

EMERGENCY FIRE COST COMMITTEE

September 3, 2024

In accordance with the provisions of ORS 477.455, a meeting of the Emergency Fire Cost Committee (EFCC) was held in the Tillamook Room of the Oregon Department of Forestry Headquarters in Salem and via Zoom Video Conferencing on September 3, 2024.

Committee Members Present

Brennan Garrelts, Chair
Kathryn VanNatta (via Zoom)
Erik Lease
Chris Johnson (via Zoom)

Others Present (in person)

Nancy Hirsch, EFCC Administrator
Lorna Hobbs, EFCC Finance Coordinator
Kristine Klossen, Administrative Support, ODF
Emily Sorce, Executive Support, ODF
Kyle Williams, Deputy Director Fire Operations, ODF
James Short, Chief Financial Officer, ODF
Kate Skinner, Tillamook District Forester, ODF
Ron Graham, Deputy Chief of Operations and Fire Protection, ODF

Others Present (via Zoom)

Kiel Nairns, Fire Cost Recovery Specialist, ODF
Tracy Wrolson, Protection Finance Unit Manager, ODF
Brian Pew, Eastern Oregon Area Director, ODF
Sione Filimoehala, CFO Analyst, DAS
April McDonald, Principle Legislative Analyst, Legislative Fiscal Office
Jerilee Johnson, Area Accountant, ODF
Peggy Lynch, Lobbyist, League of Women Voters
Matt Hoehna, Unit Forester, ODF
Jim Carnegie
Kay Rinker, District Business Manager, ODF
Cheri Law, Fiscal Support, ODF
Tara Sell, Deputy Chief Financial Officer, ODF
Matt Moses
Justin Tryon, Community Wildfire Forester, ODF
Eric Kranzush
Robbie Lefebvre, Asst to the Area Director, NWOA - ODF
Ole Buch, Western Lane District Forester
Suzanne Como, District Business Manager
Carolyn Mayers
Dan Quinones, District Forester, ODF
Matt Howard, Northeast Oregon District Forester, ODF
Ryan Miller, Administrative Rules Specialist, ODF
Stacy McCarter, Mitigation Program Manager, ODF
Blake Ellis, Fire operations Manager, ODF
Katrina Chinn, Contracts Officer, ODF
Dave Larson, Area Director, ODF
Jim McCauley
Rebecca Edmison, Business Manager, ODF

ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER, CHAIR COMMENTS AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Garrelts called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. on Tuesday, September 3, 2024. He and committee member Erik Lease were present in the room and Chris Johnson and Kathryn VanNatta were present via Zoom. There was a quorum. Chair Garrelts continued; this has been a very difficult fire season. There is much I could say, but I believe the single most important thing is: Thank you. Thank you to ODF Incident Management Teams, ODF staff helping behind the scenes, and thank you to all the firefighters and support staff who have engaged – ODF, Federal, contractor, and private landowners.

I want to also say thank you to Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM), their teams, task forces and the rural fire departments and all that they provide to the complete and coordinated system.

The EFCC/ODF Eligibility Policy Workgroup was established at our June meeting. Since then, the workgroup has met several times, dedicating numerous hours to this important effort. The process has been collaborative, transparent, and rigorous. We will further discuss the policy proposal under agenda item 7.

The sustainable fire funding work is ongoing. I really don't have much to update the group on from an EFCC perspective. It is a very large group, trying to tackle a very large and complex problem. We are still working through the process.

ITEM 2: APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 4, 2024, EFCC MEETING [Decision Item]

Committee member Erik Lease motioned to approve the June 4, 2024, [Emergency Fire Cost Committee Meeting Minutes](#) as emailed to committee members. Kathryn VanNatta seconded the motion. All were in favor, and none opposed, and the motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 3: FINANCIAL STATUS OF OREGON FOREST LAND PROTECTION FUND [Information Item]

The financial status of the Oregon Forest Land Protection Fund (OFLPF) was reported by Lorna Hobbs, EFCC Finance Coordinator and reviewed by the committee. Lorna noted that the report covers the Oregon Forestland Protection Fund's fiscal year 2024 ending balance and revenue and expenditure projections for fiscal year 2025.

