



Wildfire Adapted Communities Stakeholder Group Meeting #2: Incorporating the Wildfire Risk Map at a Local Level

Meeting Summary

Tuesday, May 17, 2022 | 1:00 – 3:00 pm

Meeting Purpose: The purpose of Stakeholder Group Meeting #2 was to provide an overview of the Wildfire Risk Map and have a discussion with stakeholders about how to incorporate the wildfire map at the local level and considerations for implementation of the map. Their input will be used to inform DLCD staff recommendations to the Wildfire Programs Advisory Council and legislature.

- Meeting agenda located in Appendix A
- Meeting recording can be accessed at: [Stakeholder Group Meeting #2 Recording](#)
- Meeting presentation can be found here: [Stakeholder Meeting Group Presentation #2](#)

1. Meeting Welcome and Introduction

Thirty stakeholders participated in the second Stakeholder Group meeting. See Appendix B for a list of participants. Representatives from the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) and the Department of Forestry (ODF) provided a background orientation for the group.

- Susan Millhauser, DLCD Natural Hazards Planner – Wildfire
- Sadie Carney, DLCD Communications Manager and Policy Analyst
- Tim Holschbach, ODF Deputy Chief – Policy & Planning

Millhauser welcomed everyone and provided an overview of the purpose of the Stakeholder Group and meeting #2. Carney provided the land acknowledgement. Carney also shared demographic information of the Stakeholder Group compared to Oregon as a whole.

DEMOGRAPHIC COMPARISON	Oregon	Stakeholder Group
Household Income Under \$60,000	50%	13%
People Living with a Disability	26%	3%
People of Color	24%	7%
Renters	38%	10%

She asked the stakeholders to be mindful of the differences between the Stakeholder Group and the people who the group is representing.

2. Wildfire Risk Map Overview

Holschbach from ODF provided an overview of the work that ODF and Oregon State University have been doing to develop the rules and the wildfire risk map to meet the section 7 and section 34 portions of Senate Bill 762. The map will also include a socially and economically vulnerability layer. The final map will be used to inform policy actions and programs from multiple agencies. Holschbach's presentation included an overview of the different responsibilities for Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM), and Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Service (DCBS) Building Codes Division.

Holschbach also provided an overview and definition of the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI), which is defined as the geographical area where structures and other human development meets or intermingles with wildland or vegetative fuels. He explained that ODF has developed criteria to identify and classify the wild land urban interface with five wildfire risk classic categories. The risk categories are no risk, low, moderate, high, and extreme. He explained that the legislation directs the department and OSU to assign a wildfire risk designation to all lands in Oregon and that some lands will be included within the WUI. Lands within the WUI with a wildfire risk designation of high or extreme will be subject to defensible space provisions developed by OSFM and building codes provisions established by DCBS. He also provided the next steps and key decision dates moving forward:

- June 8, 2022 – ODF submits final proposed rule with public comments to Board of Forestry
- June 20, 2022 – Submit rule to Secretary of State and Legislative Counsel for filing
- June 30, 2022 – Effective date

His presentation contained information from the slides shared at Oregon Department of Forestry Informational Session & Public Hearings on the Wildfire Risk Mapping & Wildland-Urban Interface, held April 19, 20, and 21, 2022. Slides can be found:

<https://www.oregon.gov/odf/aboutodf/pages/proposedlawsrules.aspx>

3. Incorporating the Wildfire Risk Map at the Local Level

Carnie introduced the discussion about incorporating the wildfire risk map. She explained DLCD's role to advance recommendations about updates to the statewide land use planning program and local comprehensive plans and zoning codes to incorporate wildfire risk maps and minimize wildfire risk.

For the discussion, she asked the group to consider looking at questions from a best practices point of view at the local level. She provided examples about how the legislation might impact land use, defensible space requirements, and building codes that impact property owners.

