Advancing Fire Protection In Oregon

Wildfire Programs Advisory Council Annual Report

November 2026

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Advancing Fire Protection in Oregon
Wildfire Programs Advisory Council - Annual Report

Advisory Council Roster and Workgroup Participants

November 2026

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Glossary of Acronyms

COU	Consumer-owned Utility
CRP	Community Response Plans for Smoke
CWF	California Wildfire Fund
CWPP	Community Wildfire Protection plan
DEQ	Department of Environmental Quality
DLCD	Department of Land Conservation and Development
HB	(Oregon) House Bill
HECC	Higher Education Coordinating Commission
IBHS	Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety
IOU	Investor-owned Utility
LRP	Landscape Resiliency Program
NHMP	Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan
OCC	Oregon Conservation Corps
ODF	Oregon Department of Forestry
OEM	Oregon Department of Emergency Management
OFC	Oregon Fire Code
OFMAS	Oregon Fire Mutual Aid System
OHA	Oregon Health Authority
ORS	Oregon Revised Statute
OSFM	Oregon State Fire Marshal
PM2.5	Particulate Matter 2.5
PSPS	Public Safety Power Shutoff
PUC	Oregon Public Utility Commission
RFPA	Rangeland Fire Protection Association
RFPD	Rural Fire Protection District
SB	(Oregon) Senate Bill
SSRA	Smoke Sensitive Receptor Areas
WUI	Wildland-urban Interface
WMP	Wildfire Mitigation Plan

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Executive Summary

Established under Senate Bill 762 (2021) to guide implementation of the State of Oregon's wildfire programs, the Wildfire Programs Advisory Council submits this fifth annual report to the Governor and the Oregon Legislative Assembly amid a fire season marked by unprecedented operational complexity and strained suppression resources across our state.

Prepared through the collaboration of Council members, with the support of dedicated agency staff, this report evaluates implementation progress of existing programs and delivers targeted recommendations to strengthen Oregon's wildfire mitigation, suppression, and response systems.

The severity of this year's fire season demonstrates that the state's current efforts must continue to evolve; confronting this escalating threat requires continued legislative attention and sustained investment to protect Oregon's communities, natural resources, and long-term resilience. To address these challenges directly, the Council's recommendations are centered on four areas:

- Utilities: Risk Reduction and Financial Resilience
- Land Use: Evacuation Safety and Community Planning
- Under-Protected Lands: Statewide Baseline Coverage
- Mitigation and Smoke: Community Risk Reduction, Landscape Resilience, and Public Health Protection

Council Recommendations

The Council makes the following recommendations for the continued success of wildfire programs in Oregon (Table 1). For the recommendations, legislative action is needed to consider appropriate funding and policy, and/or the responsible agencies will review to determine the action needed. The recommendations are listed below and discussed in detail in the corresponding report section.

Table 1. Summary of Wildfire Programs Advisory Council Recommendations, November 2026

Responsible Parties	**Council recommendations -** *Legislative action is needed to consider appropriate funding and policy, and/or responsible agencies should review to determine needed action.*
Legislature	**The Council recommends timing adjustment for the annual report to November.**
PUC, Local Jurisdictions	**Utilities: Risk Reduction and Financial Resilience** • The Council recommends that the Legislature require the PUC, in consultation with municipalities/cities and counties, to establish a streamlined and consistent statewide framework for utility vegetation management associated with wildfire risk reduction in utility rights-of-way/easements that (1) reduces/eliminates barriers and/or duplicative unnecessary local permitting requirements that result in avoidable costs and delays, and (2) preserves appropriate notification and coordination with local jurisdictions. • Add wildfire consequence reduction as a utility procedure in Wildfire Mitigation Plans. • Create a utility wildfire fund to compensate impacted parties / persons and reduce the risk of a utility bankruptcy resulting from a utility-caused wildfire.
DLCD, OSFM, OEM, ODF	**Land Use: Evacuation Safety and Community Planning** • Provide adequate funding and technical assistance to local governments when

Responsible Parties	Council recommendations - *Legislative action is needed to consider appropriate funding and policy, and/or responsible agencies should review to determine needed action.*
	conducting transportation planning with strong consideration given to evacuation planning. • OSFM and OEM should develop an "evacuation and communications" tool kit, including encouraging all counties and Tribes to utilize existing Oregon state funded evacuation (Genasys, or locally managed interoperable platform) and communication (OR Alert) tools. • Provide sustainable funding and technical support for local and Tribal government Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan and Community Wildfire Protection Plan updates.
ODF, OSFM, Counties, Fire Service, RFPAs, Tribes	**Under-Protected Lands** The Legislature should direct counties, ODF, and OSFM to establish adequate and organized protection from wildfire along with clear jurisdictional authority for response on every acre in Oregon by 2030. The Council offers a variety of principles to reach this goal, including building on Oregon's wildfire protection systems that already work well, ensuring resource capacity matches the growing reality of wildfire threat, and establishing a fair and equitable funding model.
HECC, OSFM, ODF	**Wildfire Mitigation Strategic Plan Development** • The Legislature should thoughtfully incorporate existing and planned mitigation and resilience projects established or required under previously enacted legislation as part of the development of a statewide wildfire mitigation/resilience strategic plan. **Wildfire Mitigation: HECC, OCC Program** • Allocate additional funding to HECC for the OCC program to return to a total of $10 million originally funded in SB 762. • HECC should establish a database out of existing funds to track the professional trajectories of the youth who participate in the OCC programs. • The OCC should review how its programs can integrate with high school and community college workforce pathways. **Wildfire Mitigation: OSFM, Community Risk Reduction Program** • Increase funding capacity for OSFM mitigation and resilience programs. • Develop additional funding streams for wildfire mitigation. • Incentivize defensible space and home hardening codes adoption. **Wildfire Mitigation: ODF, 20-Year Landscape Resiliency Strategy** • Fund the Landscape Resiliency Fund to meet the identified need in the 20-year landscape resiliency strategy. • ODF should set benchmarks for accomplishments and project planning, and report annually accordingly. Specific reporting directions, including project finances and accomplishments, are detailed in the body of the report. • ODF should coordinate regional planning, together with OSFM.

Responsible Parties	Council recommendations - *Legislative action is needed to consider appropriate funding and policy, and/or responsible agencies should review to determine needed action.*
	• Funded projects should include maintenance capacity as appropriate. • Build capacity where it is missing. ODF should weigh community vulnerability in LRP selection consistent with OSFM and fund regional coordination where collaborative capacity support is needed. • Keep agency grant administration capacity in step with the landscape resiliency fund and consider year-round internal workforce development where appropriate to complete mitigation work.
DEQ, ODF, OHA	**Public Health and Smoke** • Re-establish funding to prior levels for DEQ and ODF coordination and program implementation related to wildfire and prescribed fire smoke. • Fund local public health agencies to support smoke communications.

1. INTRODUCTION

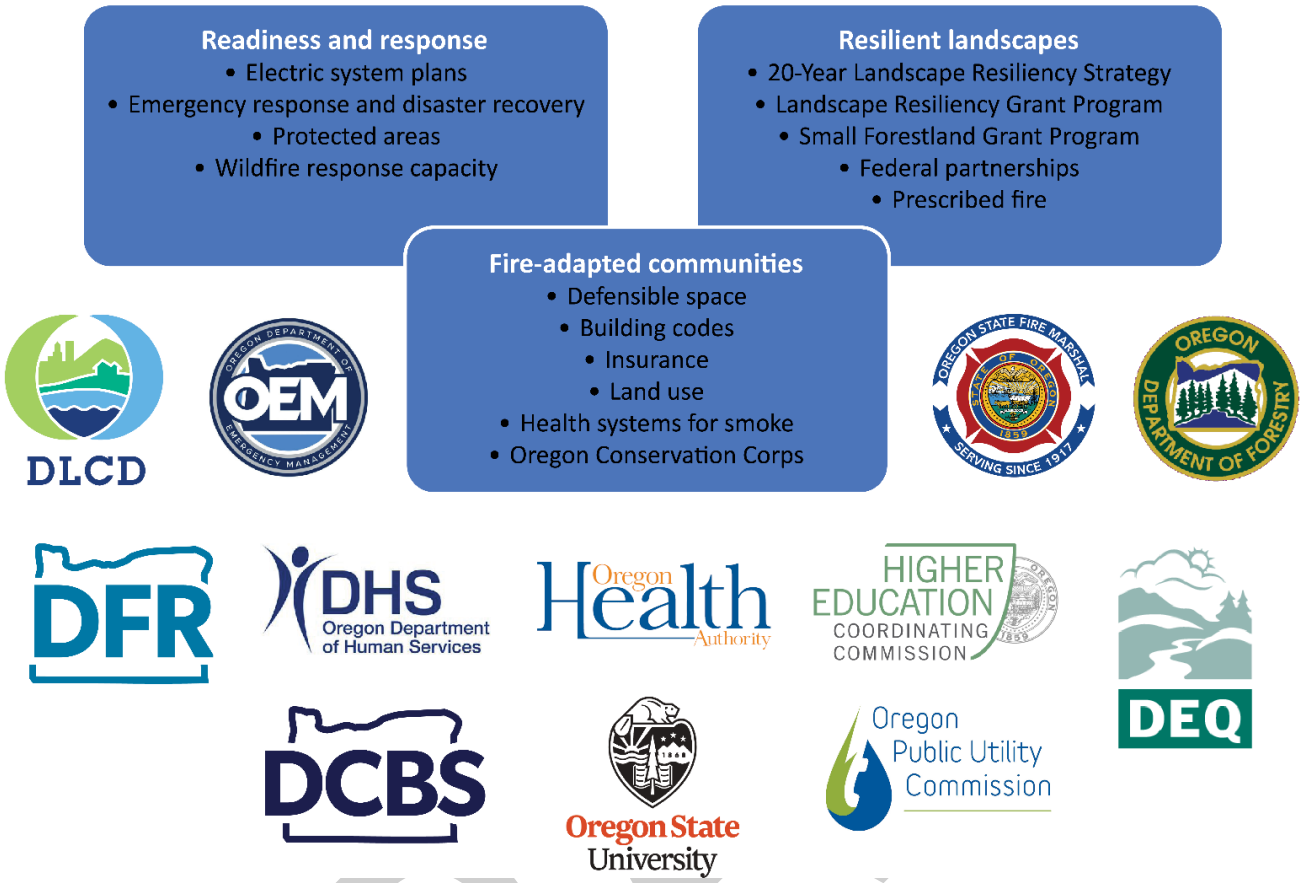
Oregon continues to face ever-increasing risks and impacts from wildfire, with the 2026 fire season demonstrating the importance of investing in proactive mitigation and safe and effective wildfire response.

