



Memorandum Date: June 14, 2023

Meeting Date: June 27, 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
- Highlights of recovery planning and projects underway

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.

As of January 2022, Recovery updates have been scheduled quarterly. The last quarterly update to the Board of County Commissioners was March 14, 2023.

B. Policy Issues

There are no administrative or Board policy requests 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

Staff will discuss the priority uses of \$4.1M in state wildfire recovery grant funding. Lane County staff are working with recovery partners to administer these funds.

Please see associated meeting materials for more 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 grant funds, 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 attachments

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

Lane County staff are actively administering state recovery grant funds and are coordinating with OHCS staff in preparation for CDBG-DR programs anticipated to begin in the summer and fall of 2023.

V. FOLLOW-UP

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

VI. ATTACHMENTS

Supplemental document attached:

Lane County Holiday Farm Fire Recovery Update: June 2023



Lane County Holiday Farm Fire Recovery Update: June 2023

INTRODUCTION

In September 2020, The Holiday Farm Fire burned over 170,000 acres in the McKenzie River Valley, taking one human life 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.

PROJECT UPDATES: INFRASTRUCTURE

Blue River Wastewater

With support from state legislators, 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.

Lane County has hired an engineering firm, HDR Inc., to conduct an engineering analysis of options for a community wastewater treatment system in Blue River. Preliminary results will be published in June 2023. This study is paired with an EPA-funded feasibility assessment that analyzed the potential use of shared septic systems in Blue River. Together these two studies should help illuminate the options for wastewater treatment in Blue River.

Lane County is working in close partnership with the Blue River Water District and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality.

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

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 Civil West has completed an assessment of the water system and delivered a preliminary report in June 2023. The existing distribution system contains asbestos cement pipe installed in 1968 and much of the system will need to be replaced. The preliminary report estimates the cost of repairs and replacements at \$7,661,000.

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

Furthermore, replacement of drinking water infrastructure and the anticipated development of a collective wastewater treatment system in Blue River triggers the need for a survey to locate many road and utility rights of way in Blue River to facilitate accurate placement of utilities.

A contract survey team hired by Lane County is currently conducting a “retracement survey” that will mark all property boundaries and rights of way in “downtown” Blue River at no cost to property owners.

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

Blue River Drive

Lane County staff are engaging Blue River community members to develop a design concept for Blue River Drive that reflects community preferences. A community-supported design will enable property owners to anticipate the structure and function of the roadway once repairs and improvements are made.

This project includes Blue River Drive in the downtown area and Blue River Drive west of the bridge over Blue River.

Lane County staff sought feedback on different road design options through stakeholder interviews and during two community meetings held in March and June of 2023. A preferred design will be selected in summer, 2023.

Becky Taylor, Senior Transportation Planner, is the Project Manager for this project.

PROJECT UPDATES: HOUSING

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. Homes for Good is planning to locate approximately 30 dwellings on the property. Site work will begin summer of 2023.

Homes for Good finalized the Environmental Assessment as required by the National Environmental Policy Act and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) signed the formal *Authority To Use Grant Funds* at the end of May 2023.

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.

McKenzie Community Land Trust project – Blue River

Founded as a non-profit in November, 2022, the McKenzie Community Land Trust (CLT) seeks to provide affordable home ownership opportunities for families that wouldn't otherwise have home ownership options in the area.

The McKenzie Community Land Trust has partnered with DevNW to develop multiple affordable single-family housing units on a single lot in downtown Blue River. The project team leveraged a commitment of \$800,000 from Lane County to apply for a Local Innovation and Fast Track (LIFT) grant from Oregon Housing and Community Services. On May 1 2023, OHCS awarded \$1,085,000 in LIFT funds to support this project.

Lane Tompkins is the Chair of the McKenzie Community Land Trust.

PROGRAM UPDATES: INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE

Wildfire Recovery and Resilience Account

The Wildfire Recovery and Resilience Account (WRRRA) supports recovery for families and individuals at or below 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). The program funds 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.

