

# Community FAQs

## Oregon Wildfires 2024

The purpose of this document is to provide answers to some of the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) related to the 2024 wildfire season in Oregon. The information within this document is believed to be accurate as of the date below but is subject to change without notice.

*Last Updated: 11/12/2024*

Questions/Comments related to this document can be directed to:

[OEM.RECOVERY@oem.oregon.gov](mailto:OEM.RECOVERY@oem.oregon.gov)

[Timber](#) | [Lost Grazing Land](#) | [Fencing Loss](#) | [Wildfire Recovery Resources](#) | [Loss of Structures](#) | [Other](#)

### Important Reminders

- **Oregon Agri-Stress Hotline.** Farming and ranching can be incredibly stressful, especially after devastating events like wildfires. Oregon's Agri-Stress Hotline offers free confidential support and resources to help you cope with stress and mental health challenges. Call or text the hotline for assistance: 833-897-2474.
- **USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).** For immediate assistance associated with livestock, forage, and crop losses, contact your county's USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).
- **Save Receipts.** Save receipts for any money spent related to the fire loss. The receipts may be needed later by insurance companies and agencies and organizations offering disaster assistance programs. Take photographs or videos of the damage for your records. Keep track of mileage traveled such as trips taken to purchase hay, feed, or seed, or trips taken to graze your cattle.
- **File Loss with Insurance Company.** Contact your insurance company as soon as possible following the wildfire event. Make sure your insurer inspects all damages before you begin making permanent repairs. If you have insurance questions or complaints, call the Oregon Division of Financial Regulation at 888-877-4894 or visit <https://dfr.oregon.gov>.

## Timber

**Q:** What can be done with all the burnt timber on private land?

**A:** Landowners should [contact their local ODF office](#) before cutting any burned trees to discuss the options available to them. ODF Stewardship foresters can assist with the evaluation of the burned trees.

**Q:** Is there any help with removing the burnt timber on private land?

**A:** There may be some assistance through ODF working with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). ODF Stewardship foresters can help evaluate the needs of the landowner. ODF assists landowners with post-fire recovery. Landowners should [contact their local ODF office](#) with any additional questions.

**Q:** Is there any salvage logging available on my privately owned land?

**A:** The landowner will need to determine if they intend to salvage the log. The landowner must [contact the local ODF office](#) before cutting any trees if they plan to salvage the log. Salvage logging is regulated under the Forest Practices Act.

**Q:** Is help available to replant trees on privately owned land? Labor costs and cost of seedlings? Different options for private vs. federal lands?

**A:** Yes, [contact our local ODF office](#) for assistance for Small Woodland Owners. Industrial Forestry can procure their own seedlings but may have surplus seedlings. The local ODF office will most likely know about surplus seedlings. Federal Lands are reforested by Federal contract crews.

**Q** The wildfire burned my privately owned timberland used for timber harvesting. Is there any financial help for the loss of timber?

**A.1** [Contact your local ODF office](#). There are programs to help replant the land but removal of the trees is typically done by the landowner.

**A.2** [Contact your local USDA Farm Services Agency \(FSA\) Office](#). Administered by FSA, the Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP) helps owners of non-industrial private forests restore damaged forests due to natural disasters such as wildfires. Financial assistance is available for debris removal and replanting. The financial assistance comes from their local FSA office, and Oregon Department Forestry foresters provide technical assistance to help the landowners through the process. Landowners should reach out to their local FSA office to start the process.

**Q** Property tax values will be significantly reduced due to the fire impacts, is there any financial help?

**A.1** There are programs to help with the reforestation of their lands. [Find your local ODF office](#).

**A.2** Taxes on property that have experienced a casualty loss due to a fire during the tax year may be eligible for reduction. The reduction is referred to as a “proration of tax.” For real property, the owner or purchaser under a recorded instrument of sale may apply. For personal property, the person assessed, person in possession, or owner of the property may apply. All applications are made to the tax collector. The application is submitted to the county tax collector no later than the end of the tax year in which the damage or destruction occurs, or 60 days after the date the property was damaged or destroyed, whichever is later. The end of the tax year is June 30. Applications are available at [www.oregon.gov/dor](http://www.oregon.gov/dor) or at each county tax collector’s office. In some counties, applications may also be available in the assessor’s office. File your application with the county tax collector. The tax collector consults with the assessment staff to determine whether or not the property has been damaged or destroyed and how much value was lost. The Harney County Tax Collector is located at the County Courthouse (450 N. Buena Vista Ave, Burns, OR.) and may be reached by phone at 541-573-8365. You may also find the County assessor at the same location, or via phone at 541-573-2246.

## Lost Grazing Land

**Q** What help is available for reseeding on privately owned land?

**A.1** First, it is important to understand whether seeding is necessary.

- Seeding and spraying decisions should be based on the pre-fire plant community and how much of the existing vegetation was killed by the fire.