Senate Bill 762 (2021)

SB 762 programs pursue the three goals of the Cohesive Strategy (Figure 1). These programs work together to modernize Oregon's fire preparedness and response systems, creating new opportunities to advance fire protection at multiple scales from the individual to the landscape.

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Figure 1. SB 762 Programs Support the Three Goals of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Strategy



Wildfire Programs Advisory Council

SB 762 established a state-wide Wildfire Programs Director position and Wildfire Programs Advisory Council (Council) to guide implementation. The Council has 21 members representing a broad and diverse range of Oregon's geographies and wildfire-related sectors. The roster of current Council members is included in Appendix A.

The Council is charged with monitoring progress, advising and assisting the Director, and preparing an annual October report to the Governor and appropriate committees or interim committees of the Oregon Legislative Assembly. This report describes implementation progress and specifically provides advice and recommendations on:

- Activities related to wildfire prevention and response, including receiving and evaluating agency reports related to wildfire prevention and response.
- Potential changes to the activities in order to fulfill the goal of dramatically reducing wildfire risk in this state and ensuring that regional defensible space, building codes, and land use applications are appropriate.
- Strengthening intergovernmental and multiparty collaboration and enhancing collaboration between governments and stakeholders on an ongoing basis.
- Developing strategies to enhance collaboration among governmental bodies and the general public.

This fifth annual report fulfills SB 762's reporting requirement for the Council. It was developed through a

collaborative process centered around four Council workgroups focused on:

- Utilities: Risk Reduction and Financial Resilience
- Land Use: Evacuation Safety and Community Planning
- Under-Protected Lands: Statewide Baseline Coverage
- Mitigation and Smoke: Community Risk Reduction, Landscape Resilience, and Public Health Protection

The workgroups met regularly to obtain information from agencies and industry experts, discuss members' perspectives, and develop report content, including how programs are addressing the needs of members of socially and economically vulnerable communities. Members were encouraged to seek consensus where possible. Council members sought to clearly document common ground and differing views where they existed. The Council discussed the recommendations of the draft report at their October 16, 2026, meeting to capture extent and levels of support (full support, support with reservations, do not support, or neutral), and to ensure that all perspectives were heard. The Council approved the report at their November 6, 2026 meeting.

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2. Utilities

Introduction

Oregon utilities play a significant role in the implementation and success of Oregon's wildfire program. Especially since the passage of SB 762, Oregon utilities have taken significant steps to reduce the risk of utility-caused wildfires. SB 762 required Oregon's three investor-owned utilities (Portland General Electric, PacifiCorp, and Idaho Power Company) (IOUs) and Oregon's consumer-owned utilities (municipal electric utilities, people's utility districts, and electric cooperatives) (COUs) to prepare risk-based wildfire mitigation plans (WMPs). When preparing its WMP, a utility is required to examine and address multiple safety improvements, including:

- Plans to deenergize power lines during risk events.
- Procedures and standards to carry out vegetation management in areas within the utility's service area that are at heightened risk of wildfire.
- Plans for community outreach and public awareness of wildfire risks within the utility's service area before, during and after wildfire season.

The Oregon Legislature directed the Oregon Public Utility Commission (PUC) to adopt administrative rules to implement and enforce the Legislature's directive to both the IOUs and COUs. In 2022, the PUC adopted agency rules to implement the WMP requirements. Under PUC rule, IOUs are required to file multi-year WMPs with the PUC addressing criteria required by the Commission. As part of their WMPs, IOUs are required to prepare plans for implementing a public safety power shutoff (PSPS) which the utility may utilize to deenergize lines and reduce risk in times of significant risk for wildfire. These plans are required to be reviewed and ultimately approved by the Commission.

COUs are required to develop and submit WMPs to the PUC; however, unlike IOU plans, the PUC does not approve those plans. Oversight and approval rests with each COU's governing body, which updates its WMP as it deems appropriate, consistent with prudent utility practices.

Policy Landscape / Implementation Progress

To date, Oregon's three IOUs have invested over $1 billion in enacting and implementing their WMPs, with an estimated $1.2 billion in additional investment forecast through 2028. The Council acknowledges and appreciates the efforts of the PUC, PUC staff, IOUs, and COUs to continue to mature WMPs in Oregon, and is supportive of the work in mitigating risk of utility-caused wildfire as practicable.

The Council recognizes that it is impossible to completely prevent utility-caused wildfires despite the efforts of Oregon's utilities. As witnessed across the western United States, the results of wildfires, including utility-caused wildfires, can be catastrophic, resulting in loss of life, property, and livelihood. It has also resulted in the bankruptcy of a California IOU and could threaten the same fate for any of Oregon's utilities. The increasing frequency and severity of catastrophic wildfires have significantly constrained the availability and affordability of wildfire insurance for utilities, resulting in higher operating costs, increased financing expenses, and ultimately higher costs for ratepayers.

The Council recognizes that when a utility is found legally responsible for causing a wildfire it is appropriate that affected parties/persons are compensated for their losses rather than bearing those costs themselves. Concurrently, liability from a utility-caused wildfire that threatens the very existence of the utility that provides service to Oregon residents and businesses also hurts Oregon's economy and is a negative

consequence that the Council believes must be avoided. Wildfire liability should not be the cause of an Oregon utility bankruptcy if the utility is following safety procedures and following its wildfire mitigation plan.

Oregon needs holistic policies that thread the needle between affordability, fair and timely fire survivor compensation, stable and safe utilities, a reliable electric grid that meets state goals, reasonable insurance coverage and costs, and accountability. The PUC has taken on this challenge, recommended by the Oregon Department of Energy in the Oregon Energy Strategy, by hiring expert consultants to develop a report on policy options Oregon can consider to address utility wildfire liability. The report will be published in Fall 2026. See PUC Docket No. UM 2427.

Equity Considerations

With Oregon utilities using PSPS and other de-energization methods to reduce ignition risk, utilities and regulators should consider the health and economic impacts of prolonged power outages for Oregonians during hot, dry, and smoky weather conditions. The PUC, IOUs, COUs, and other relevant partners/agencies should consider strategies to reduce these burdens on people, particularly for vulnerable communities, through broad collaboration and funding mechanisms that expand outage and emergency preparedness. These efforts can include battery backup programs for people who rely on medical equipment or have other at-risk factors that are elevated during outages.

Oregon's utilities have continued to expand their efforts to prevent wildfire ignitions, but ignition prevention is only one piece of the broader wildfire resilience challenge. Because wildfire risk can be reduced but never entirely eliminated, investments in consequence reduction that limit wildfire spread, intensity, and impacts are equally important. Historically, these responsibilities fall to the State of Oregon and other non-utility stakeholders, including local and Tribal governments, landowners, and communities. Examples include enhancing wildfire response capabilities, supporting home hardening programs, expanding defensible space initiatives, and increasing the use of prescribed fire.

As mentioned above, fire survivors deserve a fair and timely compensation process where they can be made whole again, whether it is a utility-caused wildfire or other-caused wildfires. This approach should also consider affordability for utility ratepayers and their dollars that have already been invested into utility wildfire mitigation.

Oregon is served by 38 electric utilities with varying sizes, customer bases, governance structures, and wildfire risk profiles. Any approach to wildfire liability should recognize these differences and ensure that ratepayers in lower-risk service territories, including areas where significant mitigation investments such as undergrounding have already been made, are not required to bear the costs of wildfire damages or mitigation measures arising from higher-risk areas.

Recommendations

With those objectives in mind, and with full knowledge that the Oregon Legislature has considered proposed legislation in the last two sessions to address responsibility for damages resulting from utility-caused wildfires, the Council has chosen to undertake a review of current policy regarding wildfire and Oregon's utilities. The Council's goal is to provide the Governor and the Legislature with policy recommendations to improve the ability of Oregon's utilities to reduce risk of liability, to ensure equitable outcomes for all Oregonians, and to balance the objectives when a utility-caused wildfire occurs.

Utility corridors should be free from tree and vegetation encroachments.

Both SB 762 and the implementing PUC rules require a utility to create a vegetation management plan for locations within their service areas that are subject to a heightened risk of wildfire. Through 2025, the IOUs have spent nearly $150 million to implement their vegetation management plans, with an additional $130 million forecast through 2028.

The Council's utilities workgroup heard from both the IOUs and COUs that a significant barrier and cost to implementing their vegetation management strategies was the need to submit applications to local governments to obtain local permits under local laws before performing vegetation management activities. The cost, uncertainty, and time delay in obtaining the permits and complying with the local process is making it more difficult for the utilities to implement their WMPs and remove necessary vegetation to reduce wildfire risk.

The Council recommends that the Legislature require the PUC, in consultation with municipalities/cities and counties, to establish a streamlined and consistent statewide framework for utility vegetation management associated with wildfire risk reduction in utility rights-of-way/easements that (1) reduces/eliminates barriers and/or duplicative unnecessary local permitting requirements that result in avoidable costs and delays, and (2) preserves appropriate notification and coordination with local jurisdictions.

Add wildfire consequence reduction as a utility procedure in Wildfire Mitigation Plans.

IOU and COU WMPs primarily focus on reducing the likelihood of utility caused ignitions and minimizing damage to utility infrastructure. While ignition prevention remains critical, wildfire risk is ultimately a function of both the likelihood of ignition and the potential consequences of a fire. The Council recommends that the governing bodies of utilities evaluate and prioritize wildfire mitigation investments using a risk-spend efficiency framework that considers both ignition reduction and consequence reduction. This cost-benefit analysis would compare the costs of wildfire prevention projects with how much each project could reduce the risk of a fire starting or spreading, helping them prioritize investments that provide the greatest risk reduction for the money spent.

Create a utility wildfire fund to compensate impacted parties / persons and reduce the risk of a utility bankruptcy resulting from a utility-caused wildfire.

In 2019, the California Legislature established the California Wildfire Fund (CWF). The fund was created in response to several catastrophic utility-caused wildfires, including the 2017 North Bay and 2018 Camp Fire fires. The liability resulting from the human and financial losses created by these fires pushed Pacific Gas & Electric, California's largest utility, into bankruptcy, leaving hundreds of thousands of utility customers at the risk of massive rate hikes, slower and compromised safety upgrades, delays and shortfalls for victims of the utility-caused wildfires, noncompliance with the state's clean energy goals, and threatening the ability of the utility to serve customers.

