



OREGON OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Wildfire Recovery Update

Feb. 15, 2022

This marks the final issue of the Wildfire Recovery Update. Nearly 18 months after the 2020 Labor Day wildfires, we find strength and hope as we continue to grieve, heal and recover. Nearly every destroyed home site has been cleared of hazardous materials and other debris left behind by the flames. Hundreds of new homes are being built, as local long-term community recovery groups help survivors access necessary resources to help them write their own recovery stories. Through partnerships—with federal and state agencies, philanthropic and non-profit organizations, the private sector and local governments—neighborhoods, cities and natural spaces show signs of recovery.

This report was developed in coordination with state and federal partners on Sept. 15, 2020, just one week following the devastating Labor Day wildfires. The update has served as a collated and verified situation summary of Oregon's wildfire recovery efforts, highlighting human impacts, statistics, information resources and volunteer opportunities. Our office has produced 75 issues of this update to inform our external audiences and partners of the ongoing status of the state's recovery efforts.

The 2020 wildfire season was unlike any Oregon has experienced in recent memory. With lives lost, over a million acres burned, and thousands of homes and businesses destroyed, the impacts of those wildfires on families, communities, jobs and local economies will last for years to come. Recovery doesn't move nearly as quickly as any of us would like, especially for disaster survivors who are still working to replace what was taken from them during the fires. While this is the last time our office will distribute the Wildfire Recovery Update, OEM will maintain strong connectivity and partnerships with our local and federal partners, non-profit organizations and the private sector until each community has fully completed its recovery process.

~Andrew Phelps, Director
Oregon Office of Emergency Management

BY THE NUMBERS

Sheltered Persons: 458

Source: Oregon Dept. of Human Services

Households in Direct Housing: 197

Source: FEMA Direct Housing Mission

Hazardous Trees Removed: 88,413 (92.1%)

Source: Oregon Dept. of Transportation

Home Sites Cleared: 3,015 (99.9%)

Source: Oregon Dept. of Transportation

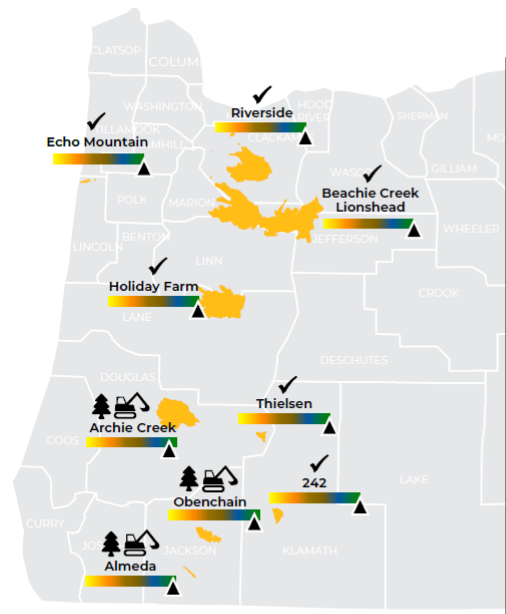
Individual Assistance Registrants: 25,251

Source: FEMA Direct Housing Mission

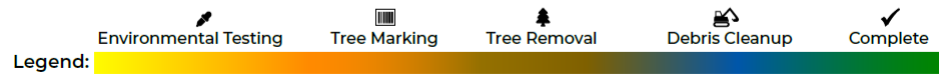
FEMA Individual Assistance Amount Approved: \$37.4 million

FEMA Public Assistance Amount Obligated to Date: \$332 million

DEBRIS CLEAN UP: ODOT



 3,015 lots cleared throughout Oregon	3,018 lots currently participating in the Step 2 cleanup process
 88,176 hazardous trees removed	96,011 hazardous trees estimated in total
99.9% lots cleared 91.8% hazardous trees removed statewide	
 541 people in the workforce, 71% from Oregon	96% of cleanup work performed by Oregon-based businesses



HOUSING: OHCS

Oregon Housing & Community Services (OHCS) continues to work with public and private housing developers on both traditional and innovative approaches to housing recovery. An important milestone in this effort was the opening of The Jackson on Jan. 31 in Medford. [The first tenants have moved into this former motel](#) that Fortify Holdings converted into 84 apartments for those who lost their homes in the 2020 Almeda Fire.

In addition to more than 1,700 homes on track for development in wildfire-impacted areas, including projects funded and under construction prior to the wildfires that will be prioritized for wildfire survivors, OHCS in February released a Notice of Funding Availability for Local Innovation Fast Track (LIFT) funds. These funds include targeted support for the development of both [rental](#) and [homeownership](#) options for wildfire survivors.

