



Office of the Chief

Chief John R. Batiste
"Service with Humility"

*****For Immediate Release*****

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Government and Media Relations

**State Fire Marshal's Office
State Fire Marshal Charles P. LeBlanc**

Date: July 22, 2021
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State Fire Mobilization Authorized for the Steptoe Canyon Fire

Whitman County – State fire assistance has been mobilized under the Washington State Fire Services Resource Mobilization Plan in support of local firefighters working to contain the Steptoe Canyon Fire located in Whitman County, near the town of Colton. The Steptoe Canyon Fire is currently burning in grass and brush. Washington State Patrol Chief John Batiste authorized the mobilization of state firefighting resources on July 22, 2021, at 6:00 a.m. at the request of Fire Chief Jay Reisenauer, Whitman County Fire District 14.

The Steptoe Canyon Fire started on July 22, 2021, at approximately 2:15 a.m. This fire is estimated at 500 acres and growing. It is threatening homes, rangeland, agricultural crops, and Bonneville Power Administration resources. Level 1 evacuations are in effect at this time. The fire cause is currently under investigation.

The State Emergency Operations Center at Camp Murray will remain partially activated at Level 2 to help coordinate state assistance for the Steptoe Canyon Fire. Mobilization specialists from the Fire Protection Bureau have ordered three strike teams and one hand crew. State Fire Marshal's Office personnel are both en route to the scene and working remotely to coordinate the dispatch of resources.

Under the State Fire Services Resource Mobilization Plan, the Fire Protection Bureau coordinates the initial dispatch and continued administrative oversight of resources and personnel for the duration of the mobilization. The Mobilization Plan is implemented to provide a process to quickly notify, assemble and deploy fire service personnel, equipment and other resources from around the state when fires, disasters or other events exceed the capacity of local jurisdictions. More information about the Washington State Fire Services Resource Mobilization Plan is available at: <http://www.wsp.wa.gov/all-risk-mobilization/>.

The State Fire Marshal's Office is a Bureau of the Washington State Patrol, providing fire and life safety services to the citizens of Washington State including inspections of state licensed facilities, plan review of school construction projects, licensing of fire sprinkler contractors and pyrotechnic operators, training Washington States firefighters, and collecting emergency response data.