6,500	0	57,000	3,500	750	10,000	15,000	2,500	1,500	1,000	500	6,500	41,250	47,650
North Harney	6,000	500	8,000	5,000	5,000	0	24,500	4,500	500	2,000	4,000	1,000	500	500	500	0	13,500	18,000
North Pendleton	15,000	5,000	8,000	15,000	7,000	10,000	60,000	4,500	2,500	15,000	7,500	5,000	3,500	7,500	2,500	7,500	55,500	0
Petersburg	5,350	2,500	8,000	4,608	4,442	0	24,900	3,800	200	0	0	0	10,000	500	300	0	14,800	23,748
Post Paulina	10,000	6,000	8,000	0	6,900	0	30,900	6,800	100	1,500	4,500	1,000	1,000	1,000	300	700	16,900	51,585
Silver Creek	12,500	500	8,000	0	8,300	0	29,300	6,300	2,000	4,600	5,600	2,500	1,800	3,750	1,075	250	27,875	57,148
Twickenham	2,000	1,000	8,000	10,000	4,200	0	25,200	3,420	50	8,000	1,000	1,000	0	10,000	100	0	23,570	30,766
Vale	3,500	1,000	8,000	40,000	4,150	0	56,650	4,000	150	5,000	5,000	6,000	1,000	1,000	2,500	0	24,650	4,000
Wagontire	0	1,000	16,000	45,000	7,000	0	69,000	3,500	3,500	40,000	16,000	0	1,000	5,000	0	0	69,000	12,000
Warner Valley	12,091	3,740	8,000	0	6,000	0	29,831	10,399	700	500	5,000	1,732	500	1,200	600	1,200	21,831	1,599
WC Ranches	2,400	200	8,000	15,000	9,000	0	34,600	7,000	2,000	5,500	2,000	0	1,000	5,000	300	11,800	34,600	
Wheeler County	0	10,000	8,000	9,500	5,000	4,000	36,500	5,500	0	10,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	3,000	0	3,000	36,500	66,900
	213,141	62,540	240,000	272,339	168,297	94,370	1,050,687	156,414	18,360	251,931	195,663	57,857	65,950	68,850	15,258	51,109	881,392	1,014,476

