



State of Oregon Advancing Wildfire Protection

Office of Governor Tina Kotek





State of Oregon
Wildfire Programs Director - Report 16
Advancing Wildfire Protection in Oregon

Contents

| | |
|--|---|
| Executive Summary | 4 |
| Duties of th Wildfire Programs Director | 5 |
| Roles of the Wildfire Programs Advisory Council..... | 5 |
| Wildfire Programs Implementation Status | 6 |

Implementation Agencies

- Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS)
- Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
- Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS)
- Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD)
- Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC)
- Office of Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM)
- Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF)
- Oregon Department of Emergency Management (ODEM)
- Oregon Health Authority (OHA)
- Oregon State University (OSU)
- Public Utility Commission (PUC)
- Wildfire Programs Advisory Council (WPAC)

Executive Summary

As required by law, this implementation status report is produced by the Wildfire Programs Director every two months for the Governor, the Presiding Officers of the Oregon Legislature, and the chairs of relevant legislative committees.

Wildfire Program Highlights

The Wildfire Programs are guided by the 19-member citizen council: [Wildfire Programs Advisory Council](#) (WPAC). The WPAC is appointed by the Presiding Officers and September 2024 marks the first rotation to half of the membership on this Council. The Wildfire Programs Director is currently working with Presiding Officers' staff to assist in these transitions.

Please note updates to the "Wildfire Programs Implementation Status" section of the report which highlights updated timelines for the state's Wildfire Hazard Map and identifies possible adjustments to baseline fire protection standard requirements in law.

The remaining portion of the executive summary will be dedicated to current wildfire activity. 2024 fire season is shaping up to be one of the most challenging fire seasons in Oregon's history.

To-date, 1000 wildfires across Oregon have burned over 1.2 million acres. The state's 10-year average for the full fire season is approximately 2000 wildfires for 640,000 acres. We have a long wildfire season ahead of us. Details on today's wildfires can be tracked at: [Wildfires Dashboard \(arcgis.com\)](#). The morning briefings report on Northwest Coordination Centers website have been as complex as we have seen in Oregon's history: [Northwest Coordination Center](#)

To-date we have lost 29 primary residences and 70 structures on wildfires. A state declaration of emergency has been issued for wildfire, providing access to the National Guard firefighting resources and making available state to state agreement for additional fire protection resources. The State's Emergency Coordination center has



been stood up to include daily calls with all County and Tribal emergency managers, all State wildfire response and supporting agencies and other partners. Eight conflagrations have been initiated by the Governor to support fires immediately threatening our population centers and FEMA has approved seven Oregon fires as eligible for Fire Management Assistance Grants.

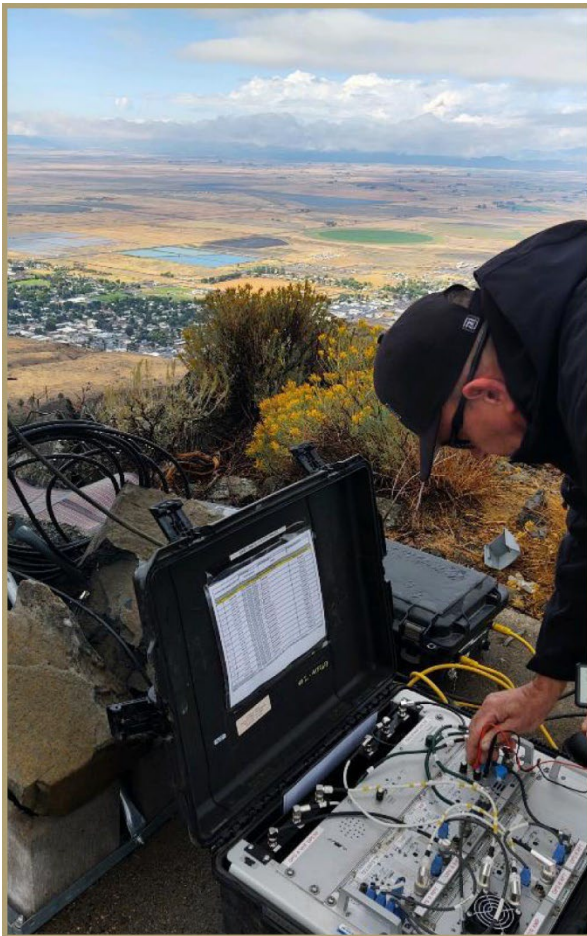
Our thoughts remain with the family of fire fighter James Maxwell, an Idaho resident, who tragically lost his life while piloting a single engine air tanker (SEAT) on the Falls Fire located near Seneca OR. The SEAT went missing the evening of July 25 and was recovered by Grant and Harney County sheriff's search and rescue team and personnel assigned to the fire on the morning of July 26.

