



Blue Mountain Region Long Term Recovery Group

Volunteer Information

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www.uwbluemt.org/content/flood-recovery



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First, we want to thank YOU for showing up and offering your time, skills and resources to the people impacted by this flood. Without your help, the work would take much longer and continue the uncertainty of people impacted. YOU are helping to begin the healing.

Blue Mountain Region Long-Term Recovery Group was organized to focus on supporting individuals and families and their recovery from February 2020 flood-related damage. It is a coalition of various entities within the community, including nonprofit leadership, faith-based organizations and private sector representatives. Areas of concern include Walla Walla, Columbia, and Umatilla counties, and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

“Our goal is to provide coordinated management of long-term recovery to disaster survivors who do not have adequate personal resources throughout this region. We’re trying to restore their life to pre-flood at this time, or pre-disaster. Our goal isn’t to make their lives better, our goal is just to try to get them back to where they were before the flood.”

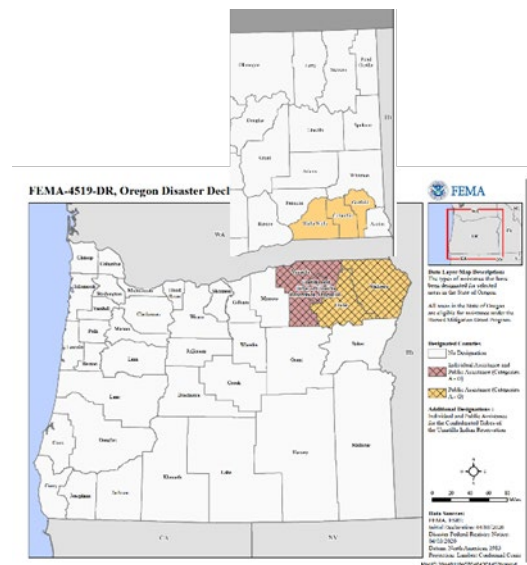
“In order to empathize with someone’s experience you must be willing to believe them as they see it and not how you imagine their experience to be.”

Brené Brown

ABOUT THE AREA:

What happened?

- [Umatilla River Flooding|Umatilla County under state of emergency](#)
Jessica Pollard, Alex Castle and Antonio Sierra/East Oregonian
- [UMATILLA RIVER FLOOD – OREGON](#)
Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian via AP
- [2020 February Flooding Spotlight](#)
Documenting impacts and support provided for the February 2020 flooding event.
Daniel Stoelb/Oregon Office of Emergency Management
- [NE Umatilla County, Reservation Residents Urged to Evacuate After Flooding](#)
Donald Orr/OPB
- [Umatilla Indian Reservation Under a State of Emergency due to Flooding](#)





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Levi Rickert/Native News Online

[Flood Photos:](#)

- [Pendleton](#)
- [Confederated Tribes](#)
- [Walla Walla](#)
- [Waitsburg](#)

Community Information

[Pendleton](#)

From the settlement of this rugged country to the Pendleton Round-Up held each September for over 100 years, Pendleton has deep Western roots.



Dip into this history by visiting the Pendleton Underground Tours or the Round-Up and Happy Canyon Hall of Fame. Pendleton Underground Tours covers our past as a railroad town and entertainment capital of Oregon on 90-minute tours. The Hall of Fame isn't just cowboys, it also includes legendary livestock, rodeo royalty, American Indian leaders, and selfless volunteers.

To take a piece of the West home with you, visit some of our leatherworkers including Richard Stapleman at Stapleman's Custom Boot Shop, Joe Meling at 23+, or Linda at L.L. Bevington. We also have a custom hat shop, Montana Peaks Hat Co. Don't forget to stop into Hamley & Co.'s Western Store, a Pendleton mainstay for over 100 years. There's nothing like the feel of wearing quality products handmade right here in Pendleton.

For a Western dining experience, within one block of Hamley's Western Store are two steakhouses, Virgil's at Cimmyotti's and Hamley Steakhouse, each with their own Western atmosphere. The Rainbow Café is right there too, check out the old cowboy memorabilia hanging on the walls.

[Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation](#)

The Walla Walla and Umatilla are river peoples among many who shared the Big River (Columbia). The Cayuse lived along the tributary river valleys in the Blue Mountains. The Tribes lived around the confluence of the Yakama, Snake, and Walla Walla rivers with the Columbia River.

The river system was the lifeblood of the people and it linked many different people by trade, marriage, conflict, and politics. The people fished, traded, and traveled along the river in canoes and over land by foot.

The Walla Walla, were mentioned by Lewis and Clark in 1805 as living along the Columbia just below the mouth of the Snake River as well as along the Yakama, Walla Walla, and Snake Rivers. The Walla Walla included many groups and bands that were often referred



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to by the village whence they originated from such as the Wallulapums and Chomnapums.

