



Memorandum Date: January 11, 2023

Meeting Date: January 24, 2023

TO: Board of County Commissioners

DEPARTMENT: County Administration/ Policy Division

PRESENTED BY: Matt McRae
Disaster Recovery Manager

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: DISCUSSION: Quarterly Holiday Farm Fire Recovery Update.

I. MOTION

Information and discussion only.

II. AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Staff will provide an update on multiple recovery topics:

- Updated permit figures
- Overview of planning and projects underway
- Lane County conversation with Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS)

III. BACKGROUND/IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION

A. Board Action and Other History

Since 2021, the Board has received regular updates from staff on Holiday Farm Fire recovery, including the number of Holiday Farm Fire survivors sheltering in hotels, number of permits issued, as well as updates on grants, planning, projects, and partnerships.

After providing the Board with monthly updates in 2021, staff provided an end-of-year review in January 2022. At that time, at the direction of the Board, Recovery updates were scheduled quarterly. The last quarterly update to the Board of County Commissioners was October 11, 2022.

B. Policy Issues

No administrative policy or objective exists associated with this agenda item.

C. Board Goals

Strategic Priority #1: Safe, Healthy County

Strategic Priority #2: Vibrant Communities

Strategic Priority #3: Robust Infrastructure. Objective C- Build a culture of preparedness and operational readiness within the organization in coordination with community partners. Objective D- Develop disaster recovery plans, policies, and procedures.

D. Financial and/or Resource Considerations

Please see attached Status Report for details.

E. Health Implications

Health Determinant	
Employment and livelihood	Directly affected by Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) allocations and state Recovery funding
Family and Community Structure	Directly affected by CDBG-DR allocations and state Recovery funding
Goods and Services	Directly affected by CDBG-DR allocations and state Recovery funding
Housing	Directly affected by CDBG-DR allocations and state Recovery funding
Land Use	Directly affected by, and will affect, CDBG-DR allocations, state legislative allocations, and to what degree local recovery can occur.
Parks and Natural Space	Directly affected by CDBG-DR allocations and state Recovery funding
Transportation	Directly affected by CDBG-DR allocations and state Recovery funding

F. Analysis

See attachment

G. Alternatives/Options

None at this time. This item is for discussion only.

III. RECOMMENDATION

None at this time. This item is for discussion only.

IV. TIMING/IMPLEMENTATION

Staff will continue to work on Holiday Farm Fire recovery.

V. FOLLOW-UP

Staff will follow-up via a quarterly update as requested by the Board.

VI. ATTACHMENTS

January, 2023 Status Report



Lane County Holiday Farm Fire Recovery Update: January 2023

INTRODUCTION

In September 2020, The Holiday Farm Fire burned over 170,000 acres in the McKenzie River Valley, killing one person and destroying 517 homes and dozens of other structures. Recovery from a disaster of this scale requires a decade or more, and involves continued coordination with state and federal agencies, and community-based organizations.

RECOVERY AT A GLANCE

Survivors living in state funded shelter as of 1/22/23: **22**

Total Number of Dwellings Destroyed: **517**

Permits as of 1/12/23

Dwellings Completed: **114**

Permits in Process: **114**

Permits in Review: **5**

Total Dwelling Permits Issued: **233**

Permit Fees Waived **\$1,414,022**

Properties Sold: **161**

RV Permits Issued: **96**

PROJECT UPDATES: INFRASTRUCTURE

Septic Repair and Replacement Incentive Program: EWEB and Lane County

Lane County has signed an Intergovernmental Agreement with Eugene Water and Electric Board to support replacement and repair of septic systems in the McKenzie River Valley. These funds will be distributed as grants through an [existing EWEB program](#). Property owners at or below 120% of AMI, who owned the property at the time of the fire, will be eligible for up to \$15,000 for a standard septic system or \$35,000 for an advanced treatment system. Property owners above that income level will be eligible for up to \$7,500 for a standard septic system and up to \$17,500 for an advanced septic system. EWEB will pair these funds with Oregon Department of Environmental Quality septic grants that can support those households at lower income levels – stretching these dollars even further.

Megan Heurion, Senior Program Services Coordinator, is the Lane County contact.

The EWEB project team is led by:

Anna Wade, Business Line Manager

Nancy Toth, Environmental Specialist

Karl Morgenstern, Watershed Restoration Manager

[More details about the septic incentive program can be found here.](#)

Blue River Wastewater

Lane County secured just over \$15 million to fund water and wastewater system repairs and improvements within the Holiday Farm Fire footprint, including a wastewater treatment system for Blue River. In Spring of 2022, Lane County hired Rob Woodard to support the development of wastewater treatment infrastructure in Blue River.