The CWF created a safety net designed to protect a utility from being forced into bankruptcy as a result of liability from a utility-caused wildfire that exceeds the utility's maximum insurance coverage and threatens the existence of the utility. The goal of the CWF was to stabilize the state's IOUs, speed up victim's claims, protect existing ratepayers, and incentivize utility safety.

Rather than shifting the burden of paying for the cost of a utility-caused wildfire, the CWF creates a liquidity pool that the state's IOUs can access when the cost of a utility-caused wildfire exceeds the cost of the utility's insurance coverage. Monies to create the fund come from an even split of ratepayer contributions and shareholder contributions from the utility's investors.

To participate and be eligible to use the CWF, an IOU must contribute its required amounts into the fund

and comply with various annual safety certification requirements imposed by the state. In instances of catastrophic utility-caused wildfires with significant losses, the fund may be tapped by a utility. Proceeds from the fund are then used to settle claims with wildfire victims in a far more rapid manner than would otherwise result from standard litigation.

The Council's utilities workgroup discussed liability for utility-caused wildfires extensively, and heard from representatives of the PUC, IOUs, rural electric cooperatives, Pacific Northwest National Laboratories, Oregon Forest Industries Council, and the insurance industry. Workgroup members included members representing rural homeowners, timberland owners, environmental justice advocates, utilities, insurance, and fire marshals. Topics ranged from caps on utility liability, limits on insurance companies' ability to assert subrogation rights upon payment of claim proceeds to a utility-caused wildfire victim, the impact of damage to property owners who suffered loss, and a prohibition on recovery of non-economic damages.

Given the increasing frequency and severity of catastrophic wildfires, the Council recommends that the Legislature reassess how liability is evaluated for utility-caused wildfires. Such a review should seek to maintain strong incentives for wildfire risk reduction while balancing the interests of customers, impacted communities, and a financially resilient electric system.

The Council understands and appreciates that California is a much different state than Oregon, and that the precise requirements of the CWF may not work in a state as large in geographic size and small in population as Oregon. The Council makes no recommendation about the precise policies and limitations found in the CWF.

The creation of a liquidity pool like the CWF, designed to facilitate the timely settlement of claims arising from utility-caused wildfires and reduce the risk of utility insolvency, merits further consideration. Any such program should be structured to reflect the differing wildfire risk profiles, ownership structures, and service territories of Oregon's electric utilities. Participation and funding obligations should be risk-based and tied to demonstrated wildfire exposure, ensuring the utilities with meaningful wildfire risk contribute appropriately while avoiding disproportionate costs for utilities with limited exposure.

The Council recommends that the Legislature introduce legislation creating an Oregon Wildfire Fund and engage all stakeholders in determining the terms of the legislation, including identifying broad-based funding sources, utility requirements to participate in the fund, a claims process for wildfire victims, and the manner of replenishing the fund.

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3. Land Use

Introduction

Natural hazards are an inherent reality across Oregon, and while their risks can be mitigated, they cannot be eliminated entirely. To safeguard communities, local governments use land use planning to evaluate and guide development according to present and future needs. This approach is anchored in Oregon's 19 Statewide Planning Goals, particularly Goal 7: Areas Subject to Natural Hazards, which establishes a public process for adopting hazard inventories and policies into comprehensive plans.

While land use planning cannot eliminate wildfire risk itself, it plays a practical role in preparing for it by facilitating emergency access, evacuation routes, and safe site design during development. When paired with direct protection measures like building codes and defensible space guidelines, sensible planning helps communities navigate fire hazards without needlessly restricting local growth or housing needs.

The land use workgroup focused on these issues and discussed how to support local governments through funding and technical assistance as they evaluate their land use regulations and wildfire protection plans.

Policy Landscape / Implementation Progress

The Council's land use workgroup was tasked with examining current land use planning frameworks and exploring strategies for improving wildfire resilience in community development and design, and reviewed the following:

- The 2022 Wildfire Adapted Communities Recommendations Report produced by the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD), with an emphasis on the recommendations related to safe evacuation and firefighting response.
- The "Increasing Oregonians' Resilience to Wildfires Across Alternative Futures" policy research project underway by Oregon State University (OSU).
- Insight into Deschutes County's efforts regarding access and egress in their land use system, transportation and defensible space planning, the role of Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs), and evacuation planning work.
- The interactions between the Oregon Fire Code and local land use codes, as well as the development review process.

Based on the agency presentations and subsequent discussions, the workgroup identified the following topics for further consideration: evacuation and emergency access and egress, including funding/cost allocation; fire code compliance; and community wildfire protection planning.

Equity Considerations

Understanding the needs of vulnerable populations and people's access and familiarity with technology are critical considerations for informing and educating community members and ensuring that people are prepared. Communication around evacuation planning should take into consideration people whose primary language is not English, people with mobility and other disabilities, elderly and young people, and access to and understanding of technology.

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Evacuation and Emergency Access

DLCD's 2022 report included two recommendations focused on safe evacuation and firefighting response:

- Recommendation 2: Cities and counties assess and improve transportation networks for safe evacuation and firefighting response.
- Recommendation 3: Cities and counties review and amend local land use codes for new development to ensure safe evacuation and efficient firefighting response.

DLCD Recommendation 2 focuses on providing resources, such as funding and technical assistance, to communities to evaluate the transportation network more holistically to understand deficiencies relative to evacuation and to prioritize and improve evacuation and firefighting access during response. DLCD Recommendation 3 focuses on review and updates to local land use codes for new development to ensure safe evacuation and efficient firefighting response.

The Deschutes County planning and emergency management teams gave a presentation on land use and transportation planning, as well as evacuation and emergency response. Land use regulations can be effective at reducing issues with access and egress for new development but are less effective in retrofitting pre-existing development for access. For new subdivisions, the county looks at connectivity, road geometry, access points, and development layouts. The Deschutes County Code requires that new subdivisions, wherever possible, have two points of access.

For access in existing developments, the county considers gates, access easements, landowner agreements, road engineering improvements, fuels work, and capital funding. Fire apparatus ingress and evacuation capacity have different requirements. Development in forest zones must meet fire-siting standards, such as those set out in Oregon Administrative Rule 660-006-0035.

Deschutes County's presentation highlighted the complexity and nuance of evacuation planning. For example, during certain wildfire events, the county urges all residents to evacuate. However, during others, the county advises residents to shelter in place (especially medically fragile individuals or those cut off from main roads). This makes defensible space and designated refuge zones critical alternatives to evacuating. When evacuations do occur, the county uses online dashboards and road signage to help both locals and visitors quickly navigate out of neighborhoods and onto major roads, thoroughfares, or highways. However, it was noted that sometimes signage can cause issues, as evacuation routes and plans frequently change. This presentation showed how a one-size-fits-all approach does not work for evacuation planning, as emergencies are complex and locally driven.

The workgroup discussed planning for regional evacuation routes, to ensure cities, counties, federal agencies, Tribal governments, private property owners, and other entities that own or manage roads are engaged. Cross-jurisdiction planning is critical to the removal of barriers such as locked gates on forest service roads or at a private subdivision. Additional funding will add capacity for coordination and planning. Also discussed was who would bear the cost burden for transportation system improvements – private property owners, developers, or other local and state governments and agencies. Needed improvements could be funded through infrastructure grants, local capital improvement plans, local improvement districts or other funding mechanisms.

Education and Development Review for Fire Code Compliance

Across Oregon, communities operate under a baseline fire and life-safety framework established by the Oregon Fire Code (OFC) through the Oregon Fire Code Advisory Board and adopted by the Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM) and administered through local fire protection districts, municipal fire departments, or

OSFM. This regulatory system governs commercial enterprises and most non-residential construction, requiring all new commercial facilities, multi-family housing, and larger subdivisions to meet standards for emergency vehicle access, fire hydrant distribution, and automatic suppression systems. While detached single-family home construction is governed by the Oregon Residential Specialty Code, the OFC prescribes critical infrastructure such as access road widths, turnarounds, and water supply. For Oregon businesses, compliance is a legal requirement, as initial occupancy permits, building alterations, and routine operational inspections enforce state standards for clear emergency egress, occupancy limits, fire alarms, and safe storage of hazardous materials.

Not all communities use the same process for educating applicants of fire code requirements. More specifically, some applicants are not aware of these code requirements until after they have submitted their land use applications.

Oregon operates with 305 fire departments, but because only about six local jurisdictions are partially exempt, the OSFM and its 25 deputies actively assist the remaining 299 non-exempt agencies with land use development reviews, fire code enforcement, and investigations. While all new development must satisfy fire code for access and water supply, coordination during initial platting and road layout is critical since ingress and egress requirements do not address community-wide evacuation. Although the baseline state fire code applies uniformly across jurisdictions, local interpretation and enforcement are susceptible to regional constraints.

The workgroup discussed whether there are actual gaps in fire-life-safety regulations versus a need for greater consistency and communication on the forefront of development. In response to questions from workgroup members about this, OSFM stated that new or larger subdivisions have design professionals that know the fire code; this is generally not a major issue. Infill projects may have more issues; this type of development typically happens in more urbanized areas with exempt fire departments. OSFM and the Building Codes Division distribute a joint technical advisory to all the building departments, and some municipalities have chosen to add this step to the building permit process. Relationships and communications are key.

Community Wildfire Protection Planning

DLCD's report included Recommendation 6 addressing planning for natural hazards: "Cities, counties, special districts, and Tribes increase the effectiveness of natural hazards planning through coordination of Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) and Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan (NHMP) processes and adoption of policies and actions into comprehensive plans and codes."

DLCD Recommendation 6 is about prioritizing natural hazards planning, independently or as part of other planning efforts, and particularly for cities and counties to coordinate the updates of their CWPPs and NHMPs. The data and mitigation actions in a CWPP can be integrated into a NHMP so it has localized, up-to-date data. Both plans help communities prioritize mitigation actions and confer access to federal and state grants and other funding opportunities.

CWPPs are strategic, non-regulatory plans that address community wildfire risk, prioritize areas for treatment, and establish strategies to protect people, property, and critical infrastructure at the community level. They are developed collaboratively – local governments convene fire agencies, landowners, and other stakeholders. CWPPs can address wildfire response, hazard mitigation, community preparedness, or structure protection. CWPPs also help communities compete for wildfire mitigation funding and guide investments toward priority local projects.

Like CWPPs, NHMPs are important, non-regulatory documents that identify risks associated with natural hazards and outline strategies to protect life and property. They address multiple hazards, including wildfire.