After her overview, the meeting was then opened up for discussion and poll questions about the following:

- *How can the Wildfire Risk Map be used to reduce wildfire risk to people, public and private property, businesses, infrastructure, and natural resources?*
- *Should implementation of the map:*
 - *Be consistent across the state OR be a community-driven process?*
 - *Use a timeline set by the legislature, subject matter experts, or communities?*
- *The map will be used to make policy choices. What should the map protect?*

A discussion summary and highlights can be found later in this document in the DLCD Questions and Discussion section.

Polling Results

To gather additional feedback from the Stakeholder Group, a series of poll questions were asked using Zoom polling. The following are results from the poll:

Should the wildfire map implementation be consistent across the state or a community driven process?

Consistent across the state	56%
A community-driven process	19%
Not sure	25%

(Total participants 16)

How effective would consistent statewide implementation of the wildfire risk map be?

Very effective	14%
Somewhat effective	36%
Not effective	7%
Not sure	43%

(Total Participants 14)

How effective would community driven implementation of the wildfire risk map be?

Very effective	14%
Somewhat effective	29%
Not effective	21%
Not sure	36%

(Total participants: 14)

Should the timeline for implementation of the wildfire risk map be set by legislature, subject matter experts, or communities?

Set by the legislature	23%
Set by communities	23%
Set by subject matter experts	15%
Not sure	38%

(Total participants: 13)

The map will be used to make policy choices. Based on your perspective, how important are these aspects be for creating fire-adapted communities?

	Very important	Important	Not important	Not sure
Community lifelines and critical facilities, such as communication assets and evacuation facilities vital to response	77%	15%	0%	8%
Cultural and heritage resources	46%	31%	15%	8%
Farm and forest land	23%	62%	0%	15%
Homes, businesses, and other elements of the built environment	54%	31%	0%	15%
Natural environment and ecosystem services	31%	62%	0%	8%
Other natural hazards	15%	38%	8%	38%
Socially and economically vulnerable communities	69%	15%	0%	15%
Preservation of development opportunities	15%	38%	38%	8%

4. Implementation Considerations

Millhauser opened up the discussion about implementation considerations by showing a map in Oregon Explorer. This provided a snapshot in time of what the current wildfire risk map looks like in general. It was not the future map.

She also provided background information and gave examples to open discussion around the following topics:

1. How could the Wildfire Risk Map inform changes to comprehensive plan maps and zoning?
2. How could the Wildfire Risk Map be used by cities and counties to guide UGB expansions?
3. How should regional differences be understood and considered?
4. What other implementation considerations should DLCDC explore?

A summary of the discussion can be found in the DLCDC Questions and Discussion section.

5. DLCD Questions and Discussion

Throughout the meeting, feedback was shared through group discussion and the Zoom chat feature. The comments, questions and suggestions that follow reflect a summary of the Stakeholder Group's feedback.

Wildfire Risk Mapping & Wildland-Urban Interface

Notification Process

- Questions were raised about how the map gets used in local planning and what the notification process is. Would it be to owners who are in the WUI who are also high or extreme risk, the ones who would be notified? (*Answer Summary*: No, the WUI designation has no bearing on who gets notified. It's the individuals who are in areas either identified as in high or in extreme risk. They will still receive a notification because the bill directs us, ODF, to notify those in high and high or extreme. ODF is not funded by the Legislature to do broader notification. It is just the property owner. If there is a renter, that's not somebody who is required to be provided notification under Senate Bill 762.)
- Landowner notification is required to be complete by June 30, 2022.

Criteria and Home Construction

- Questions were raised about the criteria used. Did the consideration criteria include differences in home quality construction like trailer parks? It was noted that poorer communities tend to congregate or be more automatically affected because of the quality of their home construction. (*Answer summary*: The type of home or material is not a consideration in the wildfire risk or the risk classification. The criteria that the Rules Advisory Committee was working through was wildfire behavior. It's limited in scope of considerate criteria to consider to climate, weather, topography, and vegetation. Those were what was outlined in the legislation.)
- One participant asked if this be added to the criteria. (*Answer Summary*: DLCD can make recommendations on changes that minimize wildfire risk that could apply in the areas that are mapped but cannot make recommendations about changes to how the map is created).

