



Northeast Oregon District 2025 Statistical Report

LA GRANDE UNIT
BAKER SUB UNIT
PENDLETON UNIT
WALLOWA UNIT



Kate Skinner
State Forester (Interim)

Justin Lauer
District Forester





District Forester's Comments



Welcome to the 2025 Annual Statistical Report for the Northeast Oregon District

After my first full year as the District Forester for the Northeast Oregon District, I present this report to you from a place of gratitude and pride in our staff on the district and the work they accomplished. 2025 proved again to be a very busy year in all facets of our operations from protection to forest resources to administration. Above all I am most proud of the customer service focus all our staff have across the district.

Fire season 2025, seemed to offer reprieve to the district after a historic 2024 fire season. Fire danger started to rise in late May prompting the district to enter fire season abnormally early on June 5th. Although by early June the district was preparing for another busy season, timely rain events became the story of the fire season moderating indices continuously until the end of fire season on October 10th. This is evidenced by the fact that the district never entered extreme fire danger during the 2025 fire season, a first in my 17 years in Northeast Oregon. Even with moderated conditions throughout the season our staff stayed busy on 90 statistical fires throughout the season. Two of the more significant fires occurred on the Pendleton Unit in late July and early August. The Lake Creek Fire burned 476 acres in difficult to access ground of the McKay Creek drainage and the Duff fire burned 248 acres in the Umatilla River drainage. During both fire events the Pendleton Unit was supported by resources from across the district as well as our partners at the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Indian Affairs.

While the 2025 season seemed like a reprieve after a tough 2024 the district was still above average in overall number of fires. This is a testament to district staff who focus day in and day out on protecting lands from fire within the district.

Our Forest Resources staff continue to stay busy throughout the year. Twelve permanent foresters handle the workload in forest practices, forestry assistance and the forest management of Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife lands. The countless hours and tireless effort our staff put into their jobs ensure that landowners are meeting objectives while staying within the bounds of the Forest Practices Act. This is evident in the thousands of acres treated through various programs across the district, hundreds of inspections and low citation numbers. The Federal Forest Restoration Program implemented multiple Good Neighbor Authority projects across the district adding capacity to the pace and scale of forestry projects in the national forests.

The district administrative staff are integral to our success and provide the framework and support to keep the district running as efficiently and effectively as it does. The resolve of our administrative staff is one of the major highlights of 2025. While all the fires of 2024 were declared out prior to the end of that year, the administrative workload created by that historic season carried all the way through 2025 while navigating another fire season and multiple process changes.

Thank you for your efforts and continued support.

Justin Lauer

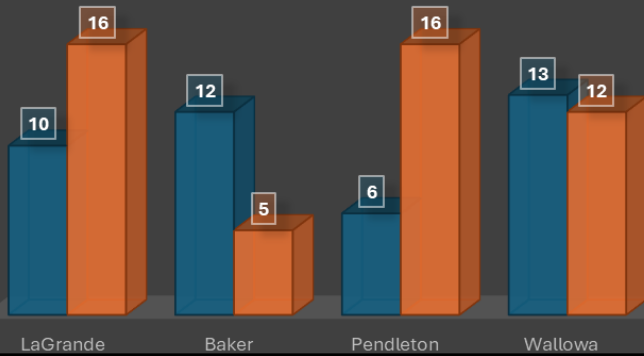
Justin Lauer
District Forester, Northeast Oregon District