RFPA FY27 OPERATING BUDGET: \$1,050,687



RFPA FY26 EXPENSES \$722,454



2025 Annual Report Statistics

Rangeland Fire Protection Association	Total Acres <u>4/</u>	Private Acres <u>3/</u>	State, County, Acres <u>2/</u>	Federal Acres <u>1/</u>	Tribal Acres	Est.	No. of Fires	Mutual Assist Fires	Smoke Chases	State & Private Acres Burned	Total Acres Burned	*Large Fires over 500 ac	Fire Suppress. Hours	Admin Hours	POV Mileage	Prescribe Fire Acres	Mem Properties (estimate)	Support Personnel	Trained Firefighters	Fire Eng Type 4	Fire Eng Type 5&6	Slip-ons Pickup	Slip on Trailers	ATV/UT V tanks	Tenders	Graders	Dozers	Tractor w/ Transport	Tractor w/ Disk	Other
Ashwood-Antelope	357,003	314,547	356	41,917	183	2009	3	10	3	79,803	82,036	1)	2,347	1,753	4,569	2314	41	45	20	3	7	9	0	12	1	1	11	3	0	
Bakeoven-Shaniko	183,145	176,247	81	5,947	870	2019	3	4	22	653	663	0	1,002	853	2,331	241	17	10	27	4	11	30	2	18	4	4	5	0	2	2- Tractor w/plow
Blue Mountain	1,157,141	75,020	2,828	1,059,899	19,394	2013	6	9	4	23	36	0	538	347	2,686	0	11	25	25	8	2	5	0	0	9	0	1	0	0	
Brothers / Hampton	716,557	225,797	35,288	455,472	-	2006	35	3	2	3	45	0	172	616	4,973	1200	56	22	17	3	5	2	7	2	0	2	2	2	4	Port-a-tank
Burnt River	273,581	169,336	3,702	100,543	-	2000	23	0	2	1,293	2,354	2), 3)	741	150	2,306	0	62	16	19	2	1	11	0	5	1	1	7	3	2	
Crane	1,344,523	574,596	102,682	658,557	8,688	1998	21	0	7	9	187	0	101	379	450	0	300	10	29	10	12	0	4	0	6	2	2	0	3	
Fields / Andrews	1,009,243	161,806	1,077	846,360	-	1998	8	0	0	6	59	0	288	115	3,424	117	48	41	7	0	5	2	0	0	3	1	1	0	0	
Frenchglen	1,467,117	414,529	2,109	1,050,479	-	2013	8	1	0	10	227	0	24	595	6,871	0	32	5	41	4	3	4	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	
Gateway	9,310	8,703	0	605	2	2010	0	2	3	0	0	0	22	116	274	323	22	17	13	1	2	0	0	4	0	2	1	3	0	
Greater Pine Valley	74,955	29,662	437	44,856	-	2016	2	0	2	35	35	0	122	947	350	0	7	2	24	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Grizzly	70,923	42,619	1	28,303	-	2023	1	1	0	4,391	4,585	1)	750	850	650	0	23	15	5	2	2	6	1	4	2	0	2	2	3	
High Desert	2,014,038	393,047	63,343	1,557,490	158	2018	35	0	12	10	15	0	650	960	1,230	150	102	5	40	4	18	1	2	1	4	0	4	3	6	2 trailer mounted pumps
Ironside	356,097	330,501	1,649	23,947	-	1964	2	0	0	85	85	0	125	1,365	3,324	0	36	30	30	0	0	7	1	14	4	2	4	3	0	
Jordan Valley	2,496,084	292,992	178,676	2,024,416	-	2008	27	0	0	11,565	57,980	4), 5), 6), 7), 8), 9)	8,001	825	8,595	0	45	40	100	8	1	31	0	37	8	3	3	2	0	
Juntura	952,374	178,141	82,154	688,808	3,271	2007	2	0	1	8	28	0	59	402	668	5	12	9	19	1	5	1	1	0	2	2	1	2	0	1 lowboy, 1 county owned tractor
Lone Pine	55,146	17,301	2,675	35,170	-	2013	1	0	6	1	1	0	20	719	2,175	23	23	5	18	2	2	2	1	0	3	1	1	1	0	
Lookout Glasgow	267,235	168,166	561	98,508	-	2014	3	2	7	9	9	0	143	212	2,136	0	10	15	30	4	0	5	0	5	5	1	2	2	0	1 Lowboy, 3 Semi tank trailers
Lower Bridge	32,258	15,212	40	17,006	-	2022	10	7	3	1,172	5,096	10), 11)	2,402	1,982	970	160	49	20	31	3	4	3	2	2	6	0	4	1	0	2
North Harney	106,269	82,663	1,209	20,607	1,790	2022	1	2	2	10	11	0	65	1,220	600	20	37	4	13	1	3	5	1	2	1	0	0	0	10	
Petersburg	179,026	162,834	1033.69	14,636	522.1	2023	1	6	0	30	30	0	250	252	3,231	0	34	3	108	0	0	25	0	0	10	0	0	0	9	
Post / Paulina	640,268	351,909	22,898	265,461	-	2006	22	2	4	2,104	5,077	12)	470	215	2,295	0	37	41	13	1	6	12	4	0	5	0	11	6	0	
Silver Creek	765,887	231,336	10,820	523,746	-	2001	12	0	0	0	50	0	41	423	4,650	0	84	47	39	9	10	2	4	0	2	0	6	3	3	1 trailer mounted volume pump
Twickenham	126,292	77,338	40	46,317	2,597	2001	3	3	0	5	6	0	264	1,032	4,369	20	42	10	6	2	1	2	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	2 Chainsaws
Vale	1,025,383	204,660	24,195	796,528	-	2008	13	1	0	278	1,220	3)	298	1,403	770	0	32	15	62	9	0	12	0	15	3	0	1	0	6	
Wagontire	301,322	37,852	68,621	194,849	-	2015	4	0	1	10	11	0	80	2,835	120	0	3	18	5	1	2	0	0	0	2	2	3	3	3	Support Humvee
Warner Valley	1,311,703	162,789	77,098	1,071,776	40	2011	12	1	1	102	1,688	13)	468	550	1,774	0	114	13	22	0	8	5	2	6	8	1	4	2	0	
WC Ranches	49,243	41,506	1,948	5,789	-	2015	0	5	0	0	0	0	141	2,445	8,358	0	11	3	18	2	5	1	0	5	0	1	6	2	1	1 skidder, 1 backhoe
Wheeler Co. F & Res	391,920	283,710	548	75,917	31,745	2016	32	13	11	3,594	6,737	14), 15)	1,865	530	110	0	14	1	16	2	5	1	1	1	3	0	1	1	0	