Lane County is investing \$400,000 of state grant funding to extend the WRRRA program beyond June, 2023, when it was previously expected to sunset.

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.

In 2022, Lane County awarded the MVLTRG \$400,000 of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to be distributed to wildfire survivors. In spring, 2023, Lane County allocated an additional \$400,000 of state wildfire recovery grant funds to the MVLTRG to distribute to wildfire survivors.

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

PROJECT UPDATES: PLANNING

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 project team completed a “Density Feasibility Memo” in May 2023 that outlines the potential for the Blue River area to accommodate growth based on different zoning and wastewater treatment alternatives. According to the memo:

Based on current zoning, the population has the potential to grow [from the currently estimated population of 160 residents] to estimated 355 people in 184 single-family dwellings at maximum build-out. Using estimates from the Future Buildout Scenario for Blue River Rural Community (Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development 2022), which includes potential zoning amendments to allow for an increase in commercial and residential density, the population could increase to 498 people over time.

This project team is coordinating closely with Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, the Blue River Water District, and Lane County staff who are evaluating wastewater treatment options for the community.

Interested parties can sign up for project updates at:
https://www.lanecounty.org/government/county_departments/public_works/land_management_division/land_use_planning___zoning/blue_river_complete_community_plan_project

*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. Lane County staff are convening a group of community stakeholders to evaluate possible uses and establish priorities for the use of these PIER funds.

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 Housing and Community Services (OHCS) Wildfire Recovery Grant

During their 2021 session, the state legislature allocated significant funding for recovery, including \$150 million statewide to be distributed by OHCS. These funds have supported several recovery projects and programs in the McKenzie River Valley. Lane County has received a \$4.1 million grant from OHCS from this allotment to be used for Holiday Farm Fire recovery.

The current planned uses of these funds are listed in the table below. Lane County staff are convening community stakeholders to prioritize uses for the remainder of these funds.

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

Holiday Farm Fire Recovery - OHCS Wildfire Recovery Grant Projects				
Project Name	Recipient	Project Summary	Estimate	Partner or contractor
Infrastructure				
Blue River Drive Engineering	Lane County	Initial design for Blue River Drive and full engineering plans for the “downtown” 1/4 mile of Blue River Drive.	\$250,000	KPFF Consulting Engineers
Blue River Retracement Survey	Lane County	Blue River retracement survey.	\$100,000	Avery Land Surveying, LLC
McKenzie River Area Surveys	Lane County	Provide additional funding for property surveys outside of “downtown” Blue River.	\$400,000	McKenzie Valley Long Term Recovery Group
Blue River Fire Station Replacement	Upper McKenzie Rural Fire Protection District	Fill the funding gap to complete construction of new fire station in “downtown” Blue River	\$250,000	Upper McKenzie Rural Fire Protection District
Communications Conduit	Lane County	Install conduit to accommodate high speed communications while utility work is occurring in the right of way within the McKenzie Valley.	\$500,000	
Staffing				
Recovery Project Management	Lane County	Additional county staffing to implement recovery projects.	\$320,000	
Recovery Finance Management	Lane County	Continue funding Disaster Recovery Finance Program Coordinator for 18 months.	\$200,000	
Housing				
Affordable Housing	DevNW, McKenzie Community Land Trust	Pre-Development costs for affordable housing project.	\$800,000	DevNW, McKenzie Community Land Trust
Individual Assistance				
Individual Assistance	McKenzie Valley Long Term Recovery Group (LTRG)	Funds to support household recovery will be granted to the LTRG who will distribute to families and individuals at or below \$120% Area Median Income.	\$400,000	McKenzie Valley Long Term Recovery Group
Individual Assistance	Lane County / DevNW	Additional funds for the Wildfire Recovery and Resilience Account program – providing resources to assist recovery for households at or below 80% of Area Median Income	\$400,000	Lane County Health and Human Services, DevNW
Total: \$3,620,000				