



OREGON FIRE SERVICE CAPACITY PROGRAM **BACKGROUND & OBJECTIVES**

BACKGROUND

Oregon has experienced an increase in wildfire and outdoor fires affecting communities across the state over the last few decades. At the same time, capacity within the Oregon fire service has decreased. Many communities across the state depend on volunteers to protect their communities.

In 2021, the Oregon legislature passed Senate Bill 762, which allocated funding the Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM) to modernize and boost capacity within the Oregon fire service and the Oregon Fire Mutual Aid System (OFMAS). As part of a multi-pronged approach to give communities the tools and capacity to respond and prevent human caused fires, the OSFM launched a robust grants program.

In summer of 2022, the Wildfire Season Staffing Grant was launched. This investment brought on additional paid firefighters across Oregon to boost capacity. The grant exceeded the OSFM's goal of keeping fires small and away from communities. This one-time funding also provided resources for local fire agencies to respond to other calls as well, decreasing response times and ultimately saving lives.

As a companion to the 2022 Wildfire Season Staffing Grant, and to offer a more sustained approach, the OSFM launched the 2023 Oregon Fire Service Capacity Program and opened applications to the fire service in November 2022.

OBJECTIVES

The goal of the 2023 Oregon Fire Service Capacity Program is to provide Oregon fire agencies resources to augment firefighting and fire prevention staffing. These agencies protect Oregon communities and play a pivotal role in the prevention and suppression of wildfires. This grant program is intended for small to medium Oregon fire agencies to encourage an increase of permanent local firefighters and fire prevention staffing.

Taking a two-pronged approach, this program will boost response capacity within communities and add addition capacity to help Oregonians prevent human caused fires through education and outreach.