Protection From Fire Program

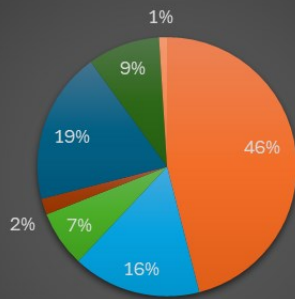


FIRES BY CAUSE

■ Lightning ■ Human



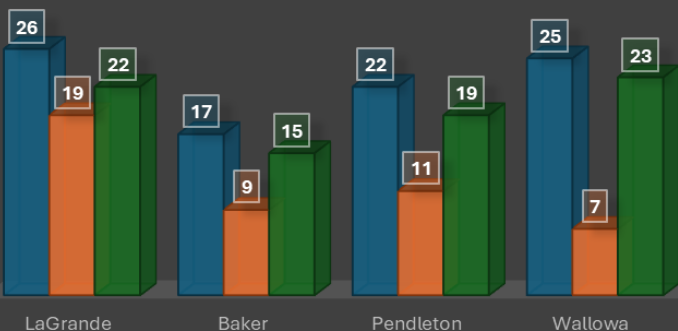
DISTRICT FIRES BY CAUSE



■ Lightning ■ Equipment Use ■ Recreation ■ Smoking
■ Debris Burning ■ Miscellaneous ■ Under Investigation

FIRES BY UNIT

■ STAT ■ NonSTAT ■ NFCA



2025 Significant Fires

Fire	Date	ODF Acres	Total Acres
Coolie Springs	7/1	1	1
Soaphill	7/18	24	24
East Rock Creek	7/27	15	15
Juniper	7/31	0	57
Lake Creek	7/31	476	476
Whiskey	8/9	.75	.75
Duff	8/11	140.7	247.9
Juniper Canyon	8/28	0	7,585
Dark Canyon	8/29	.61	18

NEO District Statistical Fire Summary

- 90 total statistical fires, above 10 year average
- 710 total acres burned, below 10 year average
- 41 lightning caused fires
 - ⇒ 46% of total statistical fires
 - ⇒ Burned 514 acres; 72% of total acres
- 49 human caused fires
 - ⇒ 54% of total statistical fires
 - ⇒ Burned 196 acres; 28% of total acres

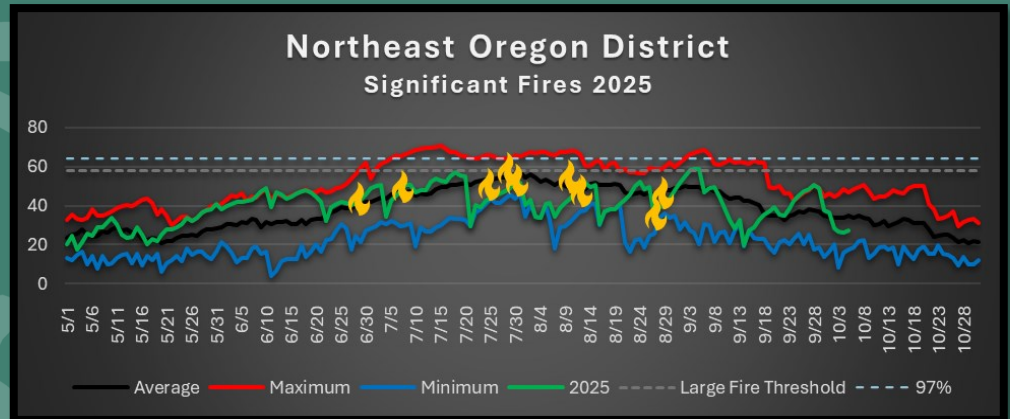
NEO District Hosted Severity Aircraft Summary

- 3NP (Type 2 Helicopter)
 - ⇒ 72 flight hours
 - ⇒ 287,625 gallons of water delivered
- T-842/T-852 (Single Engine Airtanker)
 - ⇒ 131 flight hours combined
 - ⇒ 18 incident flights each
 - ⇒ 80,540 gallons of retardant delivered
- R-65N (Detection Plane)
 - ⇒ 174 flight hours
- AA-2DZ
 - ⇒ 125 Hours
 - ⇒ 20 Incidents

Protection From Fire Program



The winter of 2024/2025 produced above average snowfall in our district. We experienced a late, warm, and dry spring which reduced fine fuel loading, but produced an early start to fire season due to weather conditions. During the month of June, we experienced above average temperatures and below average precipitation.