Incorporating the Wildfire Map in Local Planning

Discussion Questions:

- How can the Wildfire Risk Map be used to reduce wildfire risk to people, public and private property, businesses, infrastructure, and natural resources? Should implementation of the map:
 - Be consistent across the state OR be a community-driven process?
 - Use a timeline set by the legislature, subject matter experts, or communities?
- The map will be used to make policy choices. What should the map protect? (See poll results for responses to this question.)

Map Use & Adoption

- Stakeholders had many comments about not having the map to review. Several stated that it is hard for Stakeholder Group members to conceptualize when the map is not available yet and the group does not know how it will be adopted. They could make different recommendations based on the map.

- Another question raised was how would the group’s recommendations apply? Are they statewide or local? Examples: evacuation and never building hospitals in a high risk area should be a statewide standard, while others should be localized.
- Questions were raised about how these maps affect insurance rates and property owners. It was stated that most jurisdictions will be hesitant to adopt maps if they don’t know how it affects insurance rates which affects home affordability. Local governments need this information to adopt.
- A suggestion was made for a statewide map for WUI and risk that is refined and localized. Consider having a locally driven process or localize the details coming out of the state to provide check and balance at the local level.
- One participant suggested that they need a process and period of time where things should be incorporated, similar to beta testing. They suggested looking at existing processes we are using. They pointed out these are real risks and need to have processes that recognize it.
- DLCD may make recommendations related to how local governments can adopt codes related to defensible space that go beyond the minimum standards being developed by the OSFM. DLCD is not looking at changes to how the mapping is done or updates to codes specified under SB 762 that other agencies are doing, such as defensible space and fire-hardening building codes. Rather there may be recommendations about how local government could apply them further to minimize wildfire risks.
- Questions asked about what would happen if a community did not adopt map at a local level?
- Given the underlying building code/defensible space requirements of SB 762, it sounds as if a State adopted map will set a floor for High and Extreme Risk/WUI. Allowing local adoption of maps seems like it would only be applicable if jurisdictions wanted to go beyond those standards/geographies. For example, the currently adopted Wildfire Hazard Zoning map in Deschutes County shows that the entire County is classified as High Risk, and presumably utilizing a similar local map might be allowed in place of a more lenient state map? (*Answer summary:* The statewide map of wildfire risk is the only map that would apply at the local level.)
- Comment from participant that we don't have the charge of talking about how the maps are implemented. (*Answer summary:* SB 762 directs how the map is to be created and implemented by OSFM and DCBS. It also states that DLCD will make recommendations about the incorporation of the risk map to minimize risk. Nothing gives DLCD or local governments ability to ignore the language in the statute.
- Local jurisdictions may be understaffed and not able to uphold enforcement or might disagree with the map adoption and choose not to implement the rules and policies that coincide with the map. There are a lot of pro home rule authority cities in Oregon.
- Having other agencies at the table is critical.
- Having additional resources for local areas to help will be important.
- The use of the maps should prioritize protect over prohibit.

Equity and Accessibility

- There should be more than just a digital version of the map. If people can’t use the map, it is not useful. Not everyone has reliable internet or understands technology.
- The map needs to be accessible to everyone and all generations.
- Things should be translated.

- Should use this project for a community engagement tool.
- A participant noted that we already have some of the most restrictive building and expansion practices in the entire country. Based on environmental concerns for the most part etc. There has to be a choice made that allows our areas to grow even when the risk factors exist and with the least damage to the natural environment, but we have to get a better handle on an equality between environment and people or we're going to continue to have people living in precarious housing situations and in areas that we'd prefer they not be in rather than in areas we've built for them to be in.