- If herbaceous vegetation was not killed, the grasses will grow back, and seeding is not needed. A seeding will only be established if competing vegetation is eliminated. Most of the 2024 July fires resulted in very low herbaceous vegetation mortality.
- If weed pressure was high pre-fire, seeding alone may not be a viable option. These sites would require more expense and effort to rehabilitate, and producers should prioritize projects with the highest likelihood of success for the effort.
- Dozer lines should be seeded the first fall before weeds get a chance to establish. Competing vegetation was removed by the blade.

**A.2** Watershed Councils, and other agencies may be able to help with restoration (seeding, herbicide) projects. Visit the [United States Department of Agriculture \(USDA\) Natural Resources Conservation Service \(NRCS\)](#) and the [Soil Water Conservation Districts \(SWCDs\)](#) webpages to learn more.

Below is the contact information for Local NRCS, and SWCD representatives:

1.) Andrew Donaldson, NRCS: [andrew.donaldson@usda.gov](mailto:andrew.donaldson@usda.gov), 541-573-6446

2.) Rachel Beaubien, NRCS: [rachel.beaubien@usda.gov](mailto:rachel.beaubien@usda.gov), 541-573-6446

3.) Jason Kesling, Harney SWCD: [kesling@harneyswcd.net](mailto:kesling@harneyswcd.net), 541-573-5010

**Q** There is not enough grazing land left to support livestock through the winter, is there any support for the purchase of hay?

**A.1** The Oregon Cattlemen’s Association (OCA) is accepting applications for wildfire assistance from ranchers who have been affected by the 2024 wildfires. Contact the OCA by emailing [oca@orcattle.com](mailto:oca@orcattle.com). Applications are due by March 31, 2025. The OCA may also be reached at 503-361-8941.

**A.2** The Oregon Farm Bureau has established a [wildfire relief fund and a request form](#) for affected farmers and ranchers. The donation program is designed to provide critical relief to farms and ranches affected by wildfires. Through a collaborative effort with county farm bureaus, the Oregon Farm Bureau aims to support those impacted by distributing aid proportionally based on available funds and individual needs. The OFB can be reached at 503-399-1701.

**Q** I lease my land for grazing, but it is now burned. What happens to my grazing Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) contract?

**A** The grazing plan should be adjusted to reflect the change in conditions.

- If herbaceous vegetation mortality was low, it is preferred to defer grazing on burned pastures until summer dormancy the first year following the fire (e.g., July-August 2025 for 2024 fires). This allows surviving grasses to recover and produce seed in the first year following the fire, which will improve long-term condition of the pasture. Cooler, higher-elevation pastures produce seed and go dormant later than lower, hotter pastures.
- If herbicide or seeding is necessary, other adjustments may be made to the grazing plan. Deferment can be part of a grazing plan.

**Q** If grazing land is reseeded, how long do I need to keep livestock off it? What am I supposed to do in the meantime?

**A** In most of eastern Oregon, new seedings should not be grazed for at least two growing seasons.

- If grazed too early, underdeveloped plant roots allow plants to be pulled out when livestock attempt to graze. Large, young grasses may still have limited roots. Pull hard on plants to see if they can be uprooted. Leaves will tear off a mature grass plant; an immature grass plant will come out roots and all. A seeding can be destroyed quickly. It is very disappointing to put money and labor into a seeding project, observe good establishment, and see the seeding destroyed as soon as animals are reintroduced. Then you're starting over (spray, seed, deferment) or resigning to a weed infestation.
- A growing season on rangelands starts in spring and ends with summer dormancy. For example, if a field is seeded in November of 2024, the first growing season might end in July 2025, the second growing season might end in July 2026. Given normal growing conditions and adequate plant root establishment, grazing could resume in fall of 2026.
- In drought years, more than 2 growing seasons may be necessary. In parts of eastern Oregon in 2021, almost no plant growth occurred in 2020 seedings, so it took grasses an extra year to establish. Rely on plant development and the pull test.

## Fencing Loss

**Q** What help is available with privately-owned fencing that was lost in the fire?

**A** [Contact your local ODF office.](#) This is typically covered outside of the ODF agency and may need to be a claim for property damage submitted by the landowner.

**Q** What about privately-owned fencing torn down by equipment/fire fighters when dozer lines were built? Who will pay to replace it?

**A** If the damage was done during fire fighting activities, these will be repaired during the suppression repair stage of the fire. The landowner should contact the current fire team in place. If the team is gone, [contact your local ODF office](#) or [NRCS office](#) for assistance.

**Q** I need fencing now and cannot wait months for assistance, can I still get reimbursed for the fencing I build now?

**A** NRCS can only provide financial assistance when a participant has a signed contract or an approved early start waiver. There may be a possibility for NRCS to help with fencing.

