



# State of Oregon Advancing Wildfire Protection

*Office of Governor Tina Kotek*





State of Oregon  
Wildfire Programs Director - Report 13  
**Advancing Wildfire Protection in Oregon**

# Contents

Executive Summary.....	4
Duties of th Wildfire Programs Director .....	5
Roles of the Wildfire Programs Advisory Council .....	5
Wildfire Programs Implementation Status .....	6

## Implementation Agencies

- Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS)
- Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
- Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS)
- Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD)
- Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC)
- Office of Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM)
- Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF)
- Oregon Department of Emergency Management (ODEM)
- Oregon Health Authority (OHA)
- Oregon State University (OSU)
- Public Utility Commission (PUC)
- Wildfire Programs Advisory Council (WPAC)

# Executive Summary

As required by law, this implementation status report is produced by the Wildfire Programs Director every two months for the Governor, the Presiding Officers of the Oregon Legislature, and the chairs of relevant legislative committees.

There were no milestones required during this Director's report period. However, there remains significant efforts ongoing to advance fire protection in Oregon. This work continues to be guided by the Wildfire Programs Advisory Council (WPAC), as detailed in their annual report: [WPAC 2023 Report](#). The WPAC's legislative recommendations are consistent with previous Director reports that have identified the funding gap in wildfire programs from last biennium to the current biennium. The WPAC recommends re-investing in public health smoke mitigations, community risk reduction, landscape resiliency and durable capacity to respond to fires, along with new considerations to support electrical grid resiliency against wildfires. The Legislature has discussed many of these topics during Legislative Days and it is apparent that durable wildfire programming will be a part of deliberations during the 2024 session.

As you can see in this month's Director's Report, the cadence of milestones for the Wildfire Programs has largely leveled off to a routine reporting cycle. This transition has allowed time for reflection and the opportunity for focused attention on advancing fire protection in Oregon.

First, focusing on evolving Oregon's fire adapted community programs: [OSFM: Wildfire in Oregon](#). Primary in the success of addressing community risk reduction is considering durable funding strategies for these programs. Protecting our communities from wildfire and the harmful impact of smoke is vital. And ensuring these community risk reduction investments protect our most vulnerable populations, while incentivizing available and affordable homeowners' insurance is of utmost importance. The implementation of SB



82 (2023) is taking us on a pathway to partner with Oregon's insurance industry to seek long-term solutions on this challenging issue.

Second, focusing on Oregon's effective and efficient implementation of our 20-Year Landscape Resiliency Strategy is critical to mitigating the catastrophic risk of wildfire across our landscapes: [ODF: 20-Year Landscape Resiliency Strategy](#). Key federal partners from the US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management were invited to speak at the WPAC's January meeting. With over half of Oregon's forests and range under the stewardship of these federal agencies, the WPAC recognized this critical partnership and asked the federal agencies to speak on their support in achieving Oregon's landscape resiliency vision