17,734,043 5,224,819 686,070 11,753,908 69,260 290 72 93 105209.2 168271.7 15 21,449 24,089 74,258 4,573 1,304 487 797 88 122 186 37 137 93 26 84 45 52

1/ RFPAs do not protect Federal acres, this list is just the federal land within the RFPA boundary.

2/ RFPAs protect DSL lands as a membership in the RFPA, also OPRD lands are protected under a protection agreement with ODF

3/ RFPAs protect all private lands regardless of membership in the Assn as per agreement with the Board of Forestry

4/ Only includes Oregon acres.

4/ Silver Creek and Petersburg finalized boundary expansions in 2025.

- 1) Cram; 95,736 ac, Wasco & Jefferson Counties, 7/13/25
- 2) Daybreak; 851 ac, Baker County, 7/16/25
- 3) Lost Tom; 1,124 ac, Baker and Malheur Counties, 7/30/25
- 4) Coyote; 764 ac, Malheur County, 7/13/25
- 5) Black Hills; 4,958 ac, Malheur County, 7/17/25
- 6) Little John; 12,973 ac, Malheur County, 7/72/25

- 10) Alder Springs; 3,279 ac, Jefferson County, 6/16/25
- 11) Flat Fire; 23,380 ac, Jefferson & Deschutes Counties, 8/21/25
- 12) Willow; 4,417 ac, Crook County, 7/9/25
- 13) Black Canyon; 1,584 ac, Lake County, 7/1/25
- 14) Butte Creek; 1,776 ac, Wheeler County, 5/25/25
- 15) Black Rock; 43,842 ac, Wheeler County, 9/4/25

Annual Totals

Row One

Year	No. of RFPA	Total Acres Protected	Private Acres ³	State Acres ²	Federal Acres ¹	No. of Fires	Mutual Assist Fires	Smoke Chases	State & Private Acres Burned	Total Acres Burned	Fires over 500 Acres	Fire Suppression Hours	Admin Hours	POV Mileage	Prescribed Fire Acres
2015	20	13,897,124	4,007,960	616,063	9,322,329	164			113,160	263,971	11	15,591	9,954		2,755
2016	22	14,228,169	4,169,230	601,743	9,457,196	116	31		2,732	87,422	7	5,956	20,148		5,632
2017	23	15,967,400	4,553,896	639,901	10,773,603	146	35	147	29,580	103,388	17	9,556	21,148	76,589	4,174
2018	23	16,556,081	4,855,598	639,982	11,060,501	168	52	57	25,579	76,380	17	8,692	21,075	82,000	9,060
2019	24	16,556,081	4,855,598	639,982	11,060,501	114	32	76	3,308	34,475	5	5,624	17,802	84,770	1,198
2020	24	16,556,081	4,855,598	639,982	11,060,501	142	37	78	19,005	79,516	14	8,068	17,264	62,050	3,394
2021	24	16,556,081	4,855,598	639,982	11,060,501	114	32	34	5,643	14,493	9	5,228	15,816	56,938	3,345
2022	26	17,703,201	5,276,687	646,767	11,778,940	131	41	67	30,449	53,790	6	5,194	19,061	57,662	3,881
2023	28	17,539,962	5,130,732	685,902	11,654,112	93	30	91	5,606	7,080	5	4,743	20,264	67,862	1,710
2024	28	17,539,962	5,130,732	685,902	11,654,112	232	80	151	325,830	747,822	39	45,150	26,981	78,465	1,914
2025	28	17,734,043	5,224,819	686,070	11,753,908	290	72	93	105,209	168,272	15	21,449	24,089	74,258	4,573
10-Year Average						155	44	79	55,294	137,264	13	11,966	20,365	64,059	3,888