The workgroup discussed CWPP and NHMP planning processes, generally. An NHMP is required for certain federal funding and must be updated every five years to remain valid. A CWPP also is required for certain federal funding and does not have a set update timeline. An NHMP has specific requirements that must be met, set out in Federal Law (44 CFR § 201.6), and includes a formal review by the Oregon Department of Emergency Management (OEM) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Formal approval by FEMA before being locally adopted by participating jurisdictions is also required. A CWPP has more flexibility in terms of format and content, however, the required components of a CWPP are set out in the federal Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) from 2003. A CWPP must be developed collaboratively, it must address hazardous fuel reduction, and it must address structural ignitibility. The workgroup also discussed how CWPP and NHMP updates have been supported through FEMA and other federal grants; however, FEMA grants will no longer cover plan updates beginning in 2027.

The workgroup concluded that where appropriate, plans should be developed multi-jurisdictionally to maximize efficiencies of shared staff capacity and resources. Similarly, communities should integrate CWPP and NHMP updates, where feasible. This will reduce duplication and improve consistency between the two planning processes and the plans themselves.

While cities and counties can integrate information and data from those plans into comprehensive plans and implementing codes and ordinances, this appears to be an exception rather than a rule. The City of Ashland has done a lot of work around wildfires, as have Deschutes County and Wasco County.

Deschutes County staff outlined efforts to consolidate multiple CWPPs into one county-wide plan, with geographically specific action plans. The resulting plan will prioritize fire risk reduction projects based on local conditions and community needs while aligning with state and federal priorities. This approach will improve usability, reduce redundancy and administrative burden, and streamline participation by residents and agency partners.

The workgroup discussed the value in providing local governments with funding and technical assistance to update and implement their CWPPs and NHMPs. The workgroup recognizes that local governments in Oregon have very different levels of overall capacity. Some jurisdictions enjoy dedicated emergency management, planning, and geographic information systems (GIS) staff to prepare, update, maintain, and implement CWPPs and NHMPs. Others rely on limited staff managing multiple responsibilities. Access to funding and specialized expertise varies widely between jurisdictions, which can substantially impact a jurisdiction's ability to keep plans current, seek mitigation funding, coordinate with partners, and facilitate the implementation of identified projects. Consequently, state policy should support local efforts through the provision of sustained funding, flexible technical assistance, staff support, and regional coordination that can be scaled to a community's need.

Recommendations

Provide adequate funding and technical assistance to local governments when conducting transportation planning with strong consideration given to evacuation planning.

Planning for regional evacuation routes requires broad, cross-jurisdictional collaboration among public agencies, Tribal nations, and private road owners to resolve physical barriers like locked gates and identify substandard transportation infrastructure. Evacuation planning must also be locally tailored and flexible as emergency conditions vary. To successfully coordinate these routes and equitably fund the necessary transportation upgrades, local governments need dedicated financial support through grants, capital plans,

and other targeted funding mechanisms.

The Council recommends that the Legislature provide adequate funding and technical assistance to local governments when conducting DLCD Goal 12 (Transportation) planning with strong consideration given to evacuation planning.

OSFM and OEM should develop an "evacuation and communications" tool kit, including encouraging all counties and Tribes to utilize existing Oregon state funded evacuation (Genasys, or locally managed interoperable platform) and communication (OR Alert) tool.

Wildfire conditions shift rapidly – often requiring sudden pivots between mass egress and sheltering in place – which makes static road signage dangerous during a crisis. Because smaller, resource-constrained jurisdictions cannot build complex emergency communication systems on their own, consistent use of state-developed tools ensures local leaders have reliable, ready-to-use frameworks to direct the public safely. Delivering these tools through an equity lens and across multiple languages is essential to ensuring urgent, life-saving instructions reach non-English speakers, visitors, medically fragile individuals, and vulnerable rural populations before communications fail.

The Council recommends that OSFM and OEM develop an "evacuation and communications" tool kit for local governments and others to use during wildfire emergencies. The communications tool kit needs to be developed through an equity lens, in multiple languages, and specific to the communities it is developed for.

Provide sustainable funding and technical support for local and Tribal government Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan and Community Wildfire Protection Plan updates.

Keeping NHMPs and CWPPs updated is mandatory for local and Tribal governments to qualify for certain vital state and federal mitigation grants, yet federal FEMA funding to support these updates is no longer available. Because smaller and rural communities lack the dedicated staff, GIS tools, and local tax bases needed to navigate complex federal mandates on their own, sustained state funding and technical assistance are essential to prevent vulnerable jurisdictions from falling out of compliance and losing access to critical wildfire resilience dollars.

The Council recommends that the Legislature provide sustainable funding and technical assistance support for local and Tribal government NHMP and CWPP updates on a regular basis.

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4. Under-Protected Lands

Introduction

Oregon's wildfire response system should function as a fully integrated, statewide effort. However, there are approximately 300,000 acres in Oregon that lack clear wildfire response authority and capacity for initial and extended attack, considered "unprotected" lands, and approximately 12 million acres of "under-protected" areas, leaving many rural communities vulnerable.

A fully integrated system requires clear wildfire response authority across every acre, statewide. It also needs capable initial attack, the ability to mobilize more resources when a fire grows, reliable funding, and strong partnerships. Oregon's system can achieve this level of wildfire response, but action must be taken to strengthen and close the gaps in our system.

Most wildland in Oregon receives wildfire protection through a federal agency, a Tribal nation, the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), a Rangeland Fire Protection Association (RFPA), a forest protective association, or a formal agreement. Municipal fire departments and rural fire protection districts (RFPDs) also provide structural and all-hazard emergency response, which includes responses to wildfire in many communities. Yet some lands still lack assigned wildfire protection. Others have protection that may not be sufficient or dependable enough. These gaps weaken Oregon's overall wildfire response system, creating vulnerabilities that place communities, lives, property, and natural resources at greater risk.

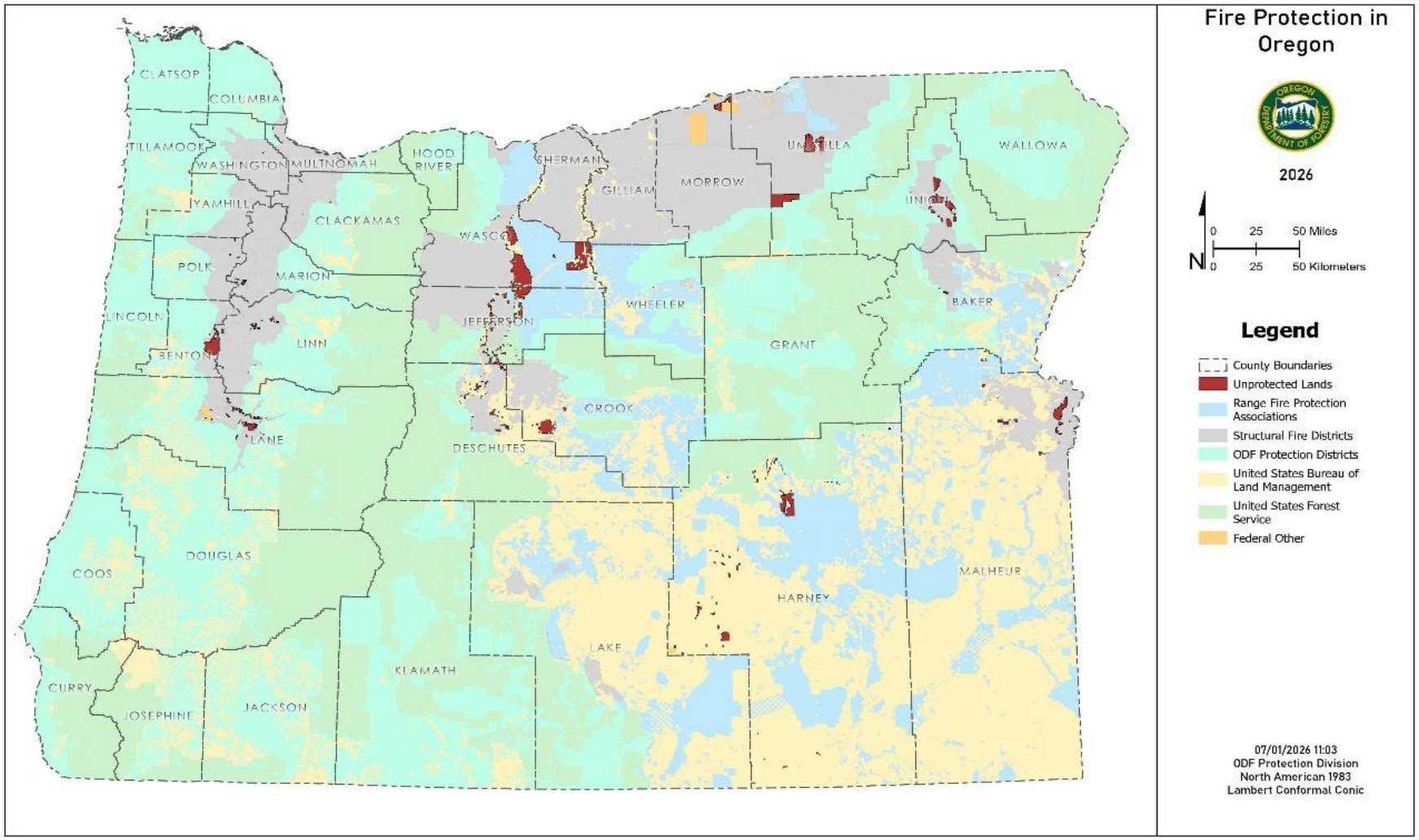
The under-protected lands Council workgroup reviewed protection duties and local response capacity. It also reviewed resource ordering, emergency fire costs, and the roles of agencies, counties, RFPAs, RFPDs, municipal fire departments, forest protective associations, and landowners. The workgroup focused on two different but related conditions. Some lands have no organization with the established authority and duty to provide a planned wildfire response. These lands are ***unprotected lands***. Other lands have an assigned authority or expected response. However, the available staff, equipment, leadership, dispatch access, funding, or added resources may not match the risk or support an extended response. These lands are ***under-protected***.

The Council makes one main policy recommendation: every acre in Oregon should have organized protection from wildfire. All other recommendations in this section support this primary recommendation. They address authority, local capacity, resource orders, funding, and partnerships. The Council did not identify a single method that addresses all these components and recognizes that every acre requires different resources – Oregon's landscapes, communities, and fire risks vary widely.

Figure 2, below, displays the jurisdictional responsibilities for wildfire protection and identifies areas of unprotected and under-protected lands in Oregon.