The Umatilla occupied both sides of the Columbia River from above the junction of the Umatilla River downstream to the vicinity of Willow Creek on the Oregon side and to Rock Creek on the Washington side. The river people were tied with other Tribes along the river with close family, trade, and economic interests in the Columbia River Gorge and the northern Plateau.

The Walla Walla and the Umatilla were a part of the larger culture of Shahaptian speaking river people of southeastern Washington, Northeastern Oregon, and Western Idaho. The Cayuse, whose original language is known to linguists as Waiilatpuan, lived: "...south of and between the Nez Perces and Wallah-Wallahs, extending from the Des Chutes or Wawanui river to the eastern side of the Blue Mountains. It [their country] is almost entirely in Oregon, a small part only, upon the upper Wallah-Wallah river, lying within Washington Territory."

Prior to the horse the Cayuse were tributary fishermen. After the arrival of the horse and gun they sometimes were mounted warriors to protect their way of life. They lived throughout the lower Columbia Plateau from the Cascade to the Blue Mountains, and grazed horses on the abundant grasses of southeast Washington, the Deschutes-Umatilla Plateau. As horsemen the Cayuse had close ties to the horsemen of the Palouse and Nimipu.

The area from Wallula to the mouth the Yakama River where many members of the tribes lived could be considered the cross roads of the Columbia River System. This area was shared by many related bands and was a central hub of Tribal life on the Columbia Plateau.

Extended family relationships, social, and economic interests exist between many Tribal people from throughout the Columbia Plateau. The people on the Columbia Plateau were multi-lingual. Tribal members learned and spoke several trade jargons, other Indian dialects of Shahaptian, as well as, Salish, Chinookian, and Klamath. Later they adapted to French and English.

[Waitsburg](#)

Set amidst bountiful rolling hills blanketed with wheat, barley and peas, Waitsburg was pioneered in the early 19th century. Lewis and Clark passed through this area in 1806 on the return from their historic expedition. Years later, along the banks of the Touchet River, the first grist mill was established to serve farmers in the area. The enterprising owner of that mill, Sylvester M. Wait, was honored as Waitsburg's namesake when the town was founded in 1865.

Stability is a key to life here. The railroad that was built in 1881 continues to run today, and the city government was organized that same year. Currently, it's the only city in the state of Washington which still operates under the terms of its Territorial Charter.



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In 1878, the Waitsburg Times newspaper began publication, and readers have delighted in the weekly paper ever since.

With a present population of 1,230 people, Waitsburg maintains a comfortable lifestyle in the abundant Pacific Northwest. Four distinct seasons punctuate the natural beauty of the area. Average rainfall here is 17 inches per year and in the wintertime, warm Chinook winds sustain a climate that many describe as "the Banana Belt." With a strong agricultural industry and a growing season of over 220 days, it is easy to understand why folks past and present decide to call Waitsburg home. Natural resources abound in the area, supporting clean energy initiatives and ample resources to support the community. The watershed from the Blues, which refreshed the early pioneers, provides today's residents with crystal clear spring water right to their taps.

[Walla Walla](#)

A vibrant reflection of the past and the present, downtown Walla Walla is the place where you begin to discover what makes this place so unique. A walk down tree-lined streets reveals a funky mix of vintage shops, boutiques, cafes, bookstores, tasting rooms, restaurants and more. Add in the numerous pieces of public art and special events, the seasonal Farmers Market and outdoor concerts, and you start to see why our downtown has been recognized time and again as one of the best small-town Main Streets in the country.

It has long been known as one of the most fertile agricultural areas in the nation, producing such crops as wheat, asparagus, strawberries and the famous Walla Walla Sweet Onions. However, it's as wine country that this community is most celebrated. With more than 120 wineries representing a wide range of varietals, it doesn't take long to see why people return again and again to Walla Walla. The area offers the rare opportunity to experience not only world-class wines but to meet the winemakers, vintners, and family members carrying on the wine tradition. No one is in a rush. Conversation is relaxed. Here, tasting wine becomes an entirely different and wonderful adventure.

Additionally, convenient day trips within the Valley include the towns of College Place, Waitsburg, Dayton, and Milton-Freewater. Only a short drive or bike ride away, our neighbors offer even more unique museums, dining and spirits, shopping and community events.

Whether you're looking for something to do, a place to stay, a hot new restaurant or the perfect winery to spend an afternoon, we've got you covered. Just start clicking, dreaming, and making your plans.

"Some people are fortunate enough to earn their livelihoods in jobs that directly help to create a more peaceful, just and sustainable world. But much of the efforts to make life better for our communities and our world are done by volunteers -- people who work for a better world without pay. Volunteers ARE creating a better world, one person and one act of kindness at a time."