Also in February, the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) released instructions for managing [\\$422 million in Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery funds](#) dedicated to wildfire recovery in Oregon. In order to develop a HUD-approved Action Plan for using these funds, OHCS will be conducting stakeholder engagement about how to address the most critical unmet needs, with a particular focus on low- and moderate-income individuals and households. To follow progress, [sign up](#) for OHCS' e-newsletter updates.



The grand opening on Jan. 31 of The Jackson in Medford, a former motel converted into 84 apartments for those who lost their homes in the 2020 Almeda Fire. Photo credit Gallatin Public Affairs.

WILDFIRE RECOVERY PUBLIC HEARING

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15TH



The Oregon Legislature House Special Committee on Wildfire Recovery would like to hear from wildfire survivors about their recovery experience. The Committee wants to learn about ongoing challenges faced rebuilding homes, communities, and lives. These stories will help legislators understand what is going well in fire-affected areas, and what needs still remain. **The public hearing will take place from 5:30-7:30 p.m. on Feb. 15.** Those wishing to testify will need to register in advance; survivors are also invited to provide written testimony. For more information, visit wildfire.oregon.gov.

LONG-TERM RECOVERY GROUPS

Seven Long Term Recovery Groups continue to fill gaps and connect recovery resources for disaster-caused unmet needs for impacted individuals and families. These LTRGs have had a significant impact on uniting recovery resources with community needs to ensure that even the most vulnerable in the community are supported in recovering from the disaster. There is still a lot left to be done and a need for help to advance the work of rebuilding and long-term resilience in these communities. The Klamath-Lake LTRG in particular is looking for more volunteers. Click the links below to connect with these LTRGs and find out how to donate or volunteer.

- [Clackamas County LTRG](#)
- [Santiam Canyon LTRG \(Marion & Linn\)](#)
- [Lincoln County LTRG](#)
- [McKenzie Valley LTRG \(Lane\)](#)
- [Jackson County Community LTRG](#)
- [Archie Creek Fire LTRG \(Douglas\)](#)
- [Klamath-Lake LTRG](#)

DIRECT HOUSING MISSION: FEMA

At the request of the state, FEMA has extended its Direct Housing Mission from March 15 to Sept. 15, 2022, in Jackson, Lane, Lincoln, Linn and Marion counties. Per the [FEMA Individual Assistance Program and Policy Guide](#), beginning April 1, occupants still residing in FEMA units will be required to pay monthly rent.

Occupants were informed of the extension and rental requirements via hand-delivered letters distributed the week of Jan. 18. A second hand-delivered letter distributed the week of Feb. 15 outlined the rent amount and provided information on how to appeal. The monthly rent amount is determined by the [U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\) Fair Market Rent \(FMR\)](#) by county and number of bedrooms. For households earning at or less than 50% of the area median income, rent may be adjusted to \$50/month once the appeal process is completed. FEMA will continue paying space rent to mobile home park owners for the duration of the Direct Housing Mission; residents are only charged rent for the unit. Occupants are billed on the first day of each month for the previous month's rent (the April 1st bill is for March rent). Payment is due within 30 days. If rent is not paid within 30 days, applicants will receive a 15-day warning in writing from FEMA. If the applicant continues



to not pay rent, FEMA will begin its revocation process. If a household cannot afford the rent, an appeal can be made to FEMA; appeal information was outlined in the Feb. 15 letter. FEMA has 60 days to approve or deny the appeal, and applicants are responsible for paying rent during the appeal process. If an appeal is approved and rent is lowered, households will receive reimbursement for overpayment. Survivors who can't afford their rent should work with their **Disaster Case Manager** on the appeal. After the appeal process, Disaster Case Managers will connect survivors with their local **Community Action Agency**, which can help with rent and deposit assistance, housing counseling and housing placement.

COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES

Jackson County
[ACCESS Center for
Community Resilience](#)
541-414-0318

Lincoln/Linn County
[Community Services Consortium](#)
541-574-2280

Marion County
[Mid-Willamette Valley
Community Action Agency](#)
503-399-9080

Lane County
[Lane Health and Human Services](#)
541-682-3798

POTABLE WATER RESOURCES TASK FORCE

The Potable Water Resources Task Force continues to provide technical assistance to regulated and unregulated drinking water sources and systems to ensure safe drinking water. For domestic (private) water supplies, OHA will continue offering [free testing vouchers](#) to 2020 wildfire survivors through May 15, 2023. Since January 2021, OHA has provided 202 vouchers for domestic well testing; to date, the agency has received 95 lab reports, of which 37 exceeded recommended health levels. The program is currently increasing partnerships with community-based organizations and local public health agencies for more targeted outreach to well owners still recovering their property.