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Figure 2. Wildfire Protection – Jurisdictional Responsibilities: "For the purpose of displaying unprotected and under-protected lands in Oregon"



Shared Terminology

The following definitions provide lawmakers and partners a common language with which to discuss wildfire protection statewide.

Fully protected land. Land where one or more wildfire organizations have formally established responsibility for a planned response. The responsible organization(s) provide timely initial attack that fits local conditions, bring in more help when a fire grows, and pay response costs through each stage.

Unprotected land. Land where no recognized wildfire organization has the jurisdictional authority and duty to provide a planned response.

Under-protected land. Land with an assigned wildfire organization or response plan, but where staff, equipment, response time, training, leadership, dispatch, funding, or added resources are not adequate or appropriate to the local risk. The organization may begin initial attack but may not be able to safely manage or pay for a larger fire.

Initial attack. The first actions taken after a wildfire is reported. Responders assess the fire, deploy the right resources, establish command, and begin suppression. The goal is to contain the fire while it is small and during the first work period.

Extended attack. The next stage when a fire is not contained during initial attack. It often lasts into another work period and needs more crews, equipment, supervisors, or other support than the first responders normally have.

Base-level protection. A basic level of wildfire protection that is appropriate and adequate for the region. It includes quick initial attack, statewide coordination, and access to large-fire support, aircraft, and other resources. Every area does not need the same staff, equipment, or delivery model.

ODF severity resources. Additional firefighters, supervisors, engines, aircraft, and other resources that ODF can add or place in advance when fire danger or fire activity is greater than normal district staffing can accommodate. These resources strengthen initial attack, support growing fires, and help districts remain ready for new fire starts.

Oregon State Fire Marshal - Oregon Fire Mutual Aid System. The Oregon Fire Mutual Aid System (OFMAS) provides for additional structural and all-hazards firefighters, engines, and other resources that OSFM can deploy through "immediate response or prepositioning" or through a declared conflagration requested by a County Government or Fire Defense Board Chief and approved by the Governor.

Forest protection district. An area where ODF or a forest protective association has the duty to protect forestland from wildfire under Oregon's forest protection laws.

Oregon Fire Service: Municipal Fire Departments and Rural Fire Protection Districts. A local government district that provides structural fire protection, emergency medical response, and other all-hazard services. All-hazard services include wildfire response within their jurisdiction.

Forest Protective Association. A private association that provides forest fire protection under Oregon's forest protection laws and agreements, such as Douglas Forest Protective Association, Coos Forest Protective Association, or Walker Range Forest Protective Association.

Rangeland Fire Protection Association. A local group of landowners and other trained members formed under Oregon law, through the Board of Forestry, to provide wildfire response in a designated rangeland area. RFPAs work with ODF, federal agencies, and other partners.

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Policy Landscape / Program Implementation

Oregon lawmakers addressed wildfire protection outside forest protection districts in SB 762. Though key sections directing state and local agencies to set regional protection levels were later repealed, core policy questions persist regarding local risk assessment, governance, operational response, and funding models to establish base-level protection statewide.

Oregon's response network relies on coordinated roles across multiple entities. Within forest protection districts, the ODF and forest protective associations manage dispatch, incident command, aircraft, and large-fire support. RFPAs handle initial attack on designated rangelands, while municipal fire departments and RFPDs focus on life safety, structural fire protection, and all-hazard emergency response near communities, including wildfire responses. Neither RFPAs, RFPDs, nor municipal fire departments alone constitute full wildland protection. Counties play a pivotal planning role by identifying jurisdictional gaps, balancing overlapping structural and wildland protections, and contributing local assets such as dispatch, roads, and emergency staff to help offset state costs. While strong inter-agency partnerships allow robust voluntary cooperation, informal arrangements frequently leave ambiguities regarding command leadership, resource ordering authority, and financial reimbursement.

For these reasons, protection gaps exist statewide, spanning vast eastern rangelands to western regions like the mid-Willamette Valley. On unprotected land – where no recognized organization holds jurisdictional authority or duty to respond – initial response depends on voluntary mutual aid. Without clear leadership, agencies struggle to establish command, order additional assets, or obtain cost compensation, often delaying active response until the fire threatens adjacent fully protected land or prompts a gubernatorial emergency declaration. Conversely, under-protected land has assigned coverage, but local staff, equipment, training, or dispatch are inadequate for the risk; these teams can initiate initial attack but cannot safely manage or fund an extended attack on a growing fire or a large complex incident. For example, RFPAs deliver essential rapid initial attack in remote areas yet rely heavily on short-term grant funding and informal coordination. Similarly, RFPDs and municipal fire departments also deliver essential rapid initial attack for wildfire response within their jurisdictions but lack immediate, coordinated, and dedicated access to and funding for wildland fire resources, such as 20-person hand crews, heavy equipment, aviation assets, and extended attack wildland fire line leadership capacity, when their jurisdiction does not overlap with ODF.

Funding and capacity are critical to the success of the program. To ensure long-term viability without diluting existing ODF district resources, state policy requires formalizing ODF support roles for RFPAs, RFPDs, and municipal fire districts outside ODF forest protection districts, alongside dedicated ODF severity resources to cover protection-gap incidents.

Equity Considerations

Equity has both a geographic and a financial component. Fire and smoke cross protection boundaries. A fire that starts on unprotected land can threaten communities, Tribal lands, farms, forests, roads, and neighbors who pay for protection. Land values, tax bases, population, and the ability to pay also differ across Oregon. Some rural eastern Oregon counties cover very large areas with small tax bases. Social vulnerability data show higher need in parts of eastern Oregon, although conditions vary within and among counties. These factors can limit a county's cash contribution even when it is committed to better wildfire protection.

As such, future policy should recognize the disparate impacts that could occur if any fees are assessed to close the state's protection gaps. The Legislature should also account for both cash and in-kind support. For example, counties may have committed staff time, dispatch, buildings, equipment, roads, maps, planning, or administrative support. That support allows counties to share responsibility without cutting basic local services to make a cash payment. Policy should not reward landowners for leaving an existing system or shift

costs to neighbors who already maintain fire capacity. State funding and technical help should consider local resources, social vulnerability, land productivity, and ability to pay.

Recommendations

Oregon needs a clear and lasting way to address unprotected and under-protected lands while protecting local systems that already work. Future policy should make duties clear during each stage of wildfire suppression efforts and match them to the type of incident and the skills needed. The Council identified the following principles to guide future policy decisions. They do not call for one statewide delivery model. The core principles outlined below should support the central policy recommendation of establishing jurisdictional authority and base level protection for every acre in Oregon by 2030.

Establish wildfire protection for every acre in Oregon by 2030.

The Legislature should direct counties, ODF, and OSFM to establish adequate and organized protection from wildfire along with clear jurisdictional authority for response on every acre in Oregon by 2030. This protection should not only be coordinated, but backed with sustained funding and guided by the following principles:

Establishing Coordinated Protection Statewide:

- **The right mix of protection types.** Counties should be encouraged to review their balance between structural protection and wildland protection during wildfire response. These forms of protection can overlap and should support, not replace, one another.
- **Match responsibility to wildfire needs.** Effective wildland response requires established command, dispatch, aircraft, resource-ordering, and cost systems.
- **Fairness and shared responsibility.** Wildfire and its effects cross property and jurisdictional boundaries. Because smoke and fire threaten all Oregonians, establishing baseline protection across all unprotected and under-protected lands is an equitable necessity.
- **Protection appropriate to local risk.** Protection and funding should account for regional and local differences in vegetation, terrain, distance from responders, likely fire behavior, and the values at risk. Every area needs clear outcomes, but the delivery model must be appropriate given these factors.
- **Empower and formalize local relationships.** Initial attack often depends on swift coordination and local expertise. Policy should formalize these cross-jurisdictional partnerships, equipping ground-level responders with direct authority and resources to act quickly and effectively.
- **Safe and effective early response.** A small fire is usually safer and less costly to control. The system should allow the right wildland fire resources to act early when local capacity or authority is missing or lacking, before a fire becomes a threat to protected land or a community.
- **Respect and build on what already works.** Honor and integrate the substantial groundwork already completed to maintain momentum and institutional trust. Avoid starting from scratch where possible.
- **Protect the statewide response system.** A fire without enough local support can pull crews and equipment away from other areas. Policy should protect Oregon's ability to manage several fires simultaneously and respond quickly to new fires.

Funding Statewide Protection:

- **Operational RFPA support.** ODF's RFPA support staff should be able to assist during active incidents, including outside forest protection districts when providing that support. Their role,

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authority, staffing, and connection to incident command and resource acquisition should be clear before fire season.

- **Recognize local contributions.** Counties and other governments with unprotected or under-protected lands may contribute money or in-kind support. Policy should acknowledge contributions of staff, dispatch, equipment, buildings, access, maps, planning, office work, and other resources that support wildfire response and protection systems.
- **Stable and flexible funding.** Readiness cannot rely only on short-term grants or emergency funding. Funding should support training, equipment, planning, coordination, and larger-fire response while accounting for local contributions and avoiding unfair cost shifts. Creating dedicated, flexible funding mechanisms ensures communities can rapidly ramp up severity response, stage critical assets, and access aerial or heavy equipment support before fires escalate into megafires. Provide dedicated funding to appropriate agency accounts to fully fund large wildfire costs on the five-year trailing average.
- **Statewide support without shifting district costs.** Operational support for RFPAs and protection-gap incidents should continue to be backed by statewide funding. It should not impair district readiness or shift costs to those who already pay for protection within ODF districts. In addition, a mechanism should be established for RFPAs to access ODF severity resources.

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5. Wildfire Mitigation and Smoke Preparedness and Response

Introduction

Wildfire is a natural element of many western ecosystems. However, due to a variety of reasons, including long-term fire suppression, development patterns, and climate change, "wildfire season" is lasting longer, impacting more communities through both fire and smoke, and burning over more acres of varied vegetation. Simply suppressing wildfires alone is no longer an effective strategy for reducing wildfire risk, protecting communities from fire and smoke, or protecting natural resources, and it is becoming increasingly expensive. Instead, a holistic approach to reduce the catastrophic nature of wildfire by prioritizing wildfire mitigation through community risk reduction and landscape resiliency is necessary.

The Legislature recognized that a new, comprehensive structure was necessary when it passed SB 762, establishing a multi-pronged approach across 11 state agencies. As a result, state and local agencies are working collaboratively to implement the many tools and programs necessary to mitigate wildfire and smoke risk and protect communities. These programs need ongoing implementation, increased investment, and policy innovation. The Council addresses each of these programs below. The Council highlights one over-arching recommendation, in addition to the program-specific recommendations discussed below.

