

STAFF REPORT

Agenda Item No.:	C
Work Plan:	Fire Protection Work Plan
Topic:	Ongoing Topic: Rangeland Protection Association
Presentation Title:	Hearing request to Expand Gateway RFPA Boundary
Date of Presentation:	September 9, 2026
Contact Information:	Levi Hopkins, Wildfire Prevention and Policy Manager 503-949-3572, Levi.A.Hopkins@odf.oregon.gov

SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda item is to obtain Board approval to proceed with a public hearing about expanding the current boundary for the Gateway 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 Jefferson County have provided a letter (Attachment 1) requesting the Board to hold a public hearing about providing protection from fire for rangelands by expanding the current boundary of the Gateway 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 Ashwood-Antelope, Bakeoven-Shaniko, Blue Mountain, Brothers /Hampton, Burnt River, Crane, Fields-Andrews, Frenchglen, Gateway, Greater Pine Valley, Grizzly, Higher 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.

The area the private landowners are considering for fire protection is interspersed with other land management agencies. Including federal, state, county, private, and tribal land.

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 about providing protection from fire for rangelands in Jefferson County, Oregon.

NEXT STEPS

The Department will hold a public hearing and determine the support for providing fire protection in Jefferson County, 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 Gateway Rangeland Protection Association
- (2) Map of the proposed boundary expansion of the Gateway Rangeland Protection Association

Oregon Board of Forestry
Salem Headquarters
2600 State Street
Salem, Oregon 97310

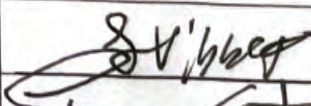
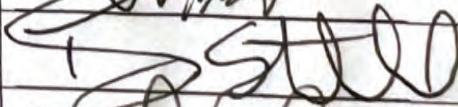
July 2, 2026

Re: Gateway Rangeland Fire Protection Association Proposed Boundary Expansion

The Gateway Rangeland Fire Protection Association (GRFPA) would like to hold a public hearing to expand our protection boundaries to include approximately 7,410.58 acres in north Jefferson County. The breakdown of increased acreage includes: 1.34 acres of state and county land; 670.51 acres of federal land; 6,261.27 acres of private land; and 477.46 acres of Tribal land (Warm Springs Confederated Tribes).

Please refer to the attached map and signatures of the interested land owners.

We appreciate your consideration of our request.

Logan Vibbert Gateway RPFA Chairman	
Buster Stoodard	
Darrell Cecilian	

CC: Allison Rayburn, ODF Rangeland Fire Protection Coordinator

Gateway RFPA Expansion

Legend

Roads

Federal
and
State
Hwy
Highway
exit And
Paved
Road

All
— weather
Road
— Dirt Road
Gateway Boundary
Gateway_Expansion

Proposed Additional Acres

Type	Acres
State/County	1.34
Federal	670.51
Private	6261.27
Tribal	477.46
Total	7410.58

