

# NEWS Release BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT OR-030-2015-013

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## Team Rubicon Joins Forces with Vale District BLM

*Vale, Ore.* – Twenty veterans from Team Rubicon are joining with the Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM) Vale District to combat fire in southeast Oregon.

Team Rubicon is a veteran’s organization that seeks to “unite the skills and experiences of military veterans with first responders to rapidly deploy emergency response teams.” Team Rubicon boasts more than 25,000 veteran volunteers which have been deployed to disaster areas both domestically and international since 2010.

“Talk about true diversity, getting these veterans here to help us out and teach them skills at the same time is a real opportunity for both the Vale District and Team Rubicon,” said Jason Simmons, Vale District BLM Fuels Specialist.

The Team Rubicon volunteers will be working on the Baker Habitat Restoration and Fuels Project about 30 minutes outside of Baker City. The crew will spend most of their time on the project cutting, lopping and piling small conifers that are encroaching into priority sage-grouse habitat. The purpose of the project is to improve sage-grouse and other wildlife habitat and reduce accumulations of hazardous fuels bordering national forest and privately held lands.

The Team Rubicon volunteers are normally a fire suppression team, and according to weather reports, they will be needed by this weekend. The Northwest Interagency Coordination Center is forecasting severe lightning activity by the end of the week through the beginning of next week.

“These vets come with a plethora of skills, some of them might get the fire bug and make a career of it,” Simmons said, “for others, it’s a chance to explore new opportunities with the BLM—and we need people like that to keep the Vale District on the cutting edge.”

The Team Rubicon volunteers will be working in the Vale District for up to 14 days. They arrive in the area Thursday night, July 30. More information about Team Rubicon is available at:

[www.teamrubiconusa.org/](http://www.teamrubiconusa.org/)

Photos are available at: <http://blm.gov/jdmd>

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land, the most of any Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM’s mission is to manage and conserve the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations under our mandate of multiple-use and sustained yield. In Fiscal Year 2014, the BLM generated \$5.2 billion in receipts from public lands.

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