Both reports are in the meeting packet. We will be showing the fiscal year 2025 report on screen.

FY24 as of June 30, 2024

- Ending balance on June 30th, 2024, \$10,843,915.
- Total revenues received in FY24 \$12,068,663.
- Expenditures for FY24 \$13,153,500.
- FY24 claim total estimated at \$35,378,292.

July 1, 2024, Report for FY25

- Beginning balance on July 1, 2024, was \$10,881,138.

Projected revenues for FY25

- Item #1: Assessment revenues are projected to be at \$9,437,792.
- Item #2: Harvest tax revenues projected to date total \$2,025,100.
- Item #3: The interest income projected at \$423,451. The interest rate rose to 5.3% (from 5.2%).

The estimated total revenue for FY25 is \$11,886,343.

Projected expenditures for FY25

- Item #1: Payroll and operating expenses are estimated at \$185,000 for FY25
- Item #2: The Fund's payment for FY25 severity costs for the 2024 fire season is estimated at \$3,000,000.

2024 Fire Season Draft Claims

- Current estimated net claim total for FY25 claims is \$61,788,860 as of 8/28/2024.
- \$4 million was advanced to the Douglas Forest Protective Association for the Dixon fire.
- Estimated expenditures for FY25 total is \$13,185,000.
- The estimated fund balance on June 30, 2025, is \$9,590,395.

No further questions from committee members.

ITEM 4: Previous Fiscal Claims Update *[Information Item]*

Claim Summary Update 2024

The claim estimate summary was provided in the meeting packet and shows estimated gross costs; reimbursements from other agencies, FEMA claims and responsible parties; district deductibles; net claim totals and the status of district claims.

Highlight of the estimated net cost and status for each fiscal year.

FY17

- \$9.6M Net

FY18

- \$35.2M Net

FY19

- \$40.6 M Net

FY20

- \$10.6 Net

FY21

- \$42M Net

FY22

- \$54.3M Net

FY23

- \$18.5M Net

FY24

- \$35.4M Net

End of report.

ITEM 5: WEATHER UPDATE *[Information Item]*

Teresa Alcock, TzA, presented the 2024 Fire Season Outlook:

National Significant Fire Potential Outlook:

- As of September 3, 2024, fire potential reduced down to normal.
- Beginning to see the effects of La Nina. Season slowing events in August, but fire season continues.

- Thunderstorms waning in northeast Oregon.
- High pressure returns Wednesday with significant warming, drying and low-level instability- westside included.
- Beginning Fri-Sat, thermal trough setting up, mainly dry thunderstorms across southern Oregon.
- Watching for any potential east winds this week. Low relative humidity on the westside.
- Oct - Dec fire season potential starts to taper off.
- Experienced critical fire phase in Eastern and Central Oregon.
- Monsoon moisture in basin with thunderstorm activity. Looking at potential for more thunderstorms Friday and Saturday.
- High pressure starting today, warmer conditions, low 100's by the end of the week in north Willamette Valley and The Dalles.
- Temperatures back off over the weekend and humidity drops. Warm and dry conditions the first half of the month; last half more encouraging.
- Drought Check: Severe and moderate drought.

Chair Garrelts and Kathryn VanNatta thanked TzA for the detailed report.

There were no questions from committee members.

ITEM 6: UPDATE ON STATUS OF LARGE FIRE COST COLLECTION EFFORTS *[Information Item]*

Tim Holschbach, Deputy Chief of Policy and Planning presented:

Fire Cost Collection Claims:

Cost recovery is a continual work in progress. There were no new demands since the previous report. The Department is continually engaged with the responsible parties, lawyers, and insurance companies to work out the best path forward for recovery of suppression costs. Payment plans received in June and August was approximately \$6,600. There is slow progression on recovery, but we are working with folks with the ability to pay. Included in the report are a few small fires not on a payment plan.

Closed fire cost collection:

- Pike Rd., Labor Day fire from 2020 - \$500,000 settlement
- Neil Rock - settled and payment received.