Parallel to addressing the immediate readiness and response needs for wildfire, the State is preparing for the recovery effort where losses are currently untold. August and September have historically been two of Oregon's most challenging months of wildfire; we anticipate losses from wildfire to expand over this time.

In summary, Oregon is once again experiencing a historic wildfire season with tremendous losses accumulating. Gross suppression costs alone, have exceeded \$70 million to-date. To chart a path forward to address Oregon's wildfire challenges, the Wildfire Programs were established in 2021 by the Oregon Legislature. The WPAC's annual report is due to the legislature and the Governor in October, and will no doubt shed light on the important steps forward we must consider as a state in preparing for these increasingly complex wildfire issues.

Duties of the Wildfire Programs Director

- Oversee implementation of the Wildfire Programs.
- Coordinate activities across all wildfire implementation agencies.
- Ensure compliance with deadlines.
- Monitor and assess the equity of any financial impacts from implementation activities on local jurisdictions.
- Supervise council staff and develop director reports every two months.
- Explore current and future opportunities to reduce wildfire risk.



Roles of the Wildfire Programs Advisory Council

- Advise and assist the Wildfire Programs Director.
- Monitor Wildfire Programs implementation and evaluate agency reports.
- Advise on changes necessary to dramatically reduce wildfire risk and ensure regional defensible space, building codes and land use applications are appropriate.
- Strengthen intergovernmental and multiparty collaboration including government, stakeholders and the public.
- Assess how Oregon's wildfire risk map may inform building codes and land use laws, rules and decisions in a regionally appropriate manner.
- Assess the application of defensible space requirements to vineyards, crops and other cultivated vegetation.
- Review the findings and recommendations in the DLCD's October 2022 report and make additional recommendations to land use planning, local comprehensive plans, and zoning codes to minimize wildfire risk.
- Report every October to the Governor and appropriate committees or interim committees of the Oregon Legislative Assembly.

Wildfire Programs Implementation Status

2024

Reporting requirement Other implementation requirements.

| Date | Responsible Party | Required Action | Implementation Status |
|------------------|-------------------|--|---|
| Oct. 1 | OSU / ODF | Final Map announced and letters are distributed to high hazard parcels in the Wildland Urban Interface. This also initiates an appeals process that is anticipated to run through the end of the year. | (On Track) Draft Map was released on July 18 th , 2024, with the Agencies accepting public comment through August 18 at: hazardmap@odf.oregon.gov Oregon Statewide Wildfire Hazard Map |
| Aug. 1 (approx.) | OSFM | Biannual report to wildfire legislative committees/Director/Council on defensible space | (On Track) To visit existing reports: Oregon State Fire Marshal |
| October | WPAC | Annual report to Governor/relevant legislative committees | (On Track) |

2025

Reporting requirement Other implementation requirements.

| Date | Responsible Party | Required Action | Implementation Status |
|------------------|-------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Feb. 1 (approx.) | OSFM | Biannual report to wildfire legislative committees/Director/Council on defensible space | (On Track) |
| Aug. 1 (approx.) | OSFM | Biannual report to wildfire legislative committees/Director/Council on defensible space | (On Track) |
| October | WPAC | Annual report to Governor/relevant legislative committees | (On Track) |

2026

Reporting requirement
 Other implementation requirements.

| Date | Responsible Party | Required Action | Implementation Status |
|------------------|-------------------|--|--|
| Jan. 1 | Counties | Required to ensure that all lands within the county that are outside of forest protection districts and susceptible to wildfire have baseline level or higher of wildfire protection | (Potential Adjustments) Counties, ODF and OSFM are considering proposals to adjust this section of the law given the modernization for fire protection since the passage of SB 762 (2021). |
| Feb. 1 (approx.) | OSFM | Biannual report to wildfire legislative committees/Director/Council on defensible space | (On Track) |
| Aug. 1 (approx.) | OSFM | Biannual report to wildfire legislative committees/Director/Council on defensible space | (On Track) |
| October | WPAC | Annual report to Governor/relevant legislative committees | (On Track) |

Note: OSFM biannual defensible space reporting requirement and WPAC reporting requirements do not sunset.

Thank you.

The Wildfire Programs Director's Report is made possible by the dogged leadership of Oregonians across the state, the Legislature, and the Governor's office, working together to address the rising risk of catastrophic wildfire in Oregon.



Governor Tina Kotek Wildfire Program

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