Recommendations

Develop a statewide wildfire mitigation and resilience strategic plan.

The Legislature should thoughtfully incorporate existing and planned mitigation and resilience projects established or required under previously enacted legislation as part of the development of a statewide wildfire mitigation/resilience strategic plan. The Council recognizes the value that a statewide strategic plan can bring to improve coordination among federal, state, and local agencies and community and private industry partners. With many initiatives launched since 2021, meaningful improvements and experience in wildfire mitigation science and significant, sustained funding now available to design and build community-supported mitigation projects, a statewide strategic plan will only move Oregon forward in resilience if it allows the work already underway to continue and grow.

Wildfire Mitigation: Oregon Conservation Corps

Policy Landscape / Implementation Progress

Through the passage of SB 762, Oregon recognized that living safely with wildfire is more than "fighting" wildfires. It requires significant investment in wildfire mitigation and community risk reduction, and success depends on a year-round work force trained on the myriad methods to achieve these objectives. The Oregon Conservation Corps (OCC) plays a significant role in both carrying out tasks to reduce risk and in building a workforce for the long-term.

SB 762 established the OCC within the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), allocated $10 million to it, and directed it to focus on three core tasks:

- Reducing the risk wildfire poses to communities and critical infrastructure.

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- Helping to create fire-adapted communities.
- Engaging youth and young adults in wildfire-related workforce training.

For the first time, the 2026 Oregon Legislature dedicated an ongoing funding source for the OCC. House Bill 4134 (the "1.25% for wildlife" bill) raised the state's transient lodging tax by 1.25%, which will generate approximately $38 million annually for fish, wildlife, and habitat recovery programs. Of the 1.25 percent increase, a 0.10 percent share (about 8 percent of the new revenue) is directed to support the OCC's youth workforce development and work on community resilience and wildfire risk reduction. The HECC estimates that the amount for this biennium will be $6-$6.5 million. This funding stability provides the HECC with the ability to make long-term commitments to youth and to the programs and efforts they fund. In addition, the 2026 Legislature allocated another $5 million of general funds to the OCC for this biennium.

OCC carries out its dual mission by providing grants to Oregon-based nonprofit youth development organizations and to public entities that provide programs for job training and skills development in forest-related or rangeland-related career path training. OCC focuses on ensuring the training programs are available to youth from diverse and underserved communities.

Most of the on-the-ground work has been to establish defensible space and conduct fuel treatment activities to protect communities and infrastructure at risk from wildfires. OCC crews take on tasks that are hard to do by individual property owners or communities, including removing ground and ladder fuels over extensive areas and clearing up to 100 feet of defensible space around infrastructure and structures. Through December 2024, approximately 1,147 individual sites covering 7,406 acres across Oregon have been treated.

Ongoing maintenance of the defensible space and forest land treatment work done by the OCC youth is key to long term landscape resilience. The Council discussed several ways this could be accomplished, including return visits by the OCC and training local residents on how to carry out regular maintenance.

OCC is creating pathways for young Oregonians to enter wildfire-related careers, including wildland firefighting, forest restoration, emergency management, and more. Youth earn certifications and credentials for firefighting, emergency wilderness response, first aid, and wildfire behavior. To date over 1,000 youth have been trained through OCC-funded programs, helping to build a much-needed locally based wildfire work force.

Equity Considerations

The OCC was designed to reach youth from underserved communities, and HECC's reporting shows that it does. In the most recent report year, a third of participants reported economic hardship, 14 percent reported a disability, and 14 percent identified as American Indian or Alaska Native. Grantees include the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and youth corps and workforce boards serving rural Oregon. Much of the defensible space work is done for residents who cannot do it themselves, physically or financially.

Recommendations

Allocate additional funding to HECC for the OCC program.

The OCC now has a durable funding source and a general fund allocation for 2025-27. Even so, one-time legislative funding fell from $10 million in each of the first two biennia to $5 million for 2025-27, while demand keeps growing. In the most recent grant round, HECC received $12.35 million in requests from 12 applicants for the $5 million available. Until HB 4134, the OCC was not part of HECC's current service level budget, so every biennium started from zero.

The Legislature should allocate additional funding to HECC for the OCC program, beyond the portion that comes from the "1.25% for wildlife" fund, to be able to serve more communities and youth and meet the

growing demand for its services.

HECC should establish a program database.

Systematic, long-term tracking of the professional trajectories of the youth who take part in the OCC-funded programs would enable the HECC to fine tune its programs as needed to help grow the work force Oregon needs to mitigate wildfire risk and increase community protection. Today the HECC reports outputs such as acres treated, sites treated, youth served, and certifications earned, but it does not yet have benchmarks for outcomes such as job placement or retention in wildfire and natural resource careers.

HECC should allocate a portion of its funding to establish a database about who has participated in the program, certificates earned, careers pursued, and other relevant metrics, to be even more effective in carrying out its mission.

Review how the OCC fits with high school and community college workforce pathways.

OCC crews are one of several ways Oregon is recruiting and training young people for wildfire and forestry work. High school natural resource and fire programs and community college pathways reach students earlier and at a lower cost per participant, and the two are already linked: several OCC grantees now award community college credit for wildland fire and chainsaw courses, and most OCC participants arrive having finished high school or a GED. As OCC funding becomes durable, the HECC is well positioned to look at how these approaches complement one another and where they could be linked, including opportunities for increased communication to youth and to future employers about the program and the professional careers it opens doors to.

The HECC, along with the Oregon Department of Education, community colleges, and universities should review how the OCC fits with high school, community college, and university workforce pathways, so that state investment builds one coordinated pipeline into wildfire and natural resource careers.

Wildfire Mitigation: Oregon State Fire Marshal

Policy Landscape / Implementation Progress

With passage of HB 3940 in 2025 and establishment of a durable funding source, OSFM receives approximately $42 million per biennium for community risk reduction to assist Oregon communities with parcel-level and community-level wildfire mitigation, preparation, and resilience.

In 2026, OSFM:

- Completed more than 6,900 free home and property defensible space assessments for Oregon property owners since 2023.
- Began development and partner input into the Wildfire Survivor and Neighborhood Wildfire Retrofit grant programs and prepared to implement Wildfire Ready Basics grants, focusing on home hardening and defensible space grants at the neighborhood level.
- Implemented Oregon's first defensible space code, now available for local adoption.
- Held seven listening/learning sessions with feedback offered by more than 300 partners across the state to inform decisions about which investments and strategies would have the greatest impact on wildfire resilience.
- Initiated a Fire Adapted Oregon regional Community Wildfire Risk Reduction strategy to increase

coordination and leverage local public and private partnerships.

- Initiated development of a landscaper/contractor wildfire mitigation/resilience certification program to ensure consistent mitigation work statewide.
- Appointed a Wildfire Innovation Manager to coordinate strategic planning, interagency cooperation/coordination, identify needed enhancements, and create an innovation and technology strategy.
- Engaged with property and casualty insurance industry partners to align mitigation initiatives with science-backed, insurance-recognized standards that are intended to stabilize the Oregon property insurance market, as set forth in SB 83 and the Memorandum of Understanding between OSFM and the Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety (IBHS).
- Began development of a dashboard to track investments of community risk reduction projects and achievement of metrics through OSFM.
- Strengthened partnerships with IBHS that continue to help support program development.

Wildfire experience in the western United States and research done by IBHS demonstrates that achieving comprehensive and effective community wildfire risk reduction requires implementation of risk reduction strategies at scale – meaning application to both new buildings and landscapes and retrofitting existing ones. California is the only state thus far that has done this with IBHS. The OSFM is currently identifying Oregon communities to pilot this project, which will require a community liaison and certified homebuilders and landscape professionals, among other things.

The Council acknowledges the Legislature's commitment, demonstrated in passage of SB 762 in 2021 and SB 83/HB 3940 in 2025, to prioritizing investment in parcel-level mitigation and community-level resilience.

Recommendations

Increase funding capacity for OSFM mitigation and resilience programs.

The Legislature should increase funding capacity – in addition to dedicated funding streams from the Oral Nicotine Tax and the Oregon Rainy Day Fund Interest accounts – for the mitigation and resilience programs that are currently being implemented by OSFM, as well as those that are in the planning and/or initial implementation stages. As the agency's strategic plans develop further to include community-level resilience pilot projects, funding will be critical to ensure equitable access to mitigation that achieves the highest possible level of community-wide implementation.

Develop additional funding streams for wildfire mitigation.

The Wildfire Funding Work Group (the "Fire 35") convened in 2024 considered multiple potential sources of sustainable long-term funding to invest in landscape resilience and community mitigation. The Legislature should consider revisiting recommendations or reconstituting a broad-based work group to develop additional funding streams to fund mitigation.

Incentivize defensible space and home hardening codes adoption.

The Legislature should consider/pass legislation to promote/incentivize standardized local adoption of the defensible space and home hardening codes to support community wildfire risk reduction (defensible space, home hardening, education for property owners, and certification of wildfire mitigation assessment professionals).

Wildfire Mitigation: Oregon Department of Forestry

Introduction

The Landscape Resiliency Program (LRP) is the state's own investment in reducing wildfire risk on the land. SB 762 directed ODF to reduce wildfire risk by restoring landscape resiliency and reducing hazardous fuels. It also directed ODF to develop and carry out a 20-Year Landscape Resiliency Strategy (Strategy, ORS 477.503). The LRP is how ODF puts state dollars into that Strategy. It funds large, cross-boundary projects led by local partnerships on public, private, and Tribal forests and rangelands, in and around communities and critical infrastructure.

The LRP is one of thirteen state and federal programs ODF reports on under the Strategy. Together they spent $51 million in 2025. They serve four different purposes, and it helps to see them that way, summarized in the following table.