Two other fires not on the report:

- Brush creek, South Cascade District – went through a small claims process and,
- Big Stump Beach, West Oregon fire – went through restitution.

We are utilizing two pathways as the Department retooled and updated its cost recovery policy and built new tools to fully utilize our authorities and the districts are taking advantage of those to get money back into budgets.

The year-to-date received is \$2.3 million in recovery actions through the course of year.

Fire Investigation list: No new fires added. This will be updated in December.

Chair Garrelts expressed appreciation for agency's focus and progress in moving things forward through process. He recognizes this pre-dates Kiel taking over and noted good processes put in place back then and encouraging to see it continue.

There were no questions from committee members.

ITEM 7: GUIDELINES FOR ELIGILITY OF FIREFIGHTING COSTS *[Information/Decision Item]*

Chair Garrelts commented:

I am pleased we have a draft policy package for the committee to review. This is a crucial step in advancing the MGO's recommendations as it seeks to streamline what was a complex set of standards and policies down to a clean 8-page document. To ensure transparency and avoid any surprises for key leadership, I would like to highlight both Nancy and I, along with ODF leadership, have been in contact with both legislative Fiscal Office and Legislative Revenue Office *** said in meeting but later corrected to DAS CFO, for the record*** to discuss draft concepts. I have reached out to BOF Chair Kelly to notify him as well.

Chair Garrelts asked Nancy Hirsch to provide an overview of the Draft Eligibility Policy, with any feedback from employees, Draft Administrative Rule changes, an estimated fiscal impact and recommendation.

Nancy Hirsch, Emergency Fire Cost Committee Administrator presented:

Good morning, Chair Garrelts and members of the committee. Brennan has outlined several topics for me to provide an overview on. All will be information items except the Draft Administrative rule changes. I will be making a recommendation to you on the rule changes that will require a decision by the committee to proceed with public comment at the end of this agenda item.

There are four documents in your meeting material that relate to this agenda item – a staff report and three attachments.

Brennan has covered what occurred in June and highlighted the makeup of the workgroup. Principles that guided our work are in staff report page 1.

The workgroup included:

- EFCC Chair and Staff
- ODF Business Services leadership – CFO, Protection Finance Unit and Financial Reporting Manager
- ODF Deputy Director Fire Operations and the Protection Policy Deputy Chief
- Two District Foresters and one District Manager. Each area was represented.

The workgroup met four times.

- June 10 and 17, July 16 and August 29.

An Overview of the Eligibility Policy is documented in Attachment A and included in the summary that it:

- Eliminates the need to track type 3 fires for eligibility,
- Eliminates the need to track in-fire season versus out of fire season and dispatch card requirements related to resources responding,
- Defines all statistical and approved threat fires as emergency fire cost (EFC) eligible,
- Requires resource orders for all resources for EFC eligibility.

Many of these changes decomplex current standards. This proposal moves district budgeted operational personnel, equipment and support costs to emergency fire costs. This is likely the largest shift from district to emergency fire costs and will improve accounting for the true cost of the fires.

This proposal changes where certain administrative and management overtime was previously paid for by emergency fire costs to now the District or a Statewide Funding Source (excluding the OFLPF) will have to cover those costs when they are in-district on in-district fires.

Repair work must be documented in an approved incident action plan or repair plan. The acreage deductible is maintained. The daily deductible shifts to an incentive, so instead of districts paying the first \$25,000, these costs move to emergency fire costs. If emergency fire costs exceed \$25,000, then the

district pays the deductible. The helicopter deductible is eliminated, and a helicopter credit is added as an incentive.

Policy standards were reduced from 31 pages to 8. The proposed policy if approved, will go into effect January 1, 2025.