Implementation Considerations

Defensible space

- One participant provided clarifying comments on defensible space and public input and aligning some of the principles discussed and critical infrastructure. When we talk about vulnerable populations in the fire code world we have a definition and this is being mapped on the risk map and will be used in the implementation of the defensible space code. We are also addressing critical infrastructure and multi-family dwelling and multiple occupancy structures and things along those lines as far as defensible space is concerned. We're still in the process of developing the defensible space code with public input as has been alluded to. A lot of the agencies have been working together. Our next meeting is tomorrow, from 8:30 to noon on defensible space code development. (State Fire Marshall Representative)
- To be able to respond appropriately through planning there needs to be an outline of the characteristics of risk in communities by density or proximity of homes. The planning zones and the actions that are taken require us to understand risk in developed areas, and I don't see that clearly identified as something that the planners are doing, but it probably is.
- Don't use the term defensible space. The participant's preference is fire adapted communities because there are actions that we can take to keep homes from being burned whether there's somebody there or not. When we use the term defensible space it implies that somebody's there to defend it either the home or the fire department, and that's no longer a realistic expectation.
- The comment was made that you can set standards that help a home survive home, such as hardening. The person stated that they haven't heard much about landscaping standards, such as prohibiting extremely flammable plants, identifying, and agreeing on what those might be, and saying they should be prohibited in certain communities. Any kind of provision or prohibition needs to be spatially relevant so it's a bigger discussion. Bark mulch, fencing materials etc. all are dependent on proximity of buildings and the features they have.
- Will there be financial assistance available to property owners that end up in that new area to help create that defensible space to become compliant? (*Answer summary: Yes, OSFM has received funding for grant programs to help property owners.*)
- A major need is to develop wildfire risk reduction resources, particularly for those who can't help themselves.

Fire hardening

- Questions were raised about the need for fire hardening standards for multi-family residential, healthcare facilities, schools, or churches, or other commercial buildings. These

buildings could put our communities at risk. These community lifelines use critical facilities. We should be protecting them.

- One participant stated that in their opinion the group should focus on land use planning not hardening standards. Others disagreed and felt this should be something discussed.

Insurance and insurability

- It was stated that some of the hardest hit areas are already having issues maintaining their insurance and that this mapping could create so many more issues and unbearable cost increases for insurance.
- Concern was expressed that if a local government or municipality chooses not to adopt the map that will affect the insurance rates more than the fact the map exists. A suggestion was made about offering incentives to communities who do adopt the map and making sure that a community isn't penalized if its governing body chooses not to adopt the mapping.
- One participant pointed out that the risk classifications for all communities will be available to insurance companies and high and extreme risk classifications will be required statewide to meet new defensible space requirements and building codes.

How could the Wildfire Risk Map be used by cities and counties to guide UGB expansions?

- Oregon Home Builders Association would have substantial concerns about the fire risk map being used for Urban Growth Boundary expansions. UGB expansions are an already incredibly difficult process. They don't believe this group should get involved in this.
- One participant noted that we're in a middle of a housing crisis. The risk map, which does not include the new risk, has full counties that are covered in red. There are a lot of the cities that are trying to grow and provide housing for its citizens.
- Housing advocates think that we may be precluding any areas where UGB expansion and more housing could go because of a fire risk. This should be done with caution. Hardening standards and Firewise communities are in place to address this.
- Others voiced a different opinion, stating that from a planning perspective, UGB analysis and the preservation of Senate Bill 100 is one of the most important things we should be considering during this. Looking at higher risk areas, we do need to do an assessment during the UGB expansion process. Wildfire risk should be considered and pretending it doesn't exist doesn't serve anyone.
- Fire protection should be considered like any infrastructure. Do we have the infrastructure to protect the people?
- One stakeholder stated that sometimes the greater risk is poverty. When it comes to the UGB, there is no flexibility and people don't have a place to live and are living in their cars. The risk of lack of housing is getting equal to the catastrophic wildfire issues.
- A participant shared the opinion that the time to preclude development is at time of UGB expansion or annexation. Once you annex a property, local jurisdictions are bound by clear and objective code criteria under needed housing provisions.

