



Wildfire Programs Advisory Council – Meeting

Friday January 19, 2024

The complete Wildfire Programs Advisory Council can be viewed at the following website and serves as the official public meeting record: <https://www.oregon.gov/gov/policies/Pages/wildfire-programs-council.aspx>

Welcome

Chair Hunnicutt

Chair Hunnicutt welcomed the council to the meeting and roll was taken of present council members. The chair reviewed meeting etiquette. The meeting summary of the December 18, 2023 council meeting was approved.

Legislative updates

Doug Grafe

Director Doug Grafe updated the council on wildfire related concepts that were being considered for the upcoming legislative session. There are three policy concepts and four funding concepts and everything is subject to change before the end of the legislative session. In overview, the funding mechanisms included in these LCs are responsive to the council's recommendations in its annual reports.

- LC 127 – Addresses several wildfire programs including prescribed fire liability, the home hardening grant program, smoke preparedness and response fund.
- LC 102 – Funding concept that that Senator Steiner talked to the council about at its last meeting.
- LC 81 – Creates a neighborhood protection grant program focusing on community risk reduction.
- LC 208 – Adjustment bill to continue to facilitate the transition of the State Fire Marshal to its own agency.
- LC 296 – makes changes to the timber harvest tax.
- LC 22 & 23 – If 22 moves, then 23 goes. LC 22 is a referral to the voters to modify property taxes to fund public safety in the state. LC 23 is the statutory implementation of LC 22 if it should be approved by the voters.

Senator Golden addressed the council and provided additional context for the intent and effect of some of the wildfire bills.

Landscape Resiliency Discussion (Federal Partners)

All, USFS, BLM

Chair Hunnicutt introduced the agenda item and the presenters from the US Forest Service and the Federal Bureau of Land Management and handed the discussion off to Director Grafe.

Director Grafe recognized the expertise that exists on the council and thanked the representatives of USFS and BLM for joining before starting the landscape resiliency presentation ([link](#)). The presentation touched on the goals and challenges involved with the long term planning for landscape resiliency. Director Grafe talked about the different approaches to landscape resiliency in different areas of the state. Director Grafe introduced Nathan Beckman who gave additional context on the landscape resiliency strategy.

Director Grafe introduced Shasta Ferranto from the US forestry Service who talked about the implementation of the federal Wildfire Crisis Strategy in the Pacific Northwest Region. Ferranto talked about the origin of the Wildfire Crisis Strategy and the goals of the program as well as the implementation steps that the program goes through in implementing it.

Director Grafe introduced Director Barry Bushue and James Dickenson from the BLM to discuss that agency's efforts towards landscape resiliency. Director Bushue made some opening remarks on the BLM's commitment to landscape resiliency before Dickenson took over the presentation. Dickenson talked about the ability to restoring ecosystems along side increasing landscape resiliency. He discussed the recent history of fire impact on BLM land.

Director Grafe and Chair Hunnicutt thanked the speakers and opened the discussion to the council for questions. The discussion touched on the priorities and challenges that the federal agencies faced in addressing wildfire risk on the landscape.

Oregon Wildfire Hazard Map, Update

ODF, Derrick Wheeler

Director Grafe introduced Derrick Wheeler from the Oregon Department of Forestry to give the council an update on the status of the wildfire hazard map. Wheeler gave some background on the lead up to where we are now in the development of the hazard map and the purpose of the hazard map. He reviewed some of the changes that came out of senate bill 80 in the 2023 legislative session and the take aways from the public engagement process. Tim Holschbach gave a summary of the next steps in developing the hazard map including the rulemaking advisory committee meetings and additional public engagement.

The discussion was opened for questions from the council. Council members had feedback and suggestions on the best way for the mapping process to move forward successfully. In response to a question, Tim Holschbach gave a summary of the projected timeline for the development and adoption of the hazard map.

Public CommentAll

The chair opened the meeting to public comment, the chair reiterated the council's desire to be open for public comment in this meeting and going forward.

Bob Hart gave comment to the council. He talked about concerns on funding as well as creating a central clearinghouse for wildfire response. He also emphasized the need for public engagement throughout the map development.

There was a question from the council on the use of the data from the wildfire map by insurance companies and whether it was possible for an insurance company to get around the prohibition on using the state's mapping data by taking the data and using it as an input into the company's own maps. Insurance Commissioner Andrew Stolfi gave a brief response, stating that a more detailed response could be developed. He stated that only the conclusions were made public or will be made public, the underlying data was not public.

Wrap UpChair Hunnicutt

The chair thanked the council and stated that the next meeting would be on April 12, 2024. He also advised the council that there may need to be an interim meeting between the April and July meetings.