Initial feedback on proposed changes

Last week we met with District and Association leadership and their key staff to gain feedback on what we are proposing. We had about 50 employees attend, and most districts/associations were represented. In general, their feedback included:

- Appreciation to modernized standards and many questions were clarifying in nature.
- Some questions and concerns of trainees on type 3 fires not being eligible, this is consistent with current standards.
- Reaffirmed process of approving threat fires through an email or phone to EFCC administrator and follow up with documentation to file.
- Some concern remains with administrative and management OT being paid for by districts.
 - A follow-up meeting is planned with District managers and District foresters for a more in-depth discussion including the fiscal analysis.
- Proposal surrounding repair definition needs further work to add more examples.
- Feedback for \$25,000 per day language is confusing and we had request to do a five-year analysis.
 - We have improved language in the version provided today and we do have a plan for further analysis on the five-year average.
- Included clarification on the helicopter credit when more than one district/association funds it and when claim does not exceed the credit.

We will continue to provide further feedback as received.

The next document I will speak to is the proposed rule modifications to Chapter 629, Division 165 (Attachments B [track change] and C [clean]).

In summary, the proposed amended administrative rule will serve to:

- Clarify the definitions/redefine emergency fire and emergency fire costs.
- Eliminate emergency fire examples that are no longer needed.
- Shift the current \$25,000 day/per fire deductible to an incentive model that aligns with the current Oregon Department of Forestry operation approach.
- Clarify a reference document.

Estimated fiscal impact on the proposed rule modifications. The proposal addresses recommendations made to ODF by MGO, an independent 3rd party contractor that reviewed ODF's financial processes.

Proposed amended administrative rules ensure the true cost of wildland suppression costs are accurately accounted for, tracked, reported and paid for at the statewide level.

Previously an average of approximately \$3.2 million of wildfire suppression cost were embedded in readiness, paid for by private and public landowners and the General Fund at the local level.

This proposal moves these costs to private and some public landowners and the General Fund at the statewide level where the rest of these costs are already accounted for. A portion of the costs that are

General Fund are simply moving from being paid for through the biennial budget to the emergency fire cost funding.

The cost moved does not increase any OFLPP revenue fees. This change results in increased certainty, in-district readiness budgeting and expenditures at the local level and improves certainty in the Department of Forestry fiscal year fire budgets.

Nancy then recommended that the EFCC direct the EFCC Administrator to proceed with the public hearing process and return in November for a special EFCC meeting to consider adopting the final rule language for Chapter 629, Division 165.

Chair Garrelts opened comment from ODF staff.

James Short commented: The agency supports these new eligibility guidelines and thanked the workgroup for excellent work. New guidelines continue the implementation of the MGO recommendations.

No other questions from committee members

Motion was made to approve recommendation as presented.

Kathryn VanNatta made the motion and stated, she thoroughly read the rules and found some English that was not agreed with and will provide further comments later. She continued, that the meeting that Nancy mentioned does need to take place with staff and District Foresters as part of the ongoing rule making process and therefore made the motion that EFCC direct the EFCC Administrator to proceed with the public hearing process and return in November with final rule language for chapters 629 division 165 and in addition to hold a meeting that the EFCC Administrator mentioned with Forestry staff and report back to the committee on the results. The motion was understood by all, Erik Lease seconded the motion, and all were in favor, and none opposed, and the motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 8: ADMINISTRATIVE BRANCH REPORT [Information Item]

State Forester Cal Mukumoto said he was pleased with the move to decomplex.

ODF Financial report:

James Short, ODF Chief Financial Officer gave the ODF Financial report:

Fire Season Impact on Cash

- Gross Fire Costs - \$214.4 million
- Net Cost - \$63.8 million
 - \$10 million reimbursed from OFLPP
 - \$53.8 million reimbursed from General Fund
- Other Agency Cost Recoveries - \$95.8 million
- FEMA Cost Recoveries - \$52.8 million
- ODF \$148.6 million carry costs
 - 2–3-year reimbursement from USFS/BLM/FEMA

As the agency entered fire season 2024 the cash and general fund available July 1, 2024 was:

- Cash - \$62.4 million
- General Fund - \$24.9 million
- Available Resources - \$87.3 million
- As of August 30, 2024,
 - \$27.4 million in available resources.
 - Cash - \$22.3 million
 - General Fund - \$5.1 million

ODF is working closely with the Legislature, Chief Financial Office, Legislative Fiscal Office and Governor's Office to ensure financial obligations are met.