The Northeast Oregon District declared fire season on June 5th. Thirty days later July 2nd, 2025, NEO entered high fire danger.

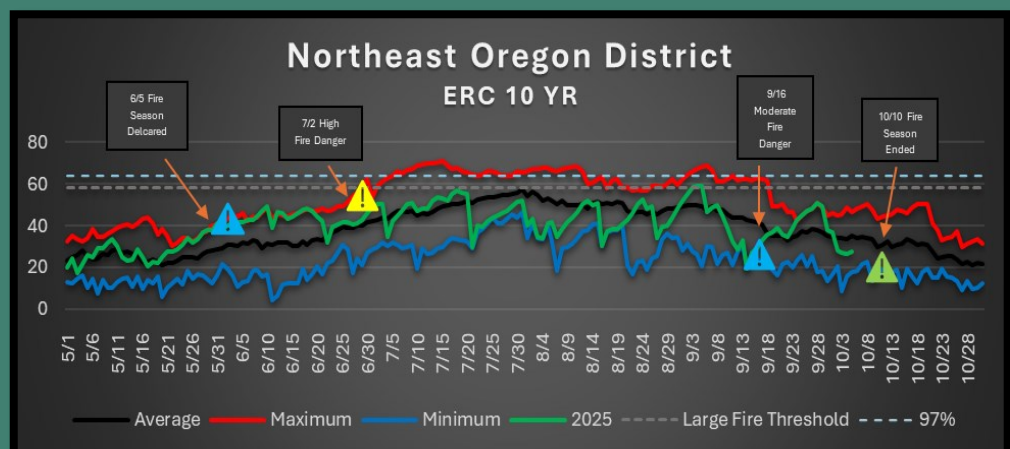
July started very warm and dry, but that trend quickly changed near the middle of the month. The rest of July produced a high frequency number of storms, but nearly every storm received significant rainfall. Most fires never exceeded 1/10th of an acre.

During the month of August, the district received an unseasonal amount of rain with temperatures hovering well below normal and local ERC's staying well below average. NEO continued IA on many small fires, but acres burned remained well below average as well.

Small fires, inconsistent weather patterns, paired with a warm and dry period toward the end of September and into early October extended fire season. On September 15th NEO reduced fire danger to Moderate, and on October 10th NEO terminated fire season. NEO never entered extreme fire danger in 2025

NEO recorded 90 stat fires in 2025, which is 12 above the ten year average. 710 acres were burned on ODF protected lands, which is 13,891 acres below the ten year average. There were 41 lightning caused fires, which is just below the ten year average of 45. There were 49 human caused fires, which was well over the ten year average of 33.

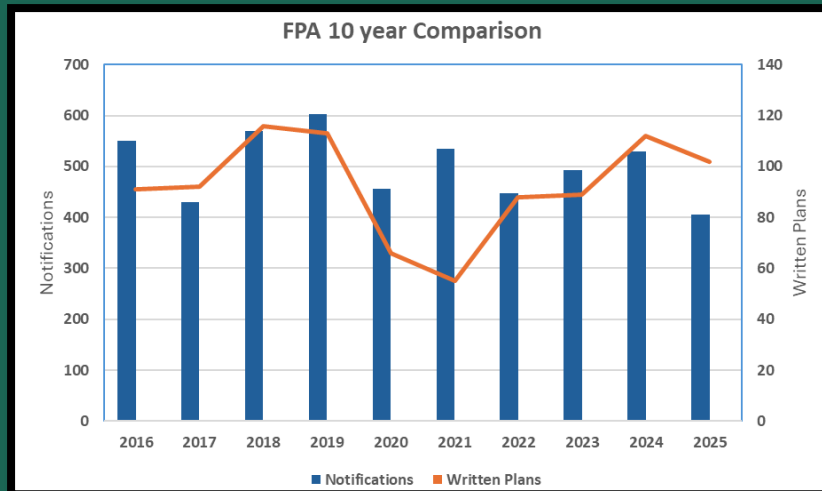
Overall, NEO had a very successful year in suppression. Aggressive initial attack, outstanding partnerships with our neighboring agencies, and a little help from weather aided in a successful and comparatively uneventful fire season across the district during the 2025 fire season.



