

Wildfire Programs Advisory Council

2026 Report Workgroup Guidance

July 13, 2026

Prepared by Susan Millhauser, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development.

This packet contains the following information to assist the four workgroups of the WPAC in working together to write the Council's 2026 report.

1. Important 2026 context
2. Workgroup objectives and rosters
3. Proposed timeline
4. Considerations for developing report content
5. Sample workgroup schedule

1. Important 2026 Context

There is a continued need for the WPAC to meet its legislated obligation for an annual report per Senate Bill 762 (2022) Section 36 (13): *"Each October the council shall submit a report to the Governor and appropriate committees or interim committees of the Legislative Assembly that describes progress on implementing program activities related to defensible space, building codes, land use and community emergency preparedness and that recommends improvements."*

Given evolving wildfire policy and funding environments since passage of SB 762, the approach for the WPAC workgroup process and annual report is being updated as follows:

- a. Four workgroups will be structured around 1) Utilities, 2) Land Use, 3) Wildfire Mitigation, and 4) Under Protected Lands. The workgroup topics align with current topics of concern as the state's wildfire programs mature.
- b. Workgroup membership to be determined at the July 17, 2026, WPAC meeting.
- c. Workgroup agency staffing is updated to reflect the relationship of key agencies with each workgroup's focus.
- d. Review and editorial functions will be provided by the WPAC executive group (Director Grafe, Chair Bayer, and Vice Chair Browne; and support staff Millhauser, Gasperini, Rau, and Gire).
- e. Workgroups will be expected to engage with relevant agencies to review and report on implementation status of existing and proposed wildfire programs and policies, including a summary of status and outcomes of related policies and programs since SB 762. They will also be expected to focus on current issues and opportunities, offering perspective, vision, and suggested strategy for advancing all components of advancing wildfire protection within their focus areas (see below for a description of each workgroup).

2. Workgroup Objectives and Rosters

Within each workgroup, the designated staff and lead council member work together to schedule and facilitate meetings, organize attendance of agencies to provide information and updates, document discussions in meeting notes, and draft their sections of the report. All workgroup members are expected to take a share of writing. **Workgroups are expected to meet frequently to maintain discussion and progress to meet the deadlines in the timeline included in section 3, below.** See content writing suggestions in section 4, below. See sample workgroup schedule at the end of this document for an example of how prior workgroups organized their internal timelines.

1. Utilities Workgroup

Purpose:

- Engage with Wildfire Program agencies.
- Review the last two years of wildfire utility-related legislation that did not pass for lessons learned.
- Review and respond to the [Oregon Public Utility Commission's \(PUC\) annual report](#) (April 2026), prepared in accordance with Senate Bill 83 (2025), including a range of activities intended to address the rapidly changing risk of a catastrophic wildfire caused by the electric system in a cost-efficient manner. Activities include:
 - Setting out rules and orders governing wildfire mitigation plans, requirements for communication and coordination during Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS) and inspection and correction cycles.
 - Launching the Oregon Wildfire Electric Collaborative (OWEC) to enable rapid sharing of emerging science and technology to reduce risk across a range of operators.
 - Defining data templates and creating a risk spend efficiency construct to better understand which mitigation efforts reduce risk at the least cost to utility customers.
- Ensure understanding of and coordination around the “expert consultant study” commissioned by the PUC in response to the [Oregon Energy Strategy](#), including public policy options to address utility wildfire liability, property insurance costs, wildfire victim recovery, and the need for low-cost capital to support the state’s planned economic development and clean energy goals
- Provide consideration of aspects related to socially and economically vulnerable communities.
- Identify intended outcomes and potential future measures of success.
- Consider a joint meeting with PUC staff including a check in regarding the PUC’s “expert consultant study.”

Workgroup Leads	Dave Hunnicutt
Agency Staff Support	Anne Gire, DCBS
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	

2. Land Use Workgroup

Purpose:

- Engage with Wildfire Programs agencies.
- Review the Department of Land Conservation and Development's (DLCD) [2022 Wildfire Adapted Communities Recommendations Report](#), specifically Recommendations 2 and 3 (see pages 14-16). Consider prior WPAC comments on DLCD's recommendations in the WPAC's [2022 Annual Report](#) (January 2023 update, see page 59).
- Review OSU and DLCD's current study on "Increasing Oregonians' Resilience to Wildfires Across Alternative Futures"
- Provide consideration of aspects related to socially and economically vulnerable communities.
- Identify intended outcomes and potential future measures of success.
- At least one meeting with DLCD should be considered.

Workgroup Leas	Branden Pursinger
Agency Staff Support	Susan Millhauser, DLCD
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	

3. Wildfire Mitigation, including Community Smoke Response Plans

Purpose:

- Engage with Wildfire Programs agencies.
- Evaluate mitigation programs and prioritization of new funding through Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM), Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC). Consider OSFM's vision for executing allocated dollars, summarized in OSFM's [HB 3940 Listening and Understanding Sessions report](#) (2026).
- Assess the status of [community response plans for smoke](#) and need for this work across the state. Smoke response plans are part of the Oregon Smoke Management Program, developed by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) in collaboration with the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA).
- Provide consideration of aspects related to socially and economically vulnerable communities.
- Identify intended outcomes and potential future measures of success.
- One meeting with OSFM, ODF, and HECC should be considered as well as one meeting with DEQ / ODF regarding the community smoke response plans.