Accounts Payable

- \$34.4 million for large fire costs currently paid
- Next 120 days:
 - \$174.5 million in Large Fire Disbursements to pay out
 - \$20.0 million in Standard Operating costs.

Short-Term Mitigation

- All vendor payments will be at the 45 days
- Delay payments to State Agencies and Federal partners
- DAS will pay payroll
- Exploring option of advance payments from USFS, BLM and FEMA, but revenue potentially 6 months out.
- ODF has requested \$47.0 million from the Emergency Board in September.
 - Severity Request - \$7.4 million
 - Large Fire Request - \$40.0 million

Long-Term Solution

- Wildfire Funding Workgroup

In conclusion James stated, in preparation for the Emergency Board in December we will continue to deploy and adjust our financial strategies as needed to inform a December Emergency Board request. Likely that additional funding will be requested through a budget bill during the next legislative session to carry the agency's wildfire costs through the remainder of the biennium.

End of report.

There were no questions from committee members.

Strategic Investments

Tracy Wrolson, ODF Protection Unit Finance Manager reported the OFLPF 2020 strategic investments beginning balance at just over \$1.5 million and budgeted through June 30, 2024. Dollars spent to date total \$599,237, for a remaining project balance of \$862,762. Handouts show detail per project from detection cameras, guard stations, trailers all of which were approved projects. There is an undistributed amount of \$57,376. The progress report is updated and included in the handout for each project. With the current state of fire season, projects are experiencing some delay but looking at Fall to complete projects.

Questions on Strategic Investments:

Kathryn VanNatta commented: Many of the strategic investments are east of the cascades. Were we able to use any of those this fire season?

Brian Pew, Area Director for Eastern Oregon: Thanked the committee for allocations of funds. We have many success stories. The Central Oregon District grapple dozer has been used multiple times and is currently in use. The communication trailers were used many times on fires such as Shoefly in Central Oregon and Town Gulch and Winding Waters in NEO. Klamath Lake District also used a communication trailer at the helibase.

Cameras funded by the committee are in motion. The Chiloquin Guard Station has been in use all year to house fire fighters assisting in fire response readiness. Without these investments we would not have been as successful with fire response.

Progress reports are located at the bottom of the report which includes current in-depth field activity.

Chair Garrelts commented and requested to see some written success stories presented at the January or March meetings including data points on success of investments.

Brian Pew: Agreed that they would be good to share.

Kathryn VanNatta expressed appreciation for how the EFCC investments assisted with fire season.

Tracy Wrolson: We continue to try and spend the funds as appropriately as possible.

FEMA Update:

Large fires have wrapped up. \$2.3 million in suppression claims to receive within the next 6 months. \$23 million claim for the Golden Fire in Klamath is in the audit process. Approximately \$57 million for 2024 to go through the audit process. The Copperfield fire is FEMA eligible. Status of claims is provided in the meeting material showing outstanding totals.

There were no questions from committee members.

Severity Update:

Severity budget is \$13.5. Current expenditures are at \$16.4 million. Cost recovery is tremendous at 54%. There is \$7.6 million net severity. Helicopters and employees are still on contract.

There were no questions from committee members.

Kyle Williams commented they are preparing for the Board of Forestry (BOF) meeting. Tim Holschbach will discuss Hazard Maps. Derek Wheeler and Derek Gasperini have put in tremendous work on the maps. Topics will include State Forest workload, and significant projects in progress. Importance of long-term solutions and the challenges at hand. The next full wildfire funding workgroup will meet in October in Pendleton. In November, we expect to provide information to the legislature. He expressed his appreciation for the EFCC work on the eligibility policy.

Cal Mukumoto commented: This year's cooperation within the agency has been great. As Kyle said, we continue to do other work, and it all needs to continue to advance Forestry. Thanks for EFCC in simplifying our lives.

No other comments or questions.

Brennan Garrelts noted – need to clean up on agenda item 7; it was DAS CFO we met with not Legislative Revenue.