Private Forest Programs



Forest Practices Administration



- 306 FPA Inspections were completed
- 131 Fire Inspections were completed
- 2 FPA citations were issued
- 0 FPA warnings were issued
- 0 FPA Unsatisfactory conditions was issued

ODFW

Auburn GNA Fuels Reduction Project

- ♦ 97 acres contracted, 34 acres ODF fuels crew

Hunt Mountain Timber Sale

- ♦ 292 mbf completed

Forestry Assistance

NRCS EQIP Inventories	6,215 Acres
NRCS EQIP Layouts	7,671 Acres
NRCS EQIP Certifications	5,967 Acres
District Wide RCPP Contracted	0 Acres
District Wide RCPP Certification	0 Acres
Stewardship Plans	0 Plans
Basic Forest Management Plan (Under the AFF Agreement)	19 Plans
PLFN (Distributed)	25,860 Seedlings
PLFN (Stored for Manulife)	865,648 Seedlings

Forestry Assistance Funding Source

Wallowa Unit

- *Wallowa County Ready, Set, Go! Program & Lake Basin Fuels Reduction Project WSFM Grant **44 Acres completed.**
- *Community Wildfire Defense Grant Wallowa Water & Soil Conservation ODF Partnership Project
- *Wallowa North NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Project
- *Wallowa Front Fuel Reduction NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Project
- ***Pendleton Unit**
- *Umatilla South County Defensible Space Grant (CA) **45 Acres completed.**
- *Umatilla McKay Fuels Grant (WSFM) **0 Acres completed.**
- *JDU Basin Forest Resiliency NRCS Conservation Implementation Strategy
- *ODF Umatilla SFG **48 Acres completed.**

La Grande Unit

- *NRCS IRA
- *Grande Ronde River Hazard Fuels Project **75 Acres completed.**
- *Union County CWDG **pause on spending obligations starting 2026**
- *Central Grande Ronde Landscape Resiliency Program (LRP)
- *Community Assistance (CA) Spout to Minam **awarded, no obligations.**
- *West Valley Forest Management NRCS Conservation Implementation Strategy

Baker Sub-Unit

- *Baker Watershed National Water Quality Initiative NRCS
- *Spring Creek Firewise Fuels Reduction & Fire Prevention Grant (CA) & Pine Valley/Eagleton Firewise Fuels Reduction Grant (WSFM) **100 Acres completed.**

District-Wide

- *East Oregon Forest Restoration NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Project

Fuel Reduction Grants

Units within Northeast Oregon District	Acres Thinned (2024)	Acres Thinned (2002 To 2024)
Baker Sub-Unit (Baker County)	100	8,713
La Grande Unit (Union County)	75	8,309
Pendleton Unit (Umatilla County)	93	6,911
Wallowa Unit (Wallowa County)	44	8,845
TOTAL	312	32,778

Federal Forest Restoration Program



Federal Forest Restoration Program

In 2013, the Oregon Legislature took an innovative step to fund the Federal Forest Restoration (FFR) Program, with the explicit intent of increasing the amount of active restoration actions on our federal forests and supporting job creation and economic recovery in rural economies. In 2014 congress authorized the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) which allows the use of federal funds to support state agency work on federal forest projects. *

In 2025 the NEO FFR Program had large timber sale projects on both the Umatilla and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests. Our crew reconned the sales for economic viability and operability, before laying out and cruising the sales. FFR personnel aided NEO District in numerous wildfire tasks, including suppression, investigation, finance, logistics, and recon flights. FMT personnel were utilized to aid Forest Service, OSU and TNC in completing prescribed burning. In addition FFR aided in wildlife surveys, avian surveys, pathology surveys, stand exams, and other data gathering missions critical to NEPA planning*. NRS1, NRS2 and FMT personnel completed and/or initiated layout and prepping of two GNA timber sales, which are located on the following Forests and Districts:

- Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, La Grande Ranger District, Alder GNA Timber Sale, layout **complete**.
- Umatilla National Forest, Walla Walla Ranger District, Summit GNA Timber Sale, layout **complete**.