Workgroup Lead	Mary Kyle McCurdy
Agency Staff Support	Erik Rau, OSFM
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	

4. Under Protected Lands Workgroup

Purpose:

- Engage with Wildfire Programs agencies.
- Review protection standards and responsibilities across the state, including the cost structures for fire readiness and emergency fire cost.
- Provide consideration of aspects related to socially and economically vulnerable communities.
- Identify intended outcomes and potential future measures of success.
- One meeting with OSFM and ODF for an orientation should be considered. Counties have a significant role as well. Consider other interested parties that should be engaged.

Workgroup Lead	Chad Washington
Agency Staff Support	Derrick Gasperini, ODF
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	
Workgroup Member	

3. Timeline for 2026

Report Timeline		Due Date
Full WPAC meeting - kickoff of report process for 2026	Full WPAC	July 17
Each workgroup holds initial remote meeting, assigns member roles, and plans meetings with relevant agencies	Each of the four workgroups	No later than August 7
Groups submit short summary of progress and a draft outline of their report sections to Executive Group	Each of the four workgroups	August 21
Groups submit their full final content for each of their sections to Executive Group	Each of the four workgroups	September 8

Report Timeline		Due Date
Samantha and Nick review and edit workgroup sections for clarity and content, in consultation with the workgroup leads as needed.	WPAC Chair and Vice Chair	September 14
Provide a copy of each workgroup's section to agency contacts for review to ensure accuracy.	Susan	September 15; agency corrections due back by September 22
Susan, w/technical support from agency support staff, submits the final draft report to full Executive Group for their review, including Executive Summary and other introductory sections.	Susan w/Derrick, Erik, and Anne	September 25
Executive Group meets and provides guidance needed on how to proceed with final writeup of report.	Executive Group / Susan	By October 2
Final draft of report ready for full council review and sent out	Susan	By October 9
Full council meeting: Final validation of report		October 16
Final draft of report content and all necessary materials (e.g., photos) ready for DAS to design final version	Executive Group	October 23
Report finalized and released to Director Grafe, Governor, legislature and appropriate committees or interim committees of the Legislative Assembly	Executive Group	October 30

4. Content Writing Considerations

Workgroups are expected to submit full drafts of their report content. The role of the Executive Group is to ensure consistency and clarity in report content, and Susan, with support from Derrick, Erik, and Anne, are tasked with technical review and additional writing of the final report. There is also an agency review process to ensure that information prepared by workgroups is accurate. However, it will help the process greatly if all workgroups can follow these considerations in preparing their content for submission.

The workgroups should each prepare:

- 1) A summary of implementation progress of all existing wildfire programs in their purview.
- 2) A clear description of the policy landscape over the last legislative session on all topics within their purview.
- 3) Observations and recommendations, which should be the most substantive component and clearly capture workgroup members' discussions of opportunities, challenges, areas of agreement, areas of difference, and potential future considerations. Explain why you are making recommendations and what improved implementation/outcome/impact you think they could have, including being specific about how and why this work could be continued, expanded, or adjusted.

Each workgroup should include consideration of the roles, needs, and impacts for socially and economically vulnerable communities.

Write in plain language following Oregon’s plain language standards. This means writing for an 8th grade reading level, keeping sentences concise, and not using complex or bureaucratic terms without defining them. Please refer to <https://www.oregon.gov/DAS/Pages/writingplainlanguage.aspx>.

Ensure terminological consistency and clarity: Any technical terms or terms important to the accuracy and content of the report should be defined and used in the same way throughout your content, and as they are referred to in any bills. Avoid using different words for the same concept.

5. Sample Workgroup Schedule from 2022

Workgroups may wish to use similar timelines/process steps to organize themselves for 2026. Note that this schedule reflects the former, now outdated topic areas of the prior workgroups.

WORKGROUP #3 2022 SCHEDULE

Meeting Date	Topic	Lead
xx	Prep: - Relevant sections of SB762 - Links / attachments to status reports - Schedule Agency representation for status discussion (Michael Grant from OPUC) - Develop questions prior to meeting	Allen Berreth
xx	Sections 2-6: Electric Utilities Wildfire Plans / Workshops Draft section writeup based on topic (PUC)	
xx	Review Allen’s 1 st draft of Utility section	Alessandra de la Torre / Ian Yocum
xx	Section 13-15: Public Health (DEQ, OHA, DHS) Draft section writeup based on topic	
xx	Review Alessandra/Ian 1 st draft public health	Jim McCauley / Susan Jane Brown
xx	Section 18: Wildfire risk reduction through landscape resiliency grants, small forestland grants, Firewise grants, 20-year plan (ODF) Draft section writeup based on topic	
xx	Review Jim/Susan Jane 1 st draft of landscape resiliency	Amelia Porterfield / John O’Keeffe
xx	Sections 25-27: Prescribed fire (ODF) Draft section writeup based on topic	
xx	Review Amelia/John 1 st draft of prescribed fire	Nick Browne / Ian Yocum / Chase Browning
xx	Section 21: Oregon Conservation Corps (HECC) Draft section writeup based on topic	
xx		Allen / Jim
xx		Allen / Jim
xx	Last Meeting before FINAL submission	Allen / Jim