Row Two

Year	Member Properties (estimate)	Support Personnel	Trained Firefighters	TOTAL VOLUNTEERS	Fire Eng Type 4	Fire Eng Type 5 & 6	Slip-on Pickup	Slip-on Trailer	ATV UTV Tank	Tenders	Graders	Dozers	Tractor w/ Transport	Tractor w/ Disk	TOTAL FF EQUIP
2015	641	252	283	535	95		112	6	57	45	11	43			369
2016	558	449	340	789	61	71	116	24	70	50	26	98	41		557
2017	671	516	512	1028	80	76	127	18	72	54	26	86	51	17	607
2018	1,007	400	648	1048	92	97	146	31	89	62	30	87	45	15	694
2019	988	406	684	1090	97	108	140	19	82	55	24	76	48	13	662
2020	996	443	655	1098	98	103	139	23	84	50	25	101	47	16	686
2021	1,185	412	639	1051	93	111	140	38	103	55	31	95	44	16	726
2022	1,129	403	802	1205	99	113	171	41	123	68	28	89	47	41	820
2023	1,286	375	798	1173	89	115	192	39	123	73	33	83	46	40	833
2024	1,248	462	746	1208	100	123	192	39	124	75	21	90	40	63	867
2025	1,304	487	797	1,284	88	122	186	37	137	93	26	84	45	52	870

1. RFPAs do not protect federal acres, this is the acres of federal land within the RFPA boundary.

2. RFPAs protect DSL lands as a membership of the RFPA; OPRD lands are protected under a protection agreement with ODF

3. RFPAs protect all private lands regardless of membership in the Association as per agreement with the Board of Forestry

Rangeland Fire Protection Associations



Annual Newsletter | 2025

Rangeland Fire Protection Associations (RFPAs), volunteer groups of landowners who protect their properties and neighboring lands from wildfires; play a vital role in safeguarding 17.7 million acres of rural private and public land, including 5.9 million acres that would otherwise lack fire protection.



Dani Cowdrey and Mat Felton of the Ashwood-Antelope RFPA attend Cram Fire morning briefing July 16, 2025.

Oregon Legislature Passes House Bill 3349



Former Senator Lynn Findley, Jordan Valley RFPA Chair Silas Skinner and Warner Valley RFPA Chair John O'Keeffe provide testimony in support of HB 3349 March 25, 2025.

The large fires that swept through eastern Oregon in the summer of 2024 pushed fire agencies and Rangeland Fire Protection Associations to their limits. During a visit to the area, Governor Tina Kotek met with Representative Mark Owens and recognized the critical work RFPAs were doing despite operating on shoestring budgets.

With the Governor's support, Owens worked alongside the rangeland fire program to develop legislation addressing these challenges. The result was House Bill 3349, signed by Governor Kotek on July 17, 2025, which authorizes Oregon Department of Forestry to transfer surplus firefighting equipment, vehicles, radios, and gear, to local RFPAs, and invests \$1 million to directly support their work.