## Wildfire Recovery Resources

**Q** Where can I find additional wildfire recovery resources?

**A** The following webpages have consolidated wildfire recovery resources:

- <https://wildfire.oregon.gov/recovery>
- <https://orcattle.com/wildfire-resources/>
- <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/announcements/wildfire-resources-agriculture-livestock-producers>
- <https://www.oregon.gov/oda/shared/Documents/Publications/Administration/Wildfire-Recovery.pdf>
- <https://www.farmers.gov/>

## Loss of Structures

**Q** My home burned and I'm staying in a travel trailer, but it is not winter-rated. Are there any programs that will assist with winterizing the trailer or help with funding to do so? What help is there for those who may still be unhoused longer term into the winter months?

**A.1** The Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS), in coordination with local agencies, may offer additional resources for winterizing your trailer or finding more suitable temporary housing solutions. To get in touch with ODHS and access these resources, you can: \*Call the Disaster Case Management Hotline: 1-833-669-0554

\*Complete an online form:

<https://uniteus.com/networks/oregon/get-help/oregonwildfires/>

**A.2** Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) provides the Weatherization Assistance Program through the coordination of local agencies. This is a federally-funded program that provides low-income households with home weatherization services. To learn more information and whether this program is available in your area, contact your local agency found at this link: <https://www.oregon.gov/ohcs/energy-weatherization/pages/weatherization-services.aspx>

**Q** Is there any assistance to help with the replacement of solar panels that were damaged in the fire?

**A** There is not currently any assistance available to help with the replacement of solar panels damaged in a wildfire on private lands. Homeowners and solar-system owners should check with their insurance providers. The Oregon Department of Energy has several rebate and incentive programs that may be applicable to some rebuilding efforts. See their Incentives Programs [here](#).

## Other Topics

**Q** There are lots of dangerous trees alongside roadways. What is being done to address them before they fall on the road?

**A** If it is within the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) or county right of way, the landowner should contact either agency to find out about removal of dangerous trees. If the trees are outside of the right-of-way, please [contact your local ODF office](#) for options.

**Q** Concerns of rocks rolling down the burnt hillsides onto the road, what is being done to address that?

**A** This would depend upon the right-of-way and where the rocks are originating from.

**Q** Concerns of flooding and erosion due to the burnt vegetation, what is being done to address it?

**A** [Contact your local ODF office](#) if the concerns are around burned forest lands. There may be programs to help out.

**Q** Who is responsible for restoring wildlife habitat?

**A** It will depend on who the landowner or manager is for an impacted property. Please contact your local Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife office with questions. Your local Watershed Council or Soil and Water Conservation District may also be able to provide assistance.

**Q** Boundary trees were burned, is there help with surveying and reestablishing property boundary lines?

**A** [Contact your local ODF office](#) before cutting any trees. Your local Stewardship Forester can help.

**Q** My private property was damaged by the fire-fighting activities. Who is responsible for addressing this? What can be done to help restore my land?

**A** [Contact your local ODF office](#) for assistance, they should be able to help answer questions.

**Q** My business suffered economic losses due to the repeated road closures and the poor air quality. What is available to help my small business?

**A** The United States Small Business Administration (SBA) is offering low-interest federal disaster loans for working capital to small businesses economically impacted by the Microwave Tower Fire that occurred July 22 - August 11. The disaster declaration makes SBA assistance available in Clackamas, Gilliam, Hood River, Jefferson, Marion, Sherman, Wasco, and Wheeler counties. The deadline to apply for economic injury is July 29, 2025. Interested businesses can apply through the SBA's Virtual Business Recovery Center, open Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. by calling (916) 735-1712 or emailing [FOCWAssistance@sba.gov](mailto:FOCWAssistance@sba.gov).

**Q** Where can I donate to help those impacted by the wildfires?

**A** Several organizations are collecting funds and resources for those impacted. The Oregon Department of Emergency Management (OEM) staff have gathered a list and made it available at [Wildfire.oregon.gov](http://Wildfire.oregon.gov).

**Q** Is there any Oregon income tax relief available to me as a result of the fire impacts?

**A** Not at this time.



**Q** Can volunteers be compensated for providing support to the wildfire impacted individuals?

**A** The Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) is reimbursing eligible volunteers for fuel costs associated with helping transport hay donations to affected ranchers. Contact OFB by emailing [heather@oregonfb.org](mailto:heather@oregonfb.org) or calling 503-399-1701 to learn more.

**Q** Is there financial assistance available to help Oregon farmers, ranchers, and forest owners protect their natural resources?

**A** The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Oregon announced funding is available for Oregon farmers, ranchers and forest owners to perform voluntary conservation activities on their land. Applicants should apply by November 29, 2024 to be considered for the first round of fiscal year 2025 funding. Visit this news release for more information:

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/conservation-by-state/oregon/news/financial-assistance-available-to-help-oregon>