ITEM 9: PROTECTION DIVISION REPORT *[Information Item]*

Ron Graham, Deputy Chief of Operations presented:

Things took a shift over the weekend after a small reprieve from what has already been a dynamic and challenging fire season. There were two team deployments over the weekend in the last 48 hours. Employing measures used back in July and working closely with partners in the NW Compact and the states we have agreements with, as well as working through the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) to get much needed resources. The system NASF has put in place with their Fire Director, and other regional directors was a daily call which has now shifted to three days a week, a check in call accessing all the states to help prioritize resources. For much of that time Washington and Oregon were the priority, shifting then to Idaho now back to Oregon this week. Blake Ellis is actively working that system, with the Salem Coordination center trying to get resources for Copperfield and Shoefly to support teams there.

Following are discussion items to be presented at the BOF meeting:

- Fire season outlook:

- Earlier predictions of a moderate fire season took a turn quickly with lightening events and high heat which ultimately led to larger fires, beginning around the July 4th weekend.
- 11 FEMA fires including Copperfield.
 - Tracy Wrolson quoted around \$500,000 in prepositioning claims due to use of severity resources on FEMA fires as well.
 - Tim has navigated well with FEMA, and we have been responsive as several fires merged.
- Current success rate of fire suppression.
 - Rate at 10 acres or less – currently at 94%, close to the average of 95-96%. Looking at typical statistics.
 - Sitting at approximately fifty percent of fires taking place on ODF protection.
 - First year ODF protection of BLM lands is not classified as stat fire for ODF.
 - It is a stat fire for BLM if point of origin is on BLM.
 - Effectively reduced our stat fire numbers.
 - First year to start tracking impacts.
 - Statewide approaching 200,000 acres of ODF direct protection burned out of 1.5 million acres statewide.
- Comparison of fire season in terms of acres burned in last 5 years.
 - 2020 the highest, followed by year 2021, then 2024 shaping up to be #3 on list as far as acres burned.
 - Looking at acres burned by decade and how the average is going up we will be well over 125,000 average acres burned with this fire season.
- Substantial year for IMT team deployments.
 - North Carolina team brought in as ODF teams were all deployed
 - Would like to see each team exercised once a year.
- Labor Day event, notably Shoefly and Copperfield fires and initial attack success.
- Parrish Creek Complex in John Day which potentially could have been large fire.
- Two fires, Wild Horse and Indian Hollow fires, both around 100-acre fires could have been substantial.
 - Challenging logistics, remote and long drive times to get access to them.
 - Utilized several out of state partner and Alaska strike teams.
- On the Silver Falls fire in West Oregon, the severity aircraft played big part with small single engine scoopers.
- Lee Falls fire near Forest Grove had potential to be large as well for Northwest Oregon.
- Oregon Military Department and National Guard contribution was substantial with Medivac aircraft, deployed for 60 days straight and 7 20-person hand crews deployed between the Falls and Diamond Complex as well.
- Severity program costs and good cost recovery.
 - Over our 10-yr average in flight hours for program as of last week.
 - Gross cost over \$16.0 million.
 - Initially set up working contract estimates over \$13.0 million with a \$10.0 million allocation.
- 54% recovery has been good this year. With FEMA supporting our partners in keeping those fires small in neighboring jurisdictions.
- Multi mission aircraft down in number of detections due to mechanical issues.
 - Challenges include foreign made airframe and availability of parts.
 - Tried to procure other aircraft with some success between other states' contracts.

- Safety.
 - Few incidents but overall numbers of reported injuries are down.
 - Small uptick in contractor injuries.
 - Will analyze possible trends. Fortunately, nothing critical as far as injuries.
- Weather reprieve and current weather as well as downturn in weather and season ending events.

Chair Garrelts commented: Over the last decade, teams have struggled with filling the middle management overhead positions. ODF had made effort to help build capacity, single resource bosses, strike team leaders, task force leaders, have you seen any reprieve of this issue? Historic season where system is tapped.

Ron Graham responded: Use of trainees has been high this year. We questioned if they should be used in qualified positions when we have critical shortages if they are qualified. At some point in time, we saw middle management overhead numbers unable to fill, nationally up in the 500 range. Critical shortages continue to be the trend nationally.