[OHA Drinking Water Services](#) continues to provide guidance to assist public water systems with emergency response planning and track compliance with OHA's requirement to sample burned connections prior to restoring service. The agency is currently coordinating with the EPA on potential infrastructure needs for building water system resiliency.

[DEQ](#) is coordinating with other state agencies to minimize risk from landslides and debris to water quality and infrastructure. It is also assisting the [Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board](#) with grant review for the legislatively approved riparian restoration funds. The [Water Resources Dept.](#) launched privately owned water wells and Points of Diversion assessment surveys to support domestic/private drinking water users with damaged wells, springs or surface water intakes. The agency hopes to have applications available in May 2022.

INDIVIDUAL & PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

FEMA continues to provide assistance to the survivors of the wildfires to help them re-establish their lives in Clackamas, Douglas, Jackson, Klamath, Lane, Lincoln, Linn and Marion counties.

- More than \$508.1 million has been provided in FEMA disaster assistance, low-interest Small Business Administration loans and mission assignments to federal partners to help Oregon residents recover and rebuild.
 - **Housing Assistance** totals over \$39.8 million to allow survivors to repair or replace their damaged homes or rent temporary housing.
 - **Other Needs Assistance** totals over \$7.84 million in grants to cover disaster-related necessary expenses and needs not covered by insurance or provided by another source.
 - **Critical Needs Assistance** totals over \$1.06 million for lifesaving and life-sustaining items such as food, water, prescriptions, medical supplies and infant formula.
 - **Direct Temporary Housing** was provided to 197 families that were approved to live in mobile home units and travel trailers. The program operated in Jackson, Lane, Lincoln, Linn and Marion counties.
- 25,251 individuals and families registered with FEMA.
- The U.S. Small Business Administration has approved **low-interest disaster loans** totaling \$62,754,100 for homeowners and business owners:
 - 39 business owners were awarded loans totaling \$5,445,700.
 - 540 homeowners were awarded loans totaling \$57,308,400.
- To date, FEMA has obligated \$332,841,123 to the state from the **Public Assistance Program** to reimburse local, tribal and state government agencies as well as certain private non-profits to assist with disaster response and recovery, including debris removal, emergency protective measures and permanent restoration of facilities.

FOOD AND SHELTER: ODHS

FEMA awarded Oregon a \$6.6 million grant to provide disaster case management resources to survivors. In addition, ODHS has developed additional disaster case management services, wrap-around services and flexible spending accounts to meet recovery needs and outreach.

Food

- From Oct. 2020 through Feb. 10, 2022, five local food vendors provided more than 1.5 million meals.

Shelter

- Shelter operations were initially managed and supported by the American Red Cross until transitioned to ODHS in Jan. 2021.
- 79 hotels across the state provided shelter to wildfire survivors under ODHS contracts (shelter is provided in hotels due to COVID-19).
 - As survivors find intermediate or permanent housing, the number of hotels used for shelter is down to 10 as of Feb. 7, 2022.
- As of Feb. 11, 2022, 465 people are sheltering in hotels and 68 in RVs.
- The greatest number sheltered was 1,411 between Feb. 27-March 5, 2021.

Financial

- Of those who remain in shelter, 85% had their homes destroyed and 73% are receiving other benefits from ODHS, such as SNAP, and through the Oregon Health Authority with the Oregon Health Plan.
- 819 survivors transitioned to long-term housing overall between May 10, 2021, and Feb. 9, 2022.

Contracts and Disaster Case Management

- Five wrap-around service partners include [Rogue Community Health](#), [DevNW](#), [Glide Revitalization](#), [Rogue Food Unites](#) and [Santiam Service Integration Teams](#).
- As of Feb. 7, 2022, there are 1,432 open cases receiving disaster case management, with 86 on waitlists. *Open cases can mean individuals and families.*

This is the final issue of this publication. Follow wildfire.oregon.gov or visit [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#) for additional updates. This publication is available in Spanish, Russian and Vietnamese on the [Oregon Wildfire Recovery website](#). It is also available in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer. For assistance, call 971-719-1183 or email language@oem.state.or.us. We accept all relay calls, or you can dial 711.