RFPAs Form Unified Leadership Committee

Following passage of House Bill 3349, which allocated \$1 million in funding and streamlined equipment acquisition through Oregon Department of Forestry, the RFPAs recognized the need for a coordinated body to help facilitate funding and equipment distribution while supporting state agency efforts and as a result the Interim Leadership Committee was formed. Ted Netter of Lower Bridge RFPA shared that the committee emerged from a commitment to "communication, cooperation and collaboration between all 28 RFPAs," with the state requiring an official representative body for effective dialogue.

A nine-person structure with three representatives each from Central, Southern, and Eastern areas covering all 28 RFPAs was formed. The committee includes:

- **Central area:** Chairman Ted Netter, Lower Bridge RFPA; Mat Felton, Ashwood-Antelope RFPA; Alan Canady, Twickenham RFPA.
- **Southern area:** Mike Fox, Frenchglen RFPA; Ron Whiting, Lone Pine RFPA; John O'Keeffe, Warner Valley RFPA
- **East area:** Silas Skinner, Jordan Valley RFPA; Jeff Burkhardt, Vale and Ironside RFPAs; Levi Bunch, Burnt River RFPA

As it formalizes its duties and structure, the committee emphasizes that it will not interfere with individual RFPA operations but rather serve as a conduit to gather and transmit member needs, concerns, and successes between RFPAs and external cooperators.

Cooperation Between RFPAs and Agencies Contains Cram & Flat Fires

The Cram Fire, which started July 13, burned more than 95,000 acres, primarily within the Ashwood-Antelope RFPA in Wasco and Jefferson Counties. Mat Felton, Fire Supervisor for the Ashwood-Antelope RFPA, described the first 24 hours as "a fiasco" driven by severe winds, with firefighters battling house to house as flames tore through Ashwood. The combined efforts of members from four RFPAs, alongside



Mat Felton working to control the Cram Fire July 15, 2025.

BLM, Oregon Department of Forestry, and structure teams over the next five days prevented what Felton estimates could have become a 300,000-acre fire. Ted Netter with Lower Bridge RFPA, who assisted during the day the fire grew 24,000 acres due to high winds, emphasized that "we worked as a team, and worked with the agencies on the ground, and there were a lot of good things that happened on a really bad day." In total, Ashwood-Antelope, Grizzly, Bakeoven-Shaniko and Lower Bridge RFPAs responded with 50 fire apparatus for 2,750 volunteer hours over a period of ten days.

The Flat Fire started August 21 and burned more than 23,000 acres in Jefferson and Deschutes Counties, destroying five houses and 11 outbuildings while damaging two additional homes and two outbuildings. Netter noted that while the fire started under Lake Chinook and Oregon Department of Forestry protection outside Lower Bridge RFPA's boundary, he immediately recognized it would affect members in the area. Day two of the fire proved particularly critical, with extreme fire conditions and "completely nasty" wind creating dangerous circumstances. Despite these challenges, cooperation between RFPA firefighters and state agencies enabled responders to contain the blaze. "Through teamwork and pretty unbelievable effort, we were able to hold that thing," Netter said. The fire burned 943 acres of private land within Lower Bridge RFPA protection. Lower Bridge and Ashwood-Antelope RFPAs responded with 28 fire apparatus for 1,652 volunteer hours over a period of ten days.

RFPAs Experience More Fires, Fewer Acres Burned in 2025 than 2024

In 2025, Oregon experienced an increased number of fire starts compared to 2024, statewide as well as within RFPA areas of protection, however, significantly fewer acres burned. Although the state didn't experience the same large-scale extreme fire weather that led to six megafires in the 2024 fire season, 2025's 95,000 acre Cram fire proved the conditions for catastrophic fires did exist. Oregon Department of Forestry Rangeland Fire Coordinator Allison Rayburn cites a contributing factor to the success as "increased participation and urgency and increased cooperation and partnerships after experiencing the devastation of 2024." RFPAs responded to 290 fires compared to 232 in 2024 and well above the ten year average of 155 fires. Burned acreage within RFPA areas of protection dropped to 168,272 acres compared to the 747,822 acres in 2024. Large fires over 500 acres decreased from 39 to 15, and large fires with Incident Management Team and RFPA interactions fell from 39 to six.



