



Scientists play waiting game with giant volcano off the Oregon coast

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Evacuations expand near Sisters as Flat Fire grows

Zach Urness
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Flat Fire grew to 22,000 acres north of Sisters and evacuation orders were expanded in the early morning hours on Aug. 24.

Level 1, 2 and 3 “go now” evacuations

now extend to just outside Sisters and along Highway 126. At least 3,938 homes are threatened by the fire, according to an Aug. 24 morning report. An evacuation map can be found here.

Oregon’s largest wildfire broke out Aug. 21 and grew rapidly on dry, hot and windy conditions that fueled the flames.

A red flag warning was issued for the fire into Aug. 25, meaning that the blaze could grow.

“A dry and unstable air mass with warm temperatures can contribute to active fire behavior,” the warning said.

Air quality ranged from unhealthy to

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The Flat Fire has grown rapidly in central Oregon. PROVIDED BY THE DESCHUTES COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



Whitney Fritzie-Koose laughs as she learns to climb a tree on Aug. 23 at Silver Falls State Park.

PHOTOS BY MARIAH JOHNSTON/STATESMAN JOURNAL

UP AND AWAY

Tree climbers from around the world gather at Silver Falls State Park

Mariah Johnston
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Suspended nearly 200 feet in the air, tree climbers made their way to the canopies of giant Douglas firs on Aug. 23 at Silver Falls State Park during the annual Tree Climbers Rendezvous.

Tree Climbing at Silver Falls hosted the event that was put on by the Global Organization for Tree Climbing. This year, the event runs through Aug. 25.

Nearly 30 people from places like the United States, Japan, Korea, Costa Rica and Mexico participated this year.



Lazlo Wissina, right, helps Savannah Schilling climb a tree.

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What’s next for commercial service at Salem Airport?

Whitney Woodworth
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

The future of commercial air service in Salem remains unclear after the last Avelo Airlines flight touched down at Salem Airport on Aug. 10.

A group of protesters — outspoken against the airline’s decision to partner with ICE for deportation flights — celebrated the departure, Salem’s sole source of commercial air service.

Even though Salem’s partnership with Avelo ended abruptly with the airline ending all West Coast service, city leaders are talking about how to bring commercial service back to Oregon’s capital city.

Returning commercial air service to Salem could cost millions, with community fundraising, the city or federal grants footing the bill. Some council members are wary of spending any city money on the airport as the city faces a general fund shortfall.

City leaders have discussed options for reviving commercial service, including community-based fundraising for a Minimum Revenue Guarantee fund to attract an airline, courting an ultra-low-cost carrier that flies to California, Las Vegas and Arizona, and applying for federal funds.

What’s next for Salem Airport?

Jack Penning, managing partner of Volaire Aviation Consulting, which partners with Salem and about 100 other communities nationwide, said top markets for flights to and from Salem are Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Phoenix, San Francisco and San Diego.

“Avelo picked the right markets,” he said of the airlines’ flights to and from Burbank and Las Vegas. “Those are the two largest, the two lowest risk. A new carrier, regardless of who that

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