



Oregon

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To: Land Conservation and Development Commission

From: Brenda Ortigoza Bateman, Ph.D., Director
Gordon Howard, Community Services Division Manager
Josh LeBombard, Southern Oregon Regional Representative

Subject: **Agenda Item 12, November 2-3, 2023, LCDC Meeting**



Regional Tour of the Almeda Fire Damage and Recovery

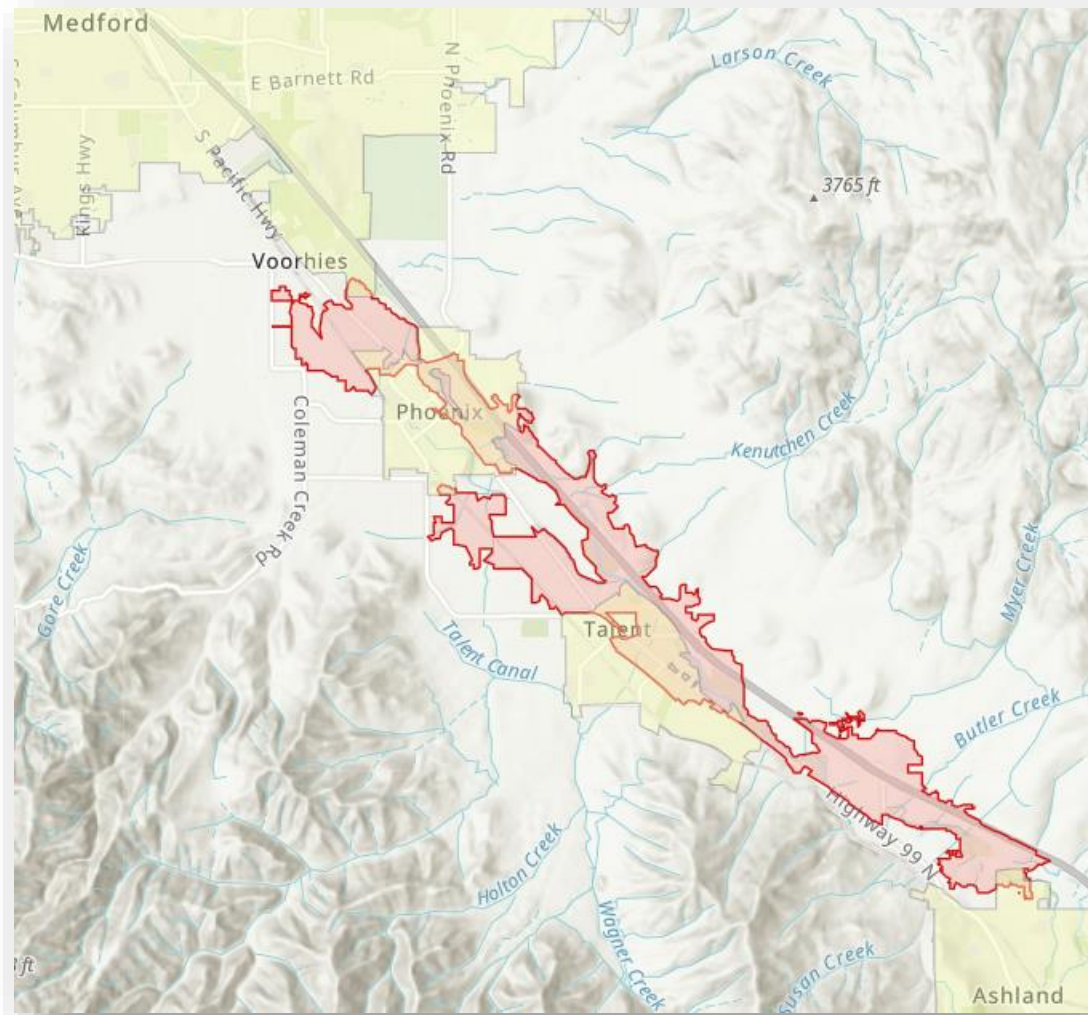
I. Summary

Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD or department) staff will be accompanied by staff and elected officials from the local jurisdictions affected by the Almeda Fire. The tour will leave Medford and travel south down the Highway 99 and Bear Creek corridor to provide the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC or commission) a view of the status of recovery.

In September of 2020, the Almeda Fire began in northern Ashland and moved north up the Highway 99 and Bear Creek corridor through the cities of Talent and Phoenix, as well as unincorporated Jackson County. The fire burned approximately 3,000 acres. The South Obenchain fire burned northeast of the City of Eagle Point in a mixture of farm and open space land. It burned roughly 33,000 acres.

Altogether, the fires destroyed around 2,500 residential properties, including around 1,600 manufactured homes in 18 mobile home parks and approximately 180 commercial properties. The fires also caused significant damage to urban infrastructure and equipment. Approximately 8,500 people were displaced.

Figure 1. Almeda Fire (Burn scar indicated in red.)



Southern Oregon, like much of Oregon, suffered from a substantial lack of housing affordable to local residents prior to the fires. The fires have exacerbated this problem.

There has been a substantial amount of assistance provided to these communities regarding interim and permanent housing and considerable rebuilding has occurred.

Shortly after the Almeda fire, DLCD staff engaged the three affected jurisdictions and developed a framework for a new Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) grant. The basic concept was to reimagine and re-envision the Highway 99 and Bear Creek corridor since much of the corridor was destroyed.

The first phase of the project is underway and will be concluding shortly. Details can be found here: <https://hwy99-bear-creek-vision.squarespace.com/>. Phase 2, which consists of implementing code work should begin early next year.