

News Release



U.S. Forest Service
Pacific Northwest Region



USDIL Bureau of Land
Management, OR & WA

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Northwest Firefighters to Help in Australia

PORTLAND – About 25 firefighters from the Pacific Northwest will assist with managing and suppressing wildfires in Australia, according to officials at the Northwest Interagency Coordination Center (NWCC) in Portland, a regional center for mobilizing resources.

The firefighters, from the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs and the National Park Service, will leave on Friday for Australia. A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service meteorologist from NWCC arrived in Melbourne last weekend. They are among 63 firefighters nationwide being sent to help under an international mutual-aid agreement.

Those deploying include smoke jumpers, rappellers, hotshot crew members, fire management personnel, a meteorologist and four burned area recovery specialists.

The personnel will be leaving from their hometowns and rendezvousing in Los Angeles with other firefighters on their way to Melbourne. Firefighters will be engaged in fire suppression and related activities in the State of Victoria working for the Department of Sustainability and Environment for up to 35 days.

Personnel are from BLM units in Burns, Prineville, Lakeview, Medford and Vale along with Forest Service employees from the Malheur, Wallowa-Whitman, Fremont-Winema, Okanogan-Wenatchee, Rogue River-Siskiyou and Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forests and the Redmond (OR) Air Center. The National Park Service employee is from Seattle. The Bureau of Indian Affairs employee and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service employee both work in Portland.

Australians, New Zealanders and Canadians, among others, have assisted with U.S. wildfires. U.S. firefighters last deployed to Australia in late 2006 and early 2007.

As of Thursday afternoon Australian time, fires have killed 181 people, damaged or destroyed 1,069 private dwellings, and burned more than 1 million acres.

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