BLM Update

The BLM agreement goes into effect July 1, 2024. Challenging year. Should lead to good AAR this off season to start untangling new business practices to be able to access and record stat fires on BLM land when point of origin was theirs. Changes in financial tracking and cost shares. The agreement took a while to get implemented and was signed just before fire season started. There was not much time to train and discuss implementation. There should be good feedback and lessons learned. Folks did the best they could given a complex situation.

Geoboard

Not much time to meet as a board. Scaling back the Geo Board as restructuring is needed due to recent promotions, retirements as well as division and program leadership changes. We are going back to quarterly meetings. Still have an aggressive workplan with succession management project. The next Geo board meeting is in December where report outs will be from incident commanders on how fire season went from a team perspective. In accordance with changes going on with Police and Fire and other updates we start IMT recruitment in September with a goal of primary draft rosters completed by January. We expect follow-up recruitments to fill in all the holes. On a related note, the upcoming Fall Complex Incident Management Course is in Arizona though we are not sending a full team currently. We will send a full team when it is in the immediate area.

Chair Garrelts commented: Regarding the BLM agreement, is there any flavor of the conversations that have taken place this season recognizing what you described of full field implementation?

Kyle Williams responded: Mostly positive centered around finance procurement who's on first, paying agent vs. nonpaying agent, how we implement the language in the agreement. Learning on Salt Creek to Rons point, we signed that agreement June 30th and Salt creek launched on July 7th. Other ones are processes that will help us be more successful across the board specifically dispatch and implementation of new FireWeb technology that we continue to fine tune. Operationally we have received good feedback.

Chair Garrelts mentioned: Just a reminder that FireWeb was a strategic investment from this committee and shout out to Douglas Forest Protective Association (DFPA) who started beta testing on it earlier before the strategic investment request. Their leadership led to a good implementation that is working between the agencies.

Kathryn VanNatta commented: Heartfelt thank you to the Protection Division for all the hard work and dedication, coordination with local officials and information put out to folks affected by the fire. This is difficult work; I see some issues that can be improved upon and will discuss at a later time, but I am proud to work with you all.

Brian Pew commented: Clarification on the report that states Eastern Oregon communication trailers showing as “in progress” as we are using trailers currently. Another successful story is the Bly Guard Station. [A photo was shared on screen.] The Committee allocated \$300,000. They are ready to put in a helicopter pad and other improvements and plan to begin using it next year. The ODF agreement with the landowner will be signed within the month and the strategic investment money will then be spent. This project will be completed next October.

Chair Garrelts responded: Another feather in the cap of ODF’s ability to think outside the box and come up with creative solutions that lean toward success. Good to see the photos and continued progress.

Chair Garrelts continued: Before we move to agenda item #10, After this report it will be public comment. Feel free to use the raised hand function or enter a comment into the chat.

ITEM 10: EFCC ADMINISTRATOR REPORT *[Information Item]*

Nancy Hirsch, EFCC Administrator presented:

Lorna mentioned the open insurance claim from fire season 2021. If ODF wants to push hard on it, there is about \$2-\$3M left there with a couple pending recoveries.

Appreciate committee support to continue policy work. Look forward to the public hearing process and will continue conversations with district and association employees and their leadership. Hope to bring a solid product that we can share and is supported statewide along with the final draft policy and rules at an all-virtual meeting on November 6, 2024. We will get that calendar invite out.

ITEM 11: PUBLIC COMMENT / GOOD OF THE ORDER

Chair Garrelts commented: No hands raised for comment or comments in chat. Jan 7, 2025 is the next EFCC meeting.

Eric Kranzush commented that we all play a large role in fire protection in Oregon. Thank you to the staff and committee for all the work supporting and addressing the myriads of financial and operational challenges the Department is facing across the state regarding fire protection. Keep up the good work.

There being no further business before the committee, Chair Garrelts adjourned the meeting at 11:43p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Emergency Fire Cost Committee will be held at **10:00 a.m.** on **Tuesday, January 7, 2025**, at the Oregon Department of Forestry Headquarters in Salem and via Zoom Video Conferencing.

Minutes drafted by: Kris Klossen

Minutes reviewed by: Nancy Hirsch, and Lorna Hobbs