



USFS PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGION AIRTANKER BASES

2012 Accomplishments



“Dedicated to providing safe, efficient and effective operational and logistics support to aerial firefighting resources”.

THE PROGRAM

The USFS Pacific Northwest Airtanker Base Program consists of the six “large” airtanker bases in the region hosted by area forests.

- Moses Lake, WA Okanogan-Wenatchee NF
- Troutdale, OR Mt. Hood NF
- La Grande, OR Wallowa Whitman NF
- Redmond, OR Deschutes NF
- Medford, OR Rogue-Siskiyou NF
- Klamath Falls, OR Fremont-Winema NF



The airtanker program often provides assistance to the two USFS operated SEAT bases in the region.

- Pendleton, OR Umatilla NF
- John Day, OR Malhuer NF

VERSATILITY

Maintaining versatility and providing support services to as many resources as possible, (“bang for the buck”), is a goal of the PNW bases. With all bases providing support for large airtankers single engine airtankers, transports and tactical aircraft.



Some also support MAFFS and VLAT airtankers and other types of incident support aircraft including smoke jumping aircraft, helicopters and more.



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2012 Accomplishments



RETARDANT PROGRAM

In 2012 five of the large airtanker bases and both SEAT bases were utilizing Phoschek LC-95A fire retardant.

Medford is still using Phoschek P-100. Negotiations with the vendor are under way to convert Medford to LC-95A in 2013 to be consistent through out the region.

Full service contracts with personnel provided by the vendor are in place at Moses Lake, Redmond, Medford and Klamath Falls. Bulk contracts using agency personnel are in use at La Grande, Troutdale and the SEAT bases.



AIRTANKER CONTRACTS

Each of the large airtankers on the national contact require a level III COR to the administer their contract. In 2012 the PNW Region base managers showed their program support by provided **four** of those COR's!



SAFETY

Once again in 2012 there were no incidents of injury or damage occurring at PNW airtanker bases. This regional safety record is an example to the national program.



Safety Briefing on the BAE-146

The program remains as always engaged in placing the well being of its personnel and the safe conduct of base operations ahead of the mission.





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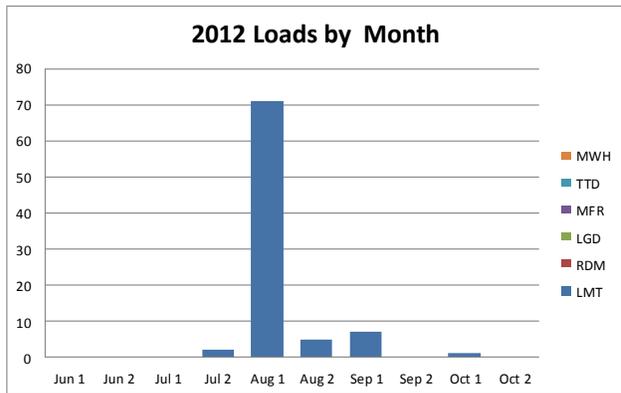
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2012 SEASON STATISTICS

In general the six large bases open for business about the first of June and close up about mid to late October. Not many statistics were available. As last year, base activity peaked in August and September. The almost complete lack of activity in June or earlier has been a trend of recent years.

Base	First Load	Last Load
Moses Lake	07-07	10-08
Klamath Falls	07-15	10-11
Redmond	07-07	10-04
La Grande	07-09	09-17
Medford		
Troutdale		



RETARDANT USE BY AGENCY

In 2012 the six large bases flew 1,591,346 gallons of retardant to nine different agencies. This was nearly double the gallons delivered last year.

Heavy Airtankers											Total By
	FS-R6	FS-Other	BIA	BLM	NPS	ODF	DNR	CalFire	FWS	Other	BASE
Redmond	164,433	9,899	14,324	123,659	0	39,787	28,728	0	0	0	380,830
Moses Lake	311,057	0	50,992	89,613	2,796	0	126,951	0	10,938	0	592,347
Medford	76,414	0	0	2,065	0	69,651	0	15,861	0	0	163,991
LaGrande	170,981	67,120	0	7,969	0	8,876	2,083	0	0	2,100	259,129
K-Falls	90,695	48,741	0	26,976	1,101	0	0	0	0	0	167,513
Troutdale	4,010	0	0	0	0	17,937	5,589	0	0	0	27,536
Agency Use	817,590	125,760	65,316	250,282	3,897	136,251	163,351	15,861	10,938	2,100	1,591,346





