



OREGON OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

2015 Oregon Wildfires Fact Sheet

Overview: Wildfires cause damage to life and property with extreme impacts to the economy. This year, continuing drought conditions in southern, eastern and central Oregon have led to greater risk of wildfires. The National Weather Service is predicting a hotter, drier summer with a potential early start to wildfire season. Lightning strikes and human activity have the greatest potential to ignite wildfires. It is difficult to predict when and where a wildfire will occur, but organizations throughout Oregon are working together to mitigate the risk.

Types of Fires:

- Wildland-Urban Interface Fires - Where urban property and natural fuels are mixed
- Forest Fires - Burn in timber and associated fuels and can be difficult and costly to suppress
- Range Fires - Burn across open lands lacking timber. Grass and shrub fuels can carry fire rapidly
- Agricultural Fires - Burn in areas where primary fuels are flammable cultivated crops

Emergency Support Functions:

State of Oregon ESF Structure Emergency Support Functions are groupings of critical functions or capabilities into an organizational structure. OEM uses the following expanded 18 ESF structure:	ESF 1 – Transportation	ESF 10 – Hazardous Materials	
	ESF 2 – Communications	ESF 11 – Food and Water	
	ESF 3 – Public Works	ESF 12 – Energy	
	ESF 4 – Firefighting	ESF 13 – Military Support	
	ESF 5 – Information and Planning	ESF 14 – Public Information	
	ESF 6 – Mass Care	ESF 15 – Volunteers and Donations	
	ESF 7 – Resource Support	ESF 16 – Law Enforcement	
	ESF 8 – Health and Medical	ESF 17 – Agriculture and Animal Protection	
	ESF 9 – Search and Rescue	ESF 18 – Business and Industry	

Roles, Responsibilities and Authorities:

- **Local Jurisdictions** – Fire, police, and emergency management officials are first on scene in urban interface areas providing initial response and coordination for public safety.
- **Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) (ESF 4)** - protects 16 million acres of forestland, including privately owned lands. ODF also protects 2.8 million acres of federal Bureau of Land Management lands in western Oregon. ODF is responsible for prevention and suppression of forest fires and oversees all fire operations within Oregon, regardless of the responsible organization.
- **Governor’s Office** – the Governor (via ORS 401.165) may declare an emergency based on fire danger (e.g. red flag warnings, wind, thunderstorms, etc.). Declarations may be statewide or specify geographic areas and authorizes use of state resources and personnel for fire management. The Conflagration Act is also directed by the Governor allowing the Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM) to mobilize structural firefighting resources when a significant number of structures or lives are threatened.
- **Oregon Office of Emergency Management (OEM) (ESF 5)** – is responsible for requesting declarations by the Governor (via ORS 401.062). OEM maintains the state’s Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) and helps coordinate the efforts of state agencies, as well as providing support and state agency assistance to impacted local and tribal jurisdictions.
- **Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM) (ESF 4)** – manages and coordinates Oregon’s structural firefighting activities by mobilizing firefighting resources to incidents beyond local fire service capabilities to protect life, property, and the environment. OSFM works with ODF pursuant to the Conflagration Act.

- **Oregon Military Department (OMD) / Oregon National Guard (ORNG) (ESF 13)** – supports ODF firefighting efforts with personnel and equipment when requested (via activation of OPLAN SMOKEY).
- **Oregon Health Authority (OHA) (ESF 8)** – develops strategies related to air quality and self-protective measures (community/population health).
- **Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) (ESF 8)** – monitors air quality/environmental health.
- **United States Forest Service (USFS)** – protects nearly 15.7 million acres of land within Oregon.
- **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)** - protects about 13.2 million acres in Oregon; ODF protects BLM-owned lands in western Oregon.
- **Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)** – protects 644,000 acres on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation.
- **National Park Service (NPS)** – protects 300,000 acres across Crater Lake National Park, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, and Oregon Caves National Monument.
- **US Fish and Wildlife Service (USF&WS)** – protects 365,000 acres across the Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge and Malheur National Wildlife Refuge.

Coordination and Resource Management: Fires are often on land owned by more than one agency and there is close coordination as well as mutual aid agreements and cooperative reimbursement to share firefighting resources. The **Northwest Interagency Coordination Center (NWCC)** located in Portland is the focal point for interagency resource coordination, logistics support, aviation support and predictive services for all state and federal agencies involved in wildland fire management and suppression in the region.

Cost of Fighting Fires and Funding Options: The cost of wildfires is very high in Oregon. During 2014, Oregon's large fires exceeded \$75 million. Different mechanisms that cover the costs of wildfires in Oregon, including the following:

- **Oregon State Budget** – There are limited General Funds for wildfire suppression.
- **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAGs)** – requests must be submitted by ODF while an uncontrolled fire is burning threatening homes. If approved, an FMAG declaration can provide financial assistance for local, tribal and state government agencies for eligible fire suppression and response activities, with a required cost share of 25%. ODF is the grantee of these funds per ORS 401.092.
- **FEMA Public Assistance Disaster Grants (Presidential Declarations)** – provide financial assistance for response and recovery costs (rarely eligible towards wildfires) with a required cost share of 25%. Requires a major disaster declaration and request from the Governor. County and state per-capita thresholds must be met to make a request. OEM is the grantee of funds per ORS 401.092.
- **Private Fire Insurance** – annually ODF purchases a fire insurance policy to help offset their firefighting costs once a pre-established deductible has been exceeded.

Additional Resources:

Oregon Department of Forestry – wildfireoregondeptofforestry.blogspot.com

Oregon Smoke Information – oregonssmoke.blogspot.com

Response Protocol for Severe Smoke Episodes – [Wildfire Response Protocol for Severe Smoke Episodes](http://www.nwccweb.us/index.aspx)

Oregon Health Authority – public.health.oregon.gov/Preparedness/Prepare/Pages/PrepareforWildfire.aspx

Northwest Interagency Coordination Center – www.nwccweb.us/index.aspx or nwccinfo.blogspot.com

Department of Environmental Quality – <http://www.deq.state.or.us/aq/burning/wildfires/index.htm>