Twickenham RFPA responds to the Butte Fire in Wheeler County June 4, 2025.

Lessons Learned from 2024 Fire Season Resonate Throughout 2025

After Action Reviews Produce Lessons Learned

Following the 2024 fire season, Katie Wollstein, Rangeland Fire Specialist with Oregon State University Extension Fire Program, facilitated After Action Reviews (AARs) in the Vale and Burns districts involving RFPAs and cooperating agencies to examine fire response effectiveness. While in-person communications and local knowledge proved strong, with people knowing each other and catching fire starts early, the reviews identified significant communication challenges between Incident Management Teams (IMTs) and RFPAs, including confusion over IMT organizational structure, contact protocols, and radio channels. The AARs highlighted critical needs for dedicated liaisons, mutual understanding between RFPAs and IMTs, and practical training opportunities, with Wollstein emphasizing that while some IMTs excel at recognizing RFPAs as valuable assets, others need time to understand the training and resources these "landowners in yellow shirts" bring to fire response as large, complex fires requiring IMT involvement become increasingly common.

RFPAs Respond to Lessons Learned

RFPAs responded to lessons learned, perhaps none more so than the Vale RFFPA, which doubled its membership to 62 and increased water carrying capacity from 3,750 to 22,750 gallons through equipment acquired via donations, grants, and the Federal Excess Personal Property program. Jeff Burkhardt, a member of both the Ironside and Vale RFPAs, credits community members wanting to help after witnessing 2024's horrific fires. The enhanced capacity yielded dramatic results in 2025: despite more fire starts than 2024, burned acreage dropped as the Vale RFFPA and BLM contained fires at 5 or 10 acres instead of thousands. "When we get a call, we're on the road in minutes," Burkhardt said. "People just know what to do."

Agencies Respond to Lessons Learned

The Oregon Department of Forestry Rangeland Fire Program's six full-time staff experienced the 2024 fire season alongside RFPAs, participated in after action reviews, and applied lessons learned throughout 2025 with increased focus on basic fire training, radio communications, and working effectively with Incident Management Teams. Working with Federal Surplus Screener Skip Morton, RFPAs acquired 15 pieces of equipment including federal surplus trucks, fire engines, and equipment trailers. Oregon Department of Forestry Rangeland staff provided presentations on working with RFPAs at four agency incident management team trainings, invited IMT personnel to present at the annual RFFPA Summit, and served as liaison officers on the Alder Springs, Cram, Flat, and Black Rock fires to facilitate communication and cooperation.

Vale RFFPA equipment, July 4, 2025. Vale added 6 heavy engines/tenders to their lineup after the 2024 fire season, tripling their fleet going into 2025.