Table 2. 20-Year Landscape Resiliency Strategy and Associated Programs

Purpose	**ODF / Federal Programs**	**CY 2025 Spending**	**Share**
Landscape-scale fuels and forest restoration	Landscape Resiliency Program (state); Federal Forest Restoration / Good Neighbor Authority (state and federal); Landscape Scale Restoration (federal)	$17.5 million	34%
Landowner and community assistance	Small Forestland Grant Program (state); Western States Fire Managers; Community Assistance; Community Wildfire Defense Grants; Forest Stewardship; NRCS agreement; Emergency Forest Restoration (federal)	$7.6 million	15%
Forest health	Sudden Oak Death; Bark Beetle Mitigation (federal)	$1.3 million	3%
Land conservation	Forest Legacy Program (one acquisition in 2025)	$24.5 million	48%
Total	**13 programs**	**$51.0 million**	**100%**

Landscape-scale fuels and forest restoration along with landowner and community assistance programs reduce wildfire risk directly. Not every forest health problem is a wildfire problem. Some are caused by an introduced pest or pathogen, some mainly cause economic losses, and some flare up and fade or are simply part of a healthy forest. One example of a forest health problem that is also a wildfire problem is the Douglas-fir mortality in southwest Oregon. Drought and flatheaded fir borer are killing Douglas-fir trees in overly dense, dry forest stands across hundreds of thousands of acres, and the result is fuel and hazard trees

that make fire behavior more extreme and firefighting less safe. Falling trees are among the leading causes of wildland firefighter deaths. Where a forest health problem is also a wildfire problem, ODF's forest health and wildfire mitigation programs should reinforce one another, so that surveys, priorities, and treatments in one program support the other.

Land conservation keeps working forests from being developed. That limits future risk in the wildland-urban interface (WUI) but does not treat fuels.

This section evaluates the LRP because the Legislature created it and funds it directly, because its funding changed in 2025, and because it is the state's contribution to the 20-Year Strategy. Senate Bill 83 (2025) now requires ODF to report on the program and the Strategy each year to the Legislature, the Wildfire Programs Director, and this Council.

Policy Landscape

House Bill 3940 (2025). HB 3940 came out of the Wildfire Funding Workgroup ("Fire 35"), co-led by ODF and the OSFM. For the LRP it did two things. It created the first ongoing revenue for the Landscape Resiliency Fund: one third of a new tax on oral nicotine products, and 6.7 percent of the interest earned on the state Rainy Day Fund. It also added a one-time $7 million General Fund appropriation. ODF estimates about $21 million for the fund in 2025–27, most of it from Rainy Day Fund interest. It is important to recognize that both ongoing funding source revenues will vary due to a number of factors including local jurisdiction regulations regarding oral nicotine products.

Table 3. Landscape Resiliency Program Estimated Funding Need

Biennium	**State Funding for the LRP**	**Source**	**Tenure**
2021–23	about $20 million	General Fund (SB 762)	One-time
2023–25	$10 million	General Fund	One-time
2025–27	Appx. $21 million	Oral Nicotine tax share, Rainy Day Fund interest share, $7 million General Fund (HB 3940)	Recurring but variable, plus one-time
Need identified by Strategy partners	**$100 million per biennium**	**—**	**Durable**

This is a real change. Before HB 3940, every dollar of LRP money was one-time, and the SB 762 investment was not repeated at the same level in later biennia. ODF describes the shift as moving from one-time appropriations to "recurring but variable revenue streams."

The amount is still about one fifth of the need. HB 3940 also directs two thirds of its new revenue to community risk reduction and one third to the landscape. The Council supports both and does not see them as separate. Oregon's communities sit inside its forests and rangelands. Defensible space around a home buys time only if the arriving fire has already been slowed by work on the land around it. Strategy partners estimate that about $100 million per biennium in state funding is needed to meet resilient-landscape goals.

That level would also leverage the roughly $300 million per biennium now coming from federal programs, much of it time limited.

Senate Bill 83 (2025) and the 2026 session. SB 83 replaced the biennial Strategy progress report with an annual implementation report. The first, for calendar year 2025, was delivered in January 2026. The 2026 legislative session protected the LRP from budget rebalancing cuts. No new revenue was directed to the program.

Implementation Progress

What the program has delivered. From 2021 through June 2025 the LRP invested $29.6 million. ODF reports 245,000 acres treated, including 5,000 acres of prescribed fire and 37,600 acres of invasive grass treatment. The work reached 23,000 homes in or near project areas, replanted 2,100 acres with fire-resilient species, and assessed landscape conditions on 40,000 acres.

The 2023–25 round put $10 million into five projects: the High Desert Partnership in southeast Oregon ($3.8 million, the largest award), the Klamath Tribes ($2.0 million), Wallowa Resources with ODF in the Northern Blues ($0.9 million), South Willamette Solutions at Oakridge–Westfir ($1.05 million), and ODF Southwest Oregon on the Rogue ($2.25 million). Those projects finished 28,750 of a planned 30,250 footprint acres.

In calendar year 2025 the program spent $5.8 million. It completed 4,500 acres of fuels reduction, 2,900 acres of prescribed fire, and 8,900 acres of juniper treatment. It held seven collaborative meetings and ran the Rapid Assessment Tool on 103,000 acres.

Rangeland. Rangeland is the larger share of the challenges the Strategy describes: 7.9 million of the 13.1 million priority acres. Rangeland and forests have fundamentally different fire systems, and the Council's recommendations recognize that. Fire in the forest is driven by large fuels, and a fuel reduction treatment there has a predictable result. Fire on rangeland is driven by the amount of fine fuels, which varies from year to year. Invasive annual grass and juniper treatments remain important for range health. With today's tools, landscape-scale treatment of annual grasses gives mixed results. That will improve as new tools are developed and techniques are refined. Managed livestock grazing is currently the most practical landscape-scale tool for controlling fine fuels on rangeland.

The LRP's rangeland work so far has been juniper removal and invasive annual grass treatment, mostly through the High Desert Partnership. ODF also continues to work with RFPAs in priority areas. Treatment costs on rangeland range from about $10 to more than $1,100 an acre, depending on the treatment. That means the LRP can cover far more ground on rangeland per dollar than in forest. It also means acre counts are not comparable between the two.

Field evidence. LRP-funded work in the Aspen Hollow area, with treatments from federal WUI programs and Firewise®, is credited by ODF field staff with slowing the 2025 Flat Fire and reducing its intensity. It helped protect homes at Whychus Canyon Estates while more than 4,000 homes were under evacuation orders. The Klamath Tribes' thinning and prescribed fire, now continued with LRP funds, changed fire behavior in the 2021 Bootleg Fire even under extreme conditions. These outcomes are what the Legislature is paying for. They deserve to be documented systematically rather than one example at a time.

Progress on the 20-Year Strategy. The Strategy is three years past its 2023 launch. Governance is in place: a Strategic Leadership Group of agency executives, an Agency Coordination and Implementation Group of senior staff, and a shared stewardship framework adopted in December 2024. Two statewide summits have been held. The most recent was the Ridgetop to Rooftop Summit in November 2025, co-hosted with the OSFM, with about 280 people attending and deliberate Tribal participation. ODF and OSFM leadership are now discussing joint projects and how to align the Strategy with OSFM's coming Fire Adapted Oregon

regional strategy.

Two of three foundational pieces are not finished. The first is the interagency accomplishment tracking system and public dashboard, which ODF calls a "foundational pillar" of the Strategy. It is still at the planning stage; ODF's internal tracker, Landscape Resiliency Accomplishment and Financial Tracker, is being built to feed it. The second is regional implementation plans for the seven fire-prone regions. They are not yet written, and the roadmap for producing them is still in development. The third foundational piece is a shared definition of landscape resiliency and the outcome measures, which have been defined.

There is an opening to change that. ODF's State Forester is leading work on a Shared Stewardship Agreement 2.0, an update of the 2019 agreement the Strategy rests on. ODF anticipates the agreement will be finalized by the end of the year That update is the natural place to commit the partners to the unfinished pieces: benchmarks, the dashboard, regional plans, and a shared definition of resiliency. Written into the agreement, they become obligations rather than items on a list.

Benchmarks and pace. ODF has a clear statement of the need: 13.1 million priority acres at an estimated treatment cost of $7.7 billion, not counting planning, engagement, or maintenance. What it does not yet have are interim benchmarks, such as acres per year by region and land type, or a date by which the first priority landscapes will be treated. Without them, annual progress cannot be judged. The Legislature cannot tell whether $21 million per biennium is buying 2 percent of the job or 10 percent.

Reporting could make this easier. ODF's 2025 landscape resiliency report leads with "108,456 acres of various treatments" across all thirteen programs. That figure combines about 30,000 acres where fuels were treated with 58,662 acres that received technical assistance and 43,090 acres surveyed for future work. Each is a real accomplishment, and each answers a different question. Presented separately, they would tell a clearer story (see Recommendation 6).

At the current level of state investment, the priority acres will not be reached within the Strategy's 20-year horizon. ODF and its partners name the constraints themselves: intermittent state funding, a fragmented set of 36 to 40 funding programs with different rules, a seasonal workforce that leaves after fire season, thin local and Tribal capacity, and little infrastructure to use the material that treatments produce. Maintenance is the quiet problem behind all of this. Treated acres grow back and invasive grasses return. Prescribed fire on maintained ground is far cheaper than a first entry, but no LRP line funds maintenance as such.

Equity Considerations

The LRP reaches vulnerable communities mainly through the partners it funds. The Klamath Tribes' $2 million award is the clearest example. Tribal engagement was built into the 2025 Summit through consultation with all nine federally recognized Tribes and a Tribal-only session with agency leadership. OCC-funded youth corps crews, including Heart of Oregon Corps, have worked on LRP projects in Central Oregon. ODF should detail in their annual report how LRP funds reach socially and economically vulnerable communities.

However, LRP awards generally go to partnerships with the capacity to plan and manage large projects. That can favor regions that already have strong collaboratives and may leave out rural and rangeland communities that do not. The Strategy's own progress report acknowledges that "underserved communities remain underrepresented in planning and decision-making." ODF's application process does include weighted questions regarding community vulnerability, including how the proposed project includes traditionally underserved, socially vulnerable, or historically marginalized communities and ways to measure progress. However, more intentionality in matching funding allocations towards the highest wildfire risk and social vulnerability should be established in ODF's grant planning and distribution process.

Recommendations

Fund the Landscape Resiliency Fund to meet the identified need.

HB 3940 established the principle of ongoing funding. The amount is about a fifth of the $100 million per biennium the Strategy partners have identified. The Legislature should set a schedule for closing that gap. It should also treat the LRP as current service level, so the program is not rebuilt from zero each biennium. Stable state money is what leverages federal and private investment.

ODF should set benchmarks and report against them.

ODF should adopt interim targets: treated acres per year by region, land type, and ownership within the priority landscapes. It should report treated, planned, and assisted acres separately. The definition of landscape resiliency and its outcome measures should be finished in 2027, and the interagency dashboard launched, so the Legislature can see progress in one place. The Shared Stewardship Agreement 2.0 now in development should carry these commitments and dates.

ODF should coordinate regional planning, together with OSFM.