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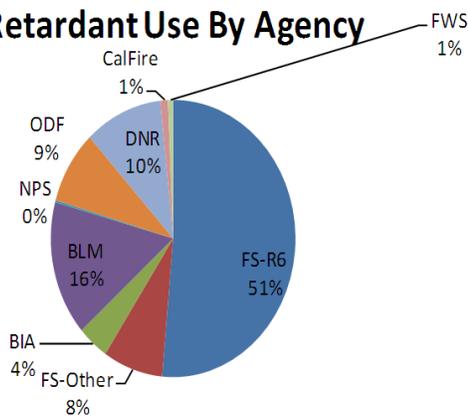
**2012
Accomplishments**



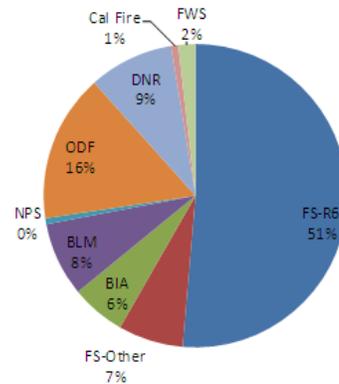
2012 AGENCY RETARDANT USE VS 20 YEAR AVERAGE

Retardant use by agency in 2012 bears a striking resemblance to the 20 year average.

Retardant Use By Agency



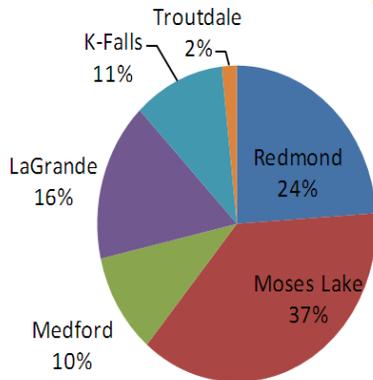
20 Year Average Use By Agency



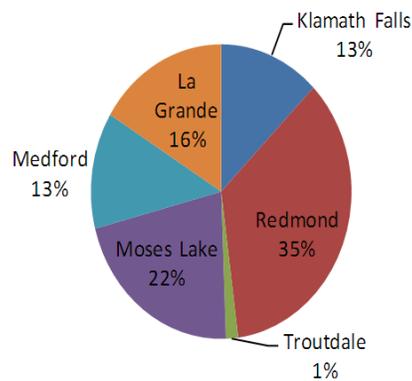
**RETARDANT USE BY BASE
VS
10 YEAR AVERAGE**



2012 Retardant Use By Base



10 Year Avg. Use By Base



In 2012 the bases were fairly consistent with their ten year average use. Moses Lake and Redmond switched places though in the one and two spots this season.



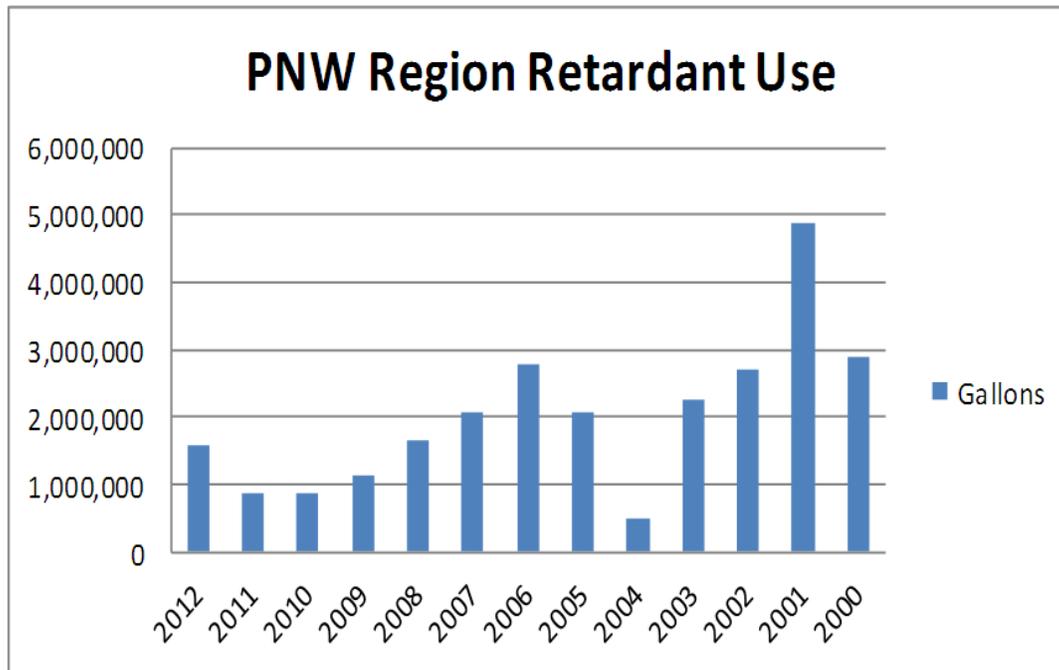
USFS PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGION AIRTANKER BASES

2012 Accomplishments



PNW REGION RETARDANT USE BY YEAR

In 2012 the downward trend in retardant use was broken



PROGRAM EVENTS 2012

PNW Region ATBM Workshop

The 2012 Airtanker Base Managers Workshop was held at the Regional Office in Portland on April 17th-20th. The workshop had a good turn out and included representatives of all the bases. The attendees received information updates from the State Aviation Manager, ODF Aviation Manager, Northwest Coordination Center and Regional Office Aviation. The group discussed events of the past season including MAFFS II certifications, airtanker contracts, fire retardant chemicals, airtanker base risk assessments, Washington Office review results and safety.