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Robert Alan, American Writer/Artist/Social Activist

GENERAL GUIDELINES:

Until COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted, the supplemental COVID-19 Volunteer Guidelines will take precedence **in coordination with what follows.**

- Team leaders will attend Team Leader training/orientation.
- All communication from Blue Mountain Region Long Term Recovery Group (BMRLTRG) with the team will be via the team leader.
- The team leader will work with a BMRLTRG Volunteer Coordinator to schedule the trip and follow the volunteer registration process.
- The registration and skills form must be completed on-line at least two weeks prior to the team's work/departure date.
- The team leader is responsible for sharing the BMRLTRG Volunteer Guidelines with all the team members prior to the team's work/departure.
- Age requirements:
 - The minimum age is 14. 14 and 15-years of age must be accompanied by a parent and must work with the parent.
 - 16 to 18 years of age must be accompanied by an adult with a maximum ratio of 6 youth per 1 adult.
- All team members must have:
 - approved background checks,
 - training in a Safe Sanctuaries/Safe Spaces program,
 - proof of medical insurance,
 - proof of accident insurance, and
 - provide of liability insurance.
- Each team/group must bring their own personal safety equipment, such as gloves, safety glasses, boots, knee pads and N-95 dust masks. Other tools and equipment may be available on site. Make sure to confirm this before arriving.
- The team leader will be notified about the team's work location five (5) to seven (7) days prior to the team's work/departure date. Please be aware that changes may occur.
- Registration procedure (refer to Team Leader Checklist):
 - Team Leader Registration form
 - On-line registration for each member of the team; including medical information, skill assessment and liability waiver
 - Safe Sanctuary training
 - Background check
 - Proof of medical insurance.
 - Proof of team/individual accident insurance.



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- Proof of liability insurance.
- The team leader will be in contact with the Volunteer Coordinator to assure all requirements are complete.

LEGAL/MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Everyone must have **medical** insurance and they must bring their insurance card to the work site.
- Team/Individual Accident Insurance.
- Liability insurance is the responsibility of the team.
- Background Checks (current within the last two years) are required for all LTR Team Members 18 years of age and older. For team members who do not have a current background check, contact a BMRLTRG Volunteer Coordinator below, and they will send you instructions to fill out the required information on-line.

WORK SITE/PROJECT INFORMATION:

- A qualified and experienced construction manager will be present on site to guide the work of the group when construction is required.
- A site manager will make sure supplies, tools and equipment are on site.
- Preferably some knowledge is requested, but training is available on-site as needed.
- It is possible that teams may find mold as building repair begins. If no one on the team has experience in mold mitigation, work will stop and the site/construction manager will be contacted.
- For construction teams, it is recommended that at least one person is skilled in construction and building.
- Work to be done will include:
 - Fence building
 - Debris removal
 - Building repair

LODGING:

- Group lodging is not available at this time.
- All members will be self-sufficient. They will travel and lodge individually or in family groups. The team may co-locate in separate camping spaces with trailers, campers or tents. Hotels or other individual accommodations are also an option. Cohabitants can lodge together.
- You can find recommended lodging options here:
 - Walla Walla — <https://www.wallawalla.org/lodging>
 - Pendleton — <https://www.umatillacountyfair.net/lodging>



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- When the counties are approved to resume group housing, other team options will be made available.

MEALS:

- Until COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted, all meals and snacks will be brought/prepared/bought by each team member.
 - There will be no kitchen facilities available.
- All team members should bring refillable water bottles and, if possible, an additional water supply.

TRANSPORTATION:

Until COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted, it is recommended that all team members will travel separately or in family groups.

FINANCES:

There is not a project fee at this time, but any donations for supplies are welcome.

Individuals/teams will need to cover costs for: insurance, background check, travel, plus food and lodging if needed.

DO's and DON'T's:

- **Do!...**
 - recognize that survivors own their recovery and have all rights to decision-making regarding their residence,
 - LISTEN,
 - have confidence that BMRLTRG has done a thorough assessment to identify the needs and available resources,
 - take time for polite conversation; don't just jump right into business,
 - acknowledge in some way when greeting someone and when saying good-bye (not shaking hands!),
 - Smile! Smile! Smile!
- **Don't...**
 - drink alcoholic beverages on site
 - smoke on site
 - make judgements or promises
 - proselytize
 - take pictures of home owners, unless you have their permission
 - take pictures of children without permission



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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- BMRLTR Frequently Asked Questions
- Team Leader Checklist
- What to Bring



United Way of the Blue Mountains



Blue Mountain Action Council



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



Mennonite Disaster Service