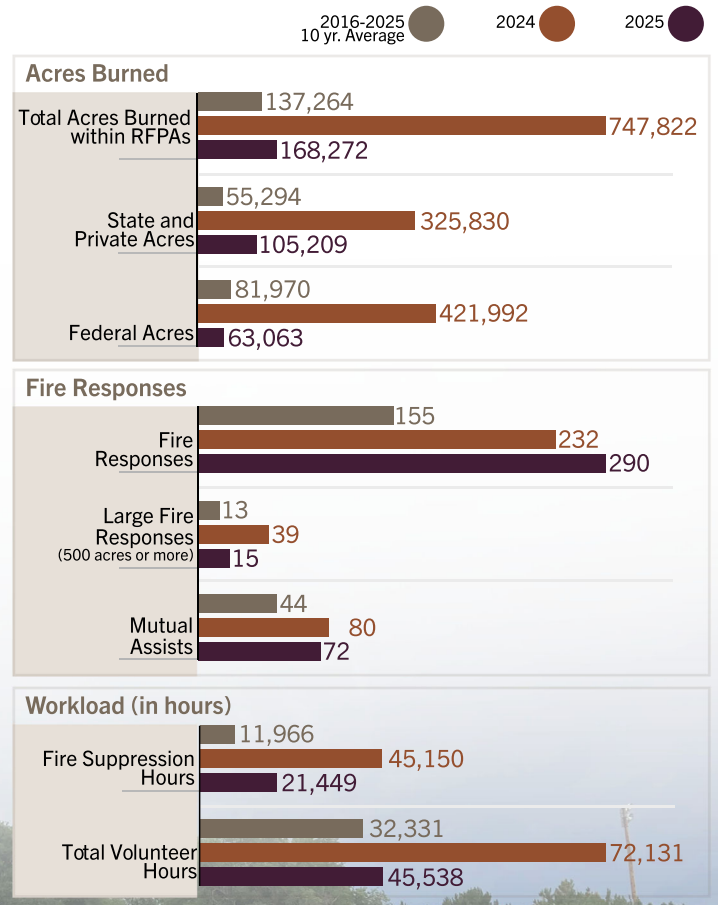


Katie Wollstein, Rangeland Fire Specialist with OSU Extension Fire Program facilitates a 2024 fire season after action review for RFPAs and cooperators in Burns January 24, 2025.



Mark McBride of the Vale RFFPA is presented the Outstanding Neighbor Award by Steve Meyer, Oregon Department of Forestry Rangeland Fire Specialist, at the 2025 RFFPA Summit.

RFFPA Firefighting Contributions









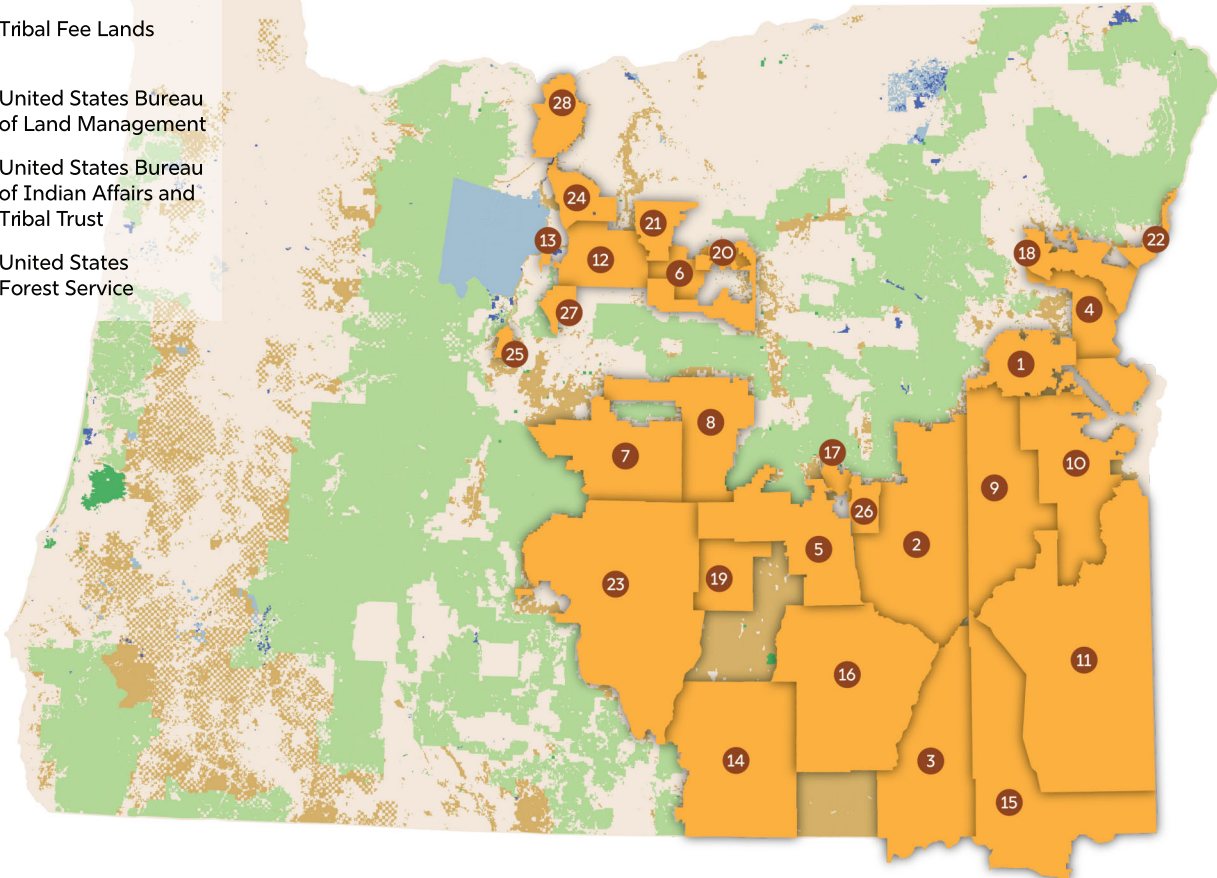
Oregon Rangeland Fire Protection Associations