Airtanker Base Administration Software

At the workshop the group was introduced to a project to create a web based administrative tool for airtanker bases. The group agreed to provide support to the project and beta test it during the 2012 season. As the season progressed the test version did not develop but the project has not been scrapped. The intention is to have the program loaded on a server for testing in winter of 2012-13.





USFS PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGION AIRTANKER BASES

2012 Accomplishments



Medford ATB B-17 Visit

On June 11th 2012, the restored B-17 Sentimental Journey was having engine troubles over Medford, Oregon on its way to a Fly-In at Roseburg. She ended up at the Medford Air Tanker Base on pit #2 to check the engine. It turned out that they needed to replace the engine and she would remain at the MATB for 11 days until fixed. As it rested at the base the SJ crew allowed us here at the MATB, as well as many other visitors, to tour the aircraft. The folks here at MATB met many people who either flew on these planes or had stories about them. Some of the best stories came from our own Tanker Pilots.



Sentimental Journey was bought by Aero Union Corporation of Chico, California in 1959 and became Tanker 17. She flew thousands of sorties on forest fires throughout the country for the next 18 years.

One of the Oregon Department of Forestry contracted DC-7 Retardant Planes used for Initial Air Attack stationed at MATB during fire season is Tanker 62. Larry Kraus is the Pilot for Tanker 62. Ironically, Larry started his Air Tanker career on this very B-17 as the co-pilot in 1972. Brent Conner, another Tanker Pilot who lives in the Medford area, also started his career on this same B-17 as a co-pilot, with his father as the pilot.

The Medford Air Tanker Base was happy to help and support the Arizona Wing of the commemorative Air Force as they repaired their Aircraft. The MATB personnel were both sad and happy to see the B-17 fly away. Thank-you Sentimental Journey! It truly was a sentimental journey for many of us here at MATB.



For a complete review of her history and ongoing mission, as well as lots of great photos, here is a link to the Sentimental Journey's website: <http://azcaf.org/pages/sentjourn.html>



MEDFORD ACTIVITY

All in a days work at the Medford Airtanker Base in 2012





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2012
Accomplishments



NEW TANKS FOR LA GRANDE

La Grande's new ramp and runway construction finished up before the 2012 season. The ICL-Phoschek crews went to work on the tanks for the base near the end of Spring in 2012 and the result was nice new tanks and plumbing. La Grande has become perhaps the most "remodeled" base overall with base and airport improvements.



A New Home for Troutdale?

Runway construction scheduled for 2014 may prevent the future use of Troutdale as a heavy airtanker base. The Regional Office and the Mount Hood National Forest are working together to try to find a suitable alternate site for the base should this occur. Possible sites at the Portland International Airport are being explored.

REDMOND UPDATE

Redmond conducted SEAT operations again in 2012 and they continue to pursue the construction of an loading pad and operations area that would more adequately separate SEAT operations from large airtankers. Redmond did not make the certification as a MAFFS reload base because of the condition of the taxiway accessing the base ramp. Negotiations are underway with the airport in an attempt to secure improvements to the taxiway.





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2012 Accomplishments



MOSES LAKE TAKES TOP MUD

In 2012 Moses Lake took the honor of most gallons pumped breaking the half million mark with 592,347 gallons. Once again the base showed off its great versatility by loading every type of current large airtanker, MAFFS, DC-10's and even for the first time a SEAT!



The Moses Lake base is the oldest of the standard design bases built in the region and is beginning to experience some age related maintenance issues. They have been chasing some of these while continuing to make improvements installing additional offload storage capability to accommodate the DC-10

KLAMATH FALLS

2012 brought a little more activity to Klamath Falls after four very slow seasons in a row. Runway construction though out the summer caused some confusion and hindered some activity but The MAFFS reload base certification came in handy as four different MAFFS airtankers were supported.



No significant projects regarding the base itself were conducted but the primary project of focus was the Tanker 61 Memorial. The retardant crew, visiting air attack and other volunteers worked on creating an irrigation system and lawn for the Memorial. A display cabinet and wall display board were installed and the first annual Tanker 61 Memorial golf tournament fundraiser was held. Being the 20 year anniversary of Tanker 61's crash a rededication ceremony was also held to commemorate.

