For Immediate Release:

Gresham Fire and Corbett Fire Join Together to Promote Water Safety on the Sandy River

Corbett Fire District Corbett, Oregon June 6, 2022

 Corbett Fire and Gresham Fire have a long history of working together to deal with significant calls, such has large structure or wildland fires. Since the two share a common border, of almost 16 miles on the Sandy River, they often respond together to deal with water rescue calls on the river. Unfortunately these calls do not always turn out well. Since 2019 seven people have drowned in the Sandy River. It is not surprising that in 1806, Lewis and Clark named this river the “The Quick Sand River” because of its swift/ cold currents, and rapidly changing sandy bottom.

 To address this issue, the two departments and Oregon State Parks have invited the public and the press to share some new information. At 10:00 AM on June 16, 2022 at Dabney State Park, which is located at 30174 East Historic Columbia River Highway, they will introduce a new approach to prevent drownings.

 First, will be a platform with bilingual instructions that will offer life jackets to be borrowed by swimmers or waders. The platform is sponsored by Dick’s Sporting Goods, Home Depot, Oregon State Parks, and Corbett Fire. By being proactive and wearing a lifejacket, hopefully drownings can be prevented when people are overcome by the dangerous river.

 Second, Gresham Fire will have its new Jet Ski watercraft that will be available for the first time this year. This will allow for a faster response, especially in shallow water, which occurs in the summer.

 Third, Corbett Fire will introduce its new underwater sonar scanner (AquaEye) that can identify human bodies under the water. The scanner is the first one to be put into service in Oregon. Already, the two departments have trained together with their new equipment. By combining the resources of both fire departments, rescuers can now quickly access the emergency scene and locate potential victims.