In 2025, NEO FFR personnel **sold** the following timber sale:

- Little Big Rock GNA Timber Sale, Umatilla National Forest, Heppner Ranger District.

In 2025, NEO FFR personnel administered timber sales, and thinning contracts as follows:

- Umatilla National Forest, Walla Walla Ranger District, Elbow GNA Timber Sale, **no operations in 2025**.
- Umatilla National Forest, North Fork John Day Ranger District, Davis GNA Timber Sale, **no operations in 2025**.
- Umatilla National Forest, North Fork John Day Ranger District, Davis Mastication Thinning Contract, **completed**.

Once sold or awarded, utilizing an ODF Timber Sale Contract or Service Contract, ODF personnel will administer the timber sale contracts and thinning contracts, and timber sale receipts will reimburse ODF for expenses related to sale prep and administration. Remaining receipts will be applied to work on upcoming restoration projects.

*For the 2024-25 biennium, FFRP awarded \$260,000 towards a heritage survey contract on the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest. **Includes 20,000 acres avian surveys across forest.

Federal Forest Restoration Program Federal Timber Sale, Thinning & Survey Projects Supported in 2025		
National Forest	Ranger District	Sale Acres
FS Survey (Stand Exam, Wildlife, etc.) Project Recon / RX		
Wallowa - Whitman/ Umatilla	All Forest	20,445**
Timber Sale / Thinning: Recon, Prep, Admin		
Umatilla	NFJD	215
Umatilla	Heppner	850
Wallowa-Whitman	Whitman	1,400
Wallowa-Whitman	Whitman	3,800
Umatilla	Walla-Walla	22,15
Total		28,925

Firewise Community

The National Fire Protection Association's "Firewise USA" recognition program is designed to teach people how to live with wildfire and increase their home and property's chance of survival through proactive actions, while encouraging neighbors to work together to reduce losses and damage.