28 RFPAs consist of 1,200 volunteer members across 9 counties in eastern Oregon. 800 are trained firefighters and 400 provide support.

June 4th, 2025 the Silver Creek RFPA expanded to include an additional 90,831 acres.

September 3rd, 2025 the Petersburg RFPA expanded to include an additional 103,262 acres.

-  Range Fire Protection Associations
-  Oregon Department of State Lands
-  Tribal Fee Lands
-  United States Bureau of Land Management
-  United States Bureau of Indian Affairs and Tribal Trust
-  United States Forest Service



- | | |
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| 1. Ironside RFPA, Malheur Co. est. 1964 | 15. Blue Mountain RFPA, Malheur Co. est. 2013 |
| 2. Crane RFPA, Harney Co. est. 1998 | 16. Frenchglen RFPA, Harney Co. est. 2013 |
| 3. Fields-Andrews RFPA, Harney Co. est. 1998 | 17. Lone Pine RFPA, Harney Co. est. 2013 |
| 4. Burnt River RFPA, Baker Co. est. 2000 | 18. Lookout-Glasgow RFPA, Baker Co. est. 2014 |
| 5. Silver Creek RFPA, Harney Co. est. 2001 | 19. Wagontire RFPA, Harney Co. est. 2015 |
| 6. Twickenham RFPA, Wheeler Co. est. 2001 | 20. WC Ranches RFPA, Wheeler Co. est. 2015 |
| 7. Brothers-Hampton RFPA, Crook, Deschutes Co. est. 2006 | 21. Wheeler County Fire & Rescue RFPA, Wheeler Co. est. 2016 |
| 8. Post-Paulina RFPA, Crook, Deschutes, & Harney Co. est. 2006 | 22. Greater Pine Valley RFPA, Baker Co. est. 2016 |
| 9. Juntura RFPA, Malheur Co. est. 2007 | 23. High Desert RFPA, Lake Co. est. 2018 |
| 10. Vale RFPA, Malheur Co. est. 2008 | 24. Bakeoven-Shaniko RFPA, Wasco Co. est. 2019 |
| 11. Jordan Valley RFPA, Malheur Co. est. 2008 | 25. Lower Bridge RFPA, Deschutes & Jefferson Co. est. 2022 |
| 12. Ashwood-Antelope RFPA, Jefferson, Wasco Co. est. 2009 | 26. North Harney RFPA, Harney Co. est. 2022 |
| 13. Gateway RFPA, Jefferson Co. est. 2010 | 27. Grizzly RFPA, Jefferson Co. est. 2023 |
| 14. Warner Valley RFPA, Lake Co. est. 2011 | 28. Petersburg RFPA, Wasco Co. est. 2023 |

Oregon Department of Forestry supports Rangeland Fire Protection Associations through administrative guidance and cost reimbursement, fire suppression training, facilitating access to federal grants and surplus fire fighting equipment.



For more Information:
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