As expressed during the Ridgetop to Rooftop Summit (2025), wildfire mitigation projects across the landscapes and around our communities should evolve through collaborative planning efforts with ODF, OSFM, and partners. Therefore, community-focused and landscape-focused wildfire mitigation projects, where possible, can work in tandem to reduce the catastrophic risk of fire across different high wildfire risk regions of the state. One possible outcome of this coordination could result in "ridgetop to rooftop pilot projects" where significant mitigation investments are concentrated in and around some of Oregon's communities at greatest risk of wildfire, possibly influencing how insurance rates a community's risk.

Fund maintenance and a year-round workforce.

LRP rules should allow, and budgets should include, maintenance on acres already treated: follow-up prescribed fire in forest and repeat invasive grass treatment and managed grazing to hold down fine fuels on rangeland. ODF should extend seasonal fire crews into year-round fuels and prescribed fire work, coordinated with the OCC and local contractors, so training and experience in the workforce are not lost each year.

Build capacity where it is missing.

ODF should continue to weigh community vulnerability in LRP selection, using a measure compatible with OSFM's. It should fund regional coordinators and collaborative capacity in regions that cannot yet compete for awards, including rangeland communities and RFPAs. Tribal co-management and cultural burning should be supported as core delivery methods, not pilots.

Report clearly, by purpose.

The SB 83 annual report is a step forward: it is short, readable, and on time. The Council asks ODF to build on it in three ways. First, group the 13 programs by purpose, as in the table above, so that wildfire risk reduction is not blended with land acquisition and forest health work that is not about fuels. Second, report treated acres, planned acres, and assisted acres as separate figures. Third, report the Landscape Resiliency Fund's actual revenue each year alongside what was spent, so the Legislature can see whether HB 3940 is delivering what was projected. Clear reporting is what will let the Council and the Legislature make the case for the larger investment the Strategy needs.

Keep agency capacity in step with the fund.

As the Landscape Resiliency Fund grows, ODF's capacity to administer grants and support field

implementation should grow with it, so that the pace and scale of the program are not limited by the agency's ability to deliver.

Smoke Mitigation Programs and Community Response Plans

Introduction

Exposure to wildfire smoke is harmful to health. Some groups are disproportionately harmed by smoke exposure due to socioeconomic or physical conditions. The number of days with poor air quality caused by wildfire smoke is increasing year after year across Oregon, as reported by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Protecting communities from the harms of smoke exposure requires a multi-pronged and multilevel coordinated approach across state and local entities.

Policy Landscape / Implementation Progress

Oregon has created multiple wildfire smoke mitigation programs to protect public health, through investments and programs of SB 762 (2021), SB 1530 (2024), and SB 1536 (2022). This includes the Oregon Smoke Management Program, which is a comprehensive program collaboratively developed by ODF, DEQ, and Oregon Health Authority (OHA) as part of prescribed burning on forestlands within the ODF protection boundaries. Oregon's wildfire smoke mitigation programs include:

- Air quality monitoring and communications capabilities.
- Community planning to prepare for and respond to wildfire smoke.
- Increased capacity to provide emergency sheltering in public spaces.
- Resources to help improve indoor air quality for individuals and families in public or private settings.

Some of these were one-time investments, such as funds to support emergency sheltering capabilities. The Legislature has not allocated funding for smoke/public health programs since 2024.

Community Response Plans

Certain areas of the state are designated in Oregon Administrative Rule as Smoke Sensitive Receptor Areas (SSRAs). These areas are provided with the highest level of protection from prescribed fire smoke. SSRA communities typically have a history of smoke impacts, dense populations, or visibility protections.

A core element of Oregon's wildfire mitigation program is prescribed burning; however, this must be implemented in ways that minimize impacts on public health. Community Response Plans (CRPs) are an element of the state's smoke management rules that allow communities to apply for a one-hour exemption to smoke impacts from prescribed burning. The purpose of the CRP – and the exemption – is to provide a system that supports increasing the pace and scale of prescribed fire near SSRAs, while also ensuring adequate efforts are made to protect public health. The CRP is a powerful tool to bring together parties that may not traditionally work together – such as land managers and local public health staff – to establish timely education and risk communication about smoke during prescribed burns. However, developing a CRP is only the first step; they must be updated and implemented. In addition, while there are 38 designated SSRAs in Oregon, according to DEQ's 2025 annual report, only nine CRPs have been completed, and only four of those communities have active one-hour exemptions.

Oregon Smoke Management Program

Oregon's existing smoke management rules are currently being updated; adoption is scheduled for Summer

2027. Among the proposed changes is an opportunity for communities with active CRPs and exemptions to apply for an Enhanced CRP. This change would allow greater flexibility for communities to increase the pace and scale of prescribed fire *so long as* enhanced public health protection efforts are in place. This is needed because smoke intrusions, as they are defined in the rule, are still being cited by land managers as a barrier to conducting larger-scale prescribed burns in high-priority areas. ODF and DEQ are also considering how CRPs can be integrated into CWPPs or NHMPs to allow communities to maintain a single plan that can carry out the related goals of risk communications, planning, and mitigation efforts.

In each community that creates a CRP, the circumstances are unique:

- There are multiple entities that have a role or engage with prescribed fire and health communications.
- The physical geography of an SSRA and its proximity to prescribed fire units varies widely.
- The forest/fuel types and seasonality of prescribed fire windows are different between the east and west sides of the state.
- The priority populations for health communications and targeted outreach vary among areas.
- Communication channels vary and are limited in remote areas (i.e. some communities have no local media to rely on).

Council members met with a handful of Oregon cities and counties that have a CRP, as well as with the state agencies implementing the smoke programs. These learnings have informed our recommendations. The Council encourages flexibility in how we empower communities to develop and implement CRPs based on their unique needs and circumstances.

Recommendations

Oregon is a leader in adapting innovative solutions to the wildfire smoke challenge. However, to continue this success in protecting public health from wildfire smoke and its impact on air quality requires ongoing funding.

Increased funding across several program areas and agencies is needed to support broader adoption and implementation of CRPs across the state, as follows:

Re-establish funding to prior levels for DEQ and ODF coordination and program implementation related to wildfire and prescribed fire smoke.

Funding to DEQ and ODF should be renewed for wildfire smoke mitigation work to support these needed programs:

- Deployment of air quality sensors to fill in the gaps in the ambient monitoring network and increased DEQ staff capacity to support ongoing maintenance and data quality analysis.
- Increased DEQ capacity to support communities to develop CRPs.
- Grants to resource local governments and entities to implement CRPs.
- Increased DEQ staff capacity to support Wildfire Smoke Advisory calls on weekends and holidays throughout the wildfire season.
- Ensure ODF's smoke management fund is sufficient to sustain operations necessary to increase prescribed fire and cultural burning demands.

Conflict between the goals of protecting public health from smoke and advancing the pace and scale of prescribed fire to restore forest health and safety is a reality. The CRPs are designed to strike a balance while

aiming to meet both objectives. The first CRP was adopted in Bend in 2019, where a 2024 pilot project also sought to increase efforts around this work. Oregon must acknowledge that all smoke is harmful to health; at the same time, smoke impacts from prescribed fire are predictable, shorter in duration, and more localized than wildfire smoke impacts – which are unplanned, heavier in intensity, and often last for multiple days or even weeks on end.

Fund local public health agencies to support smoke communications.

To support increased application of prescribed fire in high-priority areas, Oregon needs to increase the number of communities that have ongoing implementation of adopted CRPs with active exemptions. To do this, communities need increased local capacity for coordinated public health communications and education in support of prescribed fire. This includes buy-in and support from local decision makers about the importance of supporting prescribed fire.

Local public health departments need to be resourced to support smoke communications and education in partnership with land managers, including:

- Ensure stable Public Health Modernization funding to bolster local public health capacity.
- Explore ways to leverage funding from OSFM programs to increase local capacity for coordinated smoke communications.
- Offer outreach and opportunities for cities, counties, OHA, DEQ, and other relevant groups to connect on CRP implementation processes, benefits, and learnings. In particular, decision-makers in communities without active CRPs need to learn more about the value of this work and support their adoption.

Local staff engaged in the increased communications have reported that the time and resources invested in prescribed fire-related messaging is disproportionate to the impacts of smoke associated with prescribed fire. However, the communication channels and relationships established during development and implementation of a CRP carry through wildfire season. This work is essential; centering public health communications and partnerships with land managers and other entities engaged in forest restoration and fire response creates stronger, more resilient communities. Communities across Oregon will become fire and smoke adapted with robust CRPs.

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APPENDIX A:
Wildfire Programs Advisory Council Roster for 2026

Chairperson, Samantha Bayer (Eagle Point)
Member who represents farmers whose land is wholly or partially within the wildland-urban interface

Vice Chairperson, Nick Browne (Clackamas)
Member who represents fire chiefs with wildland-urban interface firefighting experience

Kenton Brine (NW Insurance Council)
Member who represents the insurance industry

Susan Jane Brown (John Day)
Member who represents environmental interests

Mark Corless (Clackamas County)
Member who represents the structural fire service and who has experience with managing, fighting, or preventing wildfire within the wildland-urban interface

Ty Darby (McMinnville)
Member who represents fire marshals with wildland-urban interface firefighting experience

Alessandra de la Torre (Talent)
Member who represents the environmental justice community

Terry Fairbanks (Jacksonville)
Member who represents forest resiliency interests

Dave Hunnicutt (Hillsboro)
Member who represents rural residential property owners whose property is wholly or partially within the wildland-urban interface

Gary Jackson (Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians)
Member who represents federally recognized Indian Tribes with land wholly or partially within the wildland-urban interface

Mary Kyle McCurdy (Portland)
Member who represents state or regional land use planning organizations

Bill Messner (Portland)
Member who represents a utility company

John O'Keeffe (Adel)
Member who represents ranchers whose land is wholly or partially within the wildland-urban interface

Branden Pursinger (Association of Oregon Counties)
Member representing County Government

Joshua Shaklee (Douglas County)
Member who is a land use planning director for a wildland-urban interface county

Pat Skrip (Roseburg)
Member who represents firefighters with wildland-urban interface firefighting experience

Nicholas Snead (City of Madras)
Member who is a land use planning director for a wildland-urban interface city

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Eric Swanson (City of Phoenix)
Member representing City Government

Chad Washington (Salem)
Member who represents forestland owners whose property is wholly or partially within the wildland-urban interface

Garrett West (Medford)
Member who represents land and housing development interests or real estate industry interests

Sarah Worthington (Bend)
Member who represents public health professionals

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Wildfire Programs Advisory Council

900 Court St NE, Suite 254

Salem, Oregon 97301

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2026