Other implementation considerations to explore

- Are we going to talk about how this applies to uses and activities permanently or temporarily permitted in farm and forest zones, for example, large gatherings that are

temporary uses—several 1,000 people in a music concert in August, and a high wildfire risk area? Should we be rethinking the locations or conditions under which some things are allowed, if at all?

- Another perspective raised was that commercial activities and non-traditional activities in the farm zone are really important to the wine industry. This needs to be kept in mind if there's a desire to discuss that issue.

Climate Change

- The question was raised if there are any native forest management techniques to prevent wildfires for Oregon that have been done on the past? Are those being taken into consideration as part of the planning for our new climate change future related to wildfires. California has adopted some of those technique.
- Oregon's federally recognized tribes are being consulted on DLCD's work related to wildfire. If people know of information to share, please do! All growth considerations should be grounded in a robust analysis of forecasted climate change and alterations of wildfire risk. For example, extreme wildfires are converting forested lands to shrublands. Shrublands burn more frequently and often more intensely. A useful tool for the climate change analysis is scenario planning using a range of plausible future conditions.

6. Next steps

The meeting closed with a review of next steps and the schedule moving forward.

Links or emails shared in the chat:

- Additional comments and questions can be emailed to: sb762.rulemaking@oregon.gov
- Information on the ODF rulemaking effort can be found by visiting: <https://www.oregon.gov/odf/aboutodf/Pages/proposedlawsrules.aspx>
- Oregon Explorer (Current map for wildfire risk can be found here. This is not the final map.) https://oregonexplorer.info/topics/wildfire-risk?qt-subtopic_quicktab=0&ptopic=62
https://tools.oregonexplorer.info/OE_HtmlViewer/Index.html?viewer=oe
- KATU News report on shed destroyed after fire in Polk County <https://katu.com/news/local/shed-destroyed-after-fire-in-polk-county>
- Questions regarding the Deschutes County Westside Transect Zone: Kyle.Collins@deschutes.org

Appendix A: Stakeholder Group Meeting #2 Agenda

Wildfire Adapted Communities Stakeholder Group

Meeting 2: Incorporating the Wildfire Risk Map at a Local Level

Tuesday, May 17, 2022 | 1:00 - 3:00 pm

This meeting will be available for livestreaming and later available for viewing on the [DLCD YouTube channel](#). A link to this stream and a recording of the meeting will also be posted on the [project webpage](#). Written public comment will be taken via [comment form](#).

Agenda

Time	Topic
1:00 pm	1. Meeting Instructions & Agenda
1:05	2. Welcome & Introductions
1:10	3. Wildfire Risk Map Overview
1:30	4. Incorporating the Wildfire Risk Map at the Local Level <i>How can the Wildfire Risk Map be used to reduce wildfire risk?</i>
2:10	5. Implementation Considerations <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How could the Wildfire Risk Map be used by cities and counties to guide UGB expansion?• How could the Wildfire Risk Map inform changes to comprehensive plan maps and zoning?• What other implementation considerations should DLCD explore?
2:55	6. Next Steps
3:00 pm	Adjourn

Americans with Disabilities Act: The Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development will make reasonable accommodations upon request. Please contact Susan Millhauser, susan.millhauser@dlcd.oregon.gov, at least 72 hours before the meeting, or by TTY: Oregon Relay Services (800) 735-2900.