6 NEW Communities

Union County

- North Powder
- Mt. Emily

Baker County

- Bourne
- Unity Lake
- Old Auburn
- Western Heights

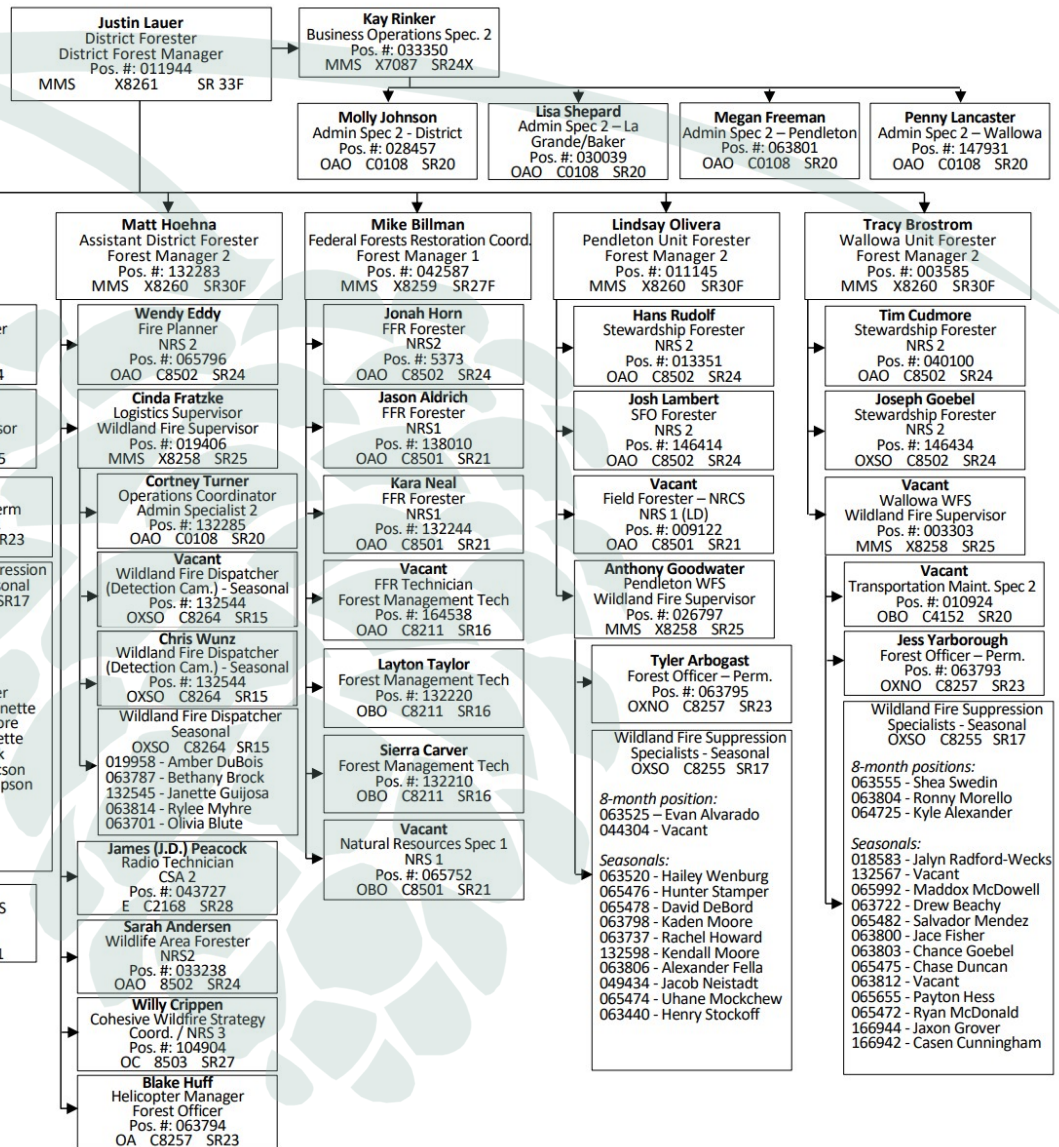
2025 NEO Personnel Changes New Hires/Promotions/Retirements

Justin Lauer NEO District Forester
Lindsay Olivera Pendleton Unit Forester
Tyler Arbogast Pendleton Unit Wildland Fire Supervisor
Greg Melhorn Pendleton Unit Permanent Forest Officer
Anthony Goodwater Detailed as Pendleton Unit Wildland Fire Supervisor
Jake Goebel Wallowa Unit Wildland Fire Supervisor

Cooperative Work Program

The District seeks out and utilizes a variety of work opportunities with private, State and Federal Cooperators which provide cross-training opportunities for permanent employees, and additional employment for many of our seasonals. In 2025, several employees worked for the Oregon Department of Transportation, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Hancock Forest Management, and other private landowners.

Northeast Oregon District July 2025



2025 Northeast Oregon District Budget Committee Members

Chris Heffernan, Union County, Forest Landowner and NEO Budget Committee Chairman; EOFPA Member
Bob Messinger, Union County, Forest Landowner
Jered Schwabauer, Harvest Operations Manager for Hancock Forest Management; EOFPA President
Clint Johnson, Baker County, Forest Landowner and Rancher
Pat Sullivan, Baker County, Forest Landowner & Rancher
Elwayne Henderson, Wallowa County, Forest Landowner & Forest Operator
Chris Cunningham, Wallowa County, Forest Landowner & Rancher
Hank Howard, Umatilla County, Forest & Rangeland Manager for Pacific Northwest Tree Farm
Bobby Corey, Umatilla County, Forest Landowner & Rancher Representing Pendleton Ranches/Cunningham Sheep Co; EOFPA member

EOFPA = East Oregon Forest Protective Association