Lane County has hired an engineering firm, HDR Inc., to conduct an engineering analysis of options for wastewater treatment in Blue River.

Staff and contractors are currently:

- Conducting assessments of percolation rates in potential drain fields
- Evaluating the hydrologic connectivity between groundwater and the river
- Conducting cultural surveys, and environmental analyses as required by federal law

Rob Woodard, Special Districts Project Manager, is the primary Lane County contact for this project.

EPA Grant: Wastewater Options

With support from FEMA and Willamette Partnership, Lane County was awarded a technical assistance grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to research options for wastewater treatment systems in Blue River. The aim is to evaluate wastewater options that can be used in Blue River and also applied to other rural communities in Lane County.

Rob Woodard, Special Districts Project Manager, is the primary Lane County contact.

Blue River Drinking Water

Blue River Water District, with support from Lane County and Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC), is overseeing the repair and replacement of the drinking water system in Blue River.

Engineering firm, CivilWest, has been hired and is evaluating and mapping the water system. CivilWest will make recommendations supporting repairs and replacement.

*Rob Woodard, Special Districts Project Manager, is the primary Lane County contact.
Jason Carman, Rural Development Specialist, is the primary RCAC contact.*

Blue River Retracement Survey

The Holiday Farm Fire removed all trace of fences and other unofficial landmarks commonly used to mark property boundaries. This means most, if not all, property owners will need to have their property boundaries formally surveyed before rebuilding.

Many of the lots in Blue River are relatively small and property owners often need every inch of available space, magnifying the importance of accurate survey results that align with one another. Replacement of drinking water infrastructure and the anticipated development of a collective wastewater treatment system in Blue River further triggers the need for a survey to locate many road and utility rights of way in Blue River to facilitate accurate placement of utilities.

Under normal circumstances it is the responsibility of the property owner to hire a surveyor to mark property lines when constructing a building. However, given the situation, Lane County has secured funds and is in the process of hiring a contract survey team to conduct a “retracement survey” that will mark all property boundaries and rights of way in “downtown” Blue River at no cost to property owners.

After seeking funds from multiple state sources and securing a commitment of funds from Oregon Housing and Community Services, Lane County staff released a Request for Proposals in fall, 2022. Multiple proposals were reviewed by staff and quotes were requested in December, 2022. Staff will evaluate pricing quotes in the last half of January, with a contractor selected shortly after.

Mikeal (Jay) Blommé, County Surveyor, is the primary Lane County contact.

High Speed Internet

Lane County is working with Lane Council of Governments, Lane Electric, and local communications service providers to coordinate undergrounding of utilities, including conduit to serve high speed internet, in Blue River and elsewhere.

Rob Woodard, Special Districts Project Manager, is the primary Lane County contact.

Landslide Risk Assessment

The Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI), is currently conducting a detailed landslide risk assessment of the terrain impacted by the Holiday Farm Fire. The study, expected in Summer, 2023, will reveal historic landslides using newly-available Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) data. This will be combined with slope, aspect, burn severity, soil type, and vegetation cover, to highlight the zones at greatest risk of landslides.

Burns, Bill, MS, CEG, is the Engineering Geologist at DOGAMI, and serves as the research lead for this assessment.

PROJECT UPDATES: HOUSING

Housing Assessment

A University of Oregon project team has used Lane County data to inform the development of a recovery housing assessment. Once completed, the assessment will highlight the number of homes currently under development, the remaining housing need, and the options available to meet the remaining need. The assessment will include an estimated cost to indicate a sense of scale of funding required and it will highlight policy barriers and other barriers that inhibit the reconstruction of the necessary housing. This assessment will be completed in Q1 of 2023.

Matt McRae, Disaster Recovery Manager, is the Lane County contact.

FEMA Direct Housing Mission

The FEMA Direct Housing Mission, located in Rainbow, has provided homes for over a year for up to fifteen families. The number of families living in the Direct Housing Mission has declined over that time and FEMA will discontinue the program in Spring, 2023. Recovery staff from OHCS and ODHS are committed to ensuring the last residents have a housing option available before FEMA demobilizes the housing units.

Matt McRae, Disaster Recovery Manager, is the Lane County contact.

Lazy Days - Affordable Housing

Homes for Good, Lane County's housing agency, purchased and is now leading the development of the Lazy Days Manufactured Home and RV park, located just east of Blue River on Highway 126. All of the housing at this site was destroyed in the fire. Homes for Good is planning to locate approximately 30 dwellings on the property, including 20 modular homes.

The property will benefit from investment from both state and federal sources, and Homes for Good is currently facilitating an Environmental Assessment as called for in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

For more information: <https://homesforgood.org/about/real-estate-development/projects/lazy-days-rv-and-mobile-home-park>

The Homes for Good team is led by Steve Ochs, Real Estate Development Director, and Spencer McCoy, Project Developer.

Matt McRae, Disaster Recovery Manager, is the Lane County contact.

5 Acre Blue River Property

Homes for Good purchased a 5-acre residential property in Blue River slated for development as affordable housing. Current land use constraints allow no more than 5 homes on this parcel.

Steve Ochs, Real Estate Development Director, and Spencer McCoy, Project Developer, lead the Homes for Good project team on the Lazy Days property.

Matt McRae, Disaster Recovery Manager, is the Lane County contact.

Three Sisters Meadow

Donated to the community of Blue River by Becky, Jody, and Kathy Jones, this 16-acre property in Blue River is currently held by McKenzie River Trust on behalf of the community of Blue River. This property may play a role in hosting some portion of a community-wide wastewater management system as well as other uses.

Brandi Crawford Ferguson serves as the Assistant Director of Philanthropy and the McKenzie Community Liaison for McKenzie River Trust and is the point of contact for this project.

McKenzie Community Land Trust

Founded as a non-profit in November, 2022, the McKenzie Community Land Trust (CLT) seeks to provide home ownership opportunities for families that wouldn't otherwise have home ownership options in the area. The CLT is supporting planning efforts for the Three Sisters Meadow property as well as other properties in the McKenzie River Valley.

Lane Tompkins is the Board President for the McKenzie Community Land Trust and serves as the primary point of contact for this initiative.

ODCB Fire Hardening Grant Program

Homes or businesses that were lost or damaged in a wildfire during 2020, may be eligible to receive \$6,000 in grant money for fire hardening a home or business. This program, offered by Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services (ODCB) in partnership with counties, provides money directly to home and business owners who receive a grant to help pay for fire hardening of a home or business that was damaged or destroyed in the 2020 wildfires.

Fire hardening describes steps that can be taken to make a home or business more resistant to damage from a wildfire, and can include: Ignition resistant materials for siding and roofing, installing fire resistant windows, and protective attic ventilation devices to reduce ember intrusion.

Marianne Nolte, Holiday Farm Fire Permit Navigator, is the primary contact for Lane County.

ODOE Energy Efficient Wildfire Rebuilding Incentive

Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) provides funding to incentivize energy-efficient rebuilding. Property owners can receive incentives to rebuild to current building code or above code – incorporating these energy efficiency improvements help make buildings more comfortable and support long-term affordability through lower energy bills. Incentives range from \$3,000 to \$15,000 based on income and type of structure.

For more information, visit: <https://www.oregon.gov/energy/Incentives/Pages/EEWR.aspx>

Marianne Nolte, Holiday Farm Fire Permit Navigator, is the primary contact for Lane County.

PROJECT UPDATES: INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE

Wildfire Recovery and Resilience Account

The Wildfire Recovery and Resilience Account (WRRRA) provides support prioritized toward lower-income survivors. The program provides funds for rental assistance, home and RV repairs, first and last month rent, damage deposits, and more. The program is implemented through a contract with DevNW that is managed by Lane County Health and Human Services.

The WRRRA program will sunset at the end of June, 2023, at the end of the biennium in which these funds were allocated by the Oregon legislature. Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) oversees the funding for this program – and OHCS aims to have Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds available to support these needs before the WRRRA program expires.

Danielle Bautista, Program Services Coordinator, is the primary contact for Lane County.

Micole Olivas-Leyva, Asset Preservation and Recovery Manager, is the primary contact for DevNW.

McKenzie Valley Long Term Recovery Group of Lane County (MVLTRG)

In the wake of a disaster, FEMA recommends the establishment of a Long-Term Recovery Group to secure and then distribute donations and resources that can provide extended assistance to individuals and families as they navigate their recovery.

Community leaders in the McKenzie River Valley established the McKenzie Valley Long Term Recovery Group of Lane County in 2021.

Devin Thompson, Executive Director, is the primary contact for the McKenzie Valley LTRG.

PROJECT UPDATES: PLANNING

Oregon Solutions

Oregon Solutions is a program of the Governor's Office, housed at Portland State University, and designed to help Oregon communities find collaborative solutions to especially difficult challenges. After the Holiday Farm Fire, Lane County requested support from Oregon Solutions to aid with the challenge of wildfire recovery. The Oregon Solutions team has been supporting recovery efforts since early 2022.

After assessing the many recovery challenges, the Oregon Solutions Project Team developed multiple subcommittees to focus on key issues, including Housing, Infrastructure, Economic Recovery, and Engagement and Communications.

Kristen Wright and Margaret Van Vliet are the Project Managers for the McKenzie River Valley Oregon Solutions project.

Commissioner Heather Buch serves as a convenor for the Oregon Solutions Project.

Blue River Transportation Growth Management

The purpose of the Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) planning process is to create a Blue River Community Plan and amend (1) the Lane County Rural Comprehensive Plan; (2) the Lane County Zoning Ordinance to implement the Blue River Complete Community Plan; and (3) the Oregon Administrative Rules Chapter 660 Division 22, also known as the "Oregon Unincorporated Communities Rule."

The Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance amendments will promote compact, small-town development patterns with an active and convenient pedestrian environment along a mixed-use Blue River Drive, higher density development near Lane Transit District bus

stops and the McKenzie River Community School, and mixed-use employment lands located within the community boundary. The Project will help people meet their daily needs by the mode of their choice, with a particular emphasis on walking, biking, and transit.

The TGM project began in Q4 of 2022 and activities will increase in Q1 of 2023

*Lindsay Eichner, Principal Planner, is the Lane County Contact
Laura Buhl, is the Land Use and Transportation Planner and the project lead for
Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD)*

PROJECT UPDATES: FUNDING

Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR)

The US. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) approved Oregon Housing and Community Services' (OHCS) CDBG-DR Action Plan in September, 2022. Implementation of the Action Plan will begin in 2023 and will include three broad programs:

Home Ownership Program (HOP), a new homeownership program for fire survivors who were renters and displaced by the fires. This fund is \$119 million statewide, with no county-specific set aside.

Homeowner Assistance and Reconstruction Program (HARP), a housing replacement program for homeowners who lost homes to the fires. This fund is \$204 million statewide, with no county-specific set aside.

Planning, Infrastructure, Economic Revitalization (PIER), a fund to support local priority projects to repair or replace infrastructure, conduct planning activities, and support economic revitalization. This fund is \$42 million statewide including \$7.8 million set aside for the Holiday Farm Fire.

More information here: <https://www.oregon.gov/ohcs/housing-assistance/disaster-recovery/pages/reoregon.aspx>

Matt McRae, Disaster Recovery Manager, is the Lane County contact.

Oregon Legislative Recovery Funding

During their 2021 session, the state legislature allocated significant funding for recovery, including \$150 million statewide to be distributed by OHCS. Of these, \$100,383,496 is General Fund and \$50,780,071 is more restricted lottery bond funds. Most of this \$150 million has already been committed, and Lane County staff continue to work with OHCS to establish an Intergovernmental Agreement for the remaining balance dedicated to the Holiday Farm Fire.

In addition to the \$150 million noted above, in 2021, the state legislature allocated funding for specific Holiday Farm Fire recovery projects:

Wildfire Recovery Appropriations, 2021 Session: HB 5006				
Amount	Agency	Fund	Recipient	Intended Use
\$1.8M	DAS	GF	McKenzie Valley Wellness	Orchid Health Clinic temporary clinic and permanent clinic rebuild
\$2.1M	DAS	GF	Upper McKenzie Rural Fire	Equipment and facility replacement
\$903,520	DAS	GF	McKenzie Fire and Rescue	Disaster Relief Logistics Center
\$15.5M	OBDD	ARPA	Lane County	Drinking water and wastewater system replacements
\$755,319	OBDD	GF	Lane County	Staffing building and planning departments due to impacts from the 2020 wildfire season
\$4M	OWEB	GF	Eugene Water and Electric Board	Restoration and acquisition of high-priority riparian properties
\$325,000	DAS	ARPA	Eugene Water and Electric Board	Finn Rock Restoration Project
\$1.4M	DAS	GF	Blue River O'Brien Memorial Library	Library Rebuild