Appendix B: Stakeholder Participant List

Stakeholder	Geographic Area/County	Attendance
Amanda Sullivan-Astor Forest Policy Manager, Associated Oregon Loggers (AOL)	Marion	x
Chad Hawkins Assistant Chief Deputy, Office of the State Fire Marshal		x
Charisse Sydoriak	Jackson	x
Court Boice Commissioner, Curry County	Curry	x
Curt Wilson AIA	Lane	x
Dave Hunnicutt Oregon Property Owners Association	Washington	x
Devin Kesner Land Use Program Manager, Rogue Advocates	Jackson, Josephine	x
Erubiel Valladares Carranza Student, Master's in Public Administration	Polk	x
Evyan Andries Lobbyist, Oregon Wine Council	Multnomah	x
Jim McCauley Legislative Director, League of Oregon Cities		x
Jon Legarza Healthy Sustainable Communities	Jackson	
Joshua Shaklee Planning Director, Douglas County	Douglas	x
Katie Skakel NIST Center of Excellence - Center for Risk-Based Community Resilience Planning	Wasco	x
Kelly O'Neill Jr. Development Services Director, City of Sandy	Clackamas	x
Kyle Collins Associate Planner Long Range Planning Division Deschutes County Community Development	Deschutes	x
Lauren Smith Director of Government Affairs, Oregon Farm Bureau	Marion	x
Leah Rausch DLCD Citizen Involvement Advisory Committee	Lane	x
Leslie Neu University of Oregon School of Law Student	Lane	x

Stakeholder	Geographic Area/County	Attendance
Mallorie Roberts Legislative Director, Association of Oregon Counties	Marion	x
Mary Kyle McCurdy Deputy Director, 1000 Friends of Oregon	Multnomah	x
McRae Carmichael Associate Planner, Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Government	Marion	x
Melanie Stanley	Lane	x
Mike Eliason General Counsel & Director of Government Affairs, Oregon Forest & Industries Council	Clackamas	x
Pam Hardy Western Environmental Law Center	Deschutes	x
Paul Anderes Commissioner, Union County	Union	x
Rachel Serslev Senior Planner, Lane County Land Management Division	Lane	x
Robbin Roderick	Lane	
Samantha Bayer Housing Program Director, Oregon Home Builders Association	Jackson	x
Tanner Fairrington Deputy Fire Marshal, Medford Fire Department, representing Oregon Fire Marshals Association (OFMA)	Jackson	x

Appendix C: Wildfire Adapted Oregon Stakeholder Group Background

The 2021 Oregon Legislative Assembly passed Senate Bill 762, Oregon’s comprehensive wildfire preparedness and resiliency bill. The bill helps modernize and improve wildfire preparedness through three key strategies:

- ✓ Creating fire-adapted communities
- ✓ Developing safe and effective response, and
- ✓ Increasing the resiliency of Oregon's landscapes

In this bill, the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) has been tasked with making recommendations to the Wildlife Programs Advisory Council (WPAC) and Legislature on potential changes to state and local land use programs that will minimize wildfire risk by October 1, 2022. As part of this effort, the DLCD brought together the Wildfire Adapted Communities Stakeholder Group. The group was formed from community members and other experts who have been affected by wildfires to share their unique and perspectives on wildfire mitigation efforts based on their experience and understanding.

Goals and Objectives of the Wildfire Adapted Communities Stakeholder Group:

- Provide input on legislative recommendations regarding wildfire planning
- Identify and help prioritize issues and potential solutions
- Inform a report required by 2021 SB 762

Stakeholder Group Meeting Topics and Schedule

To facilitate discussion and gather feedback, a series of five Stakeholder Group meetings were organized. Each meeting includes educational information from topic experts, polling, and group discussion. Meetings are held virtually via Zoom and are also livestreamed on YouTube.

Meeting #1: Introduction to SB 762 and Wildfire Risk Map	May 3, 2022 1:00 - 4:00 pm
Meeting #2: Incorporating the Wildfire Risk Map at a Local Level	May 17, 2022 1:00 - 4:00 pm
Meeting #3: Safe Evacuation & Development Considerations	June 7, 2022 9:00 - 12:00 pm
Meeting #4: Development Considerations	June 22, 2022 9:00 - 12:00 pm
Meeting #5: Report Back	August 16, 2022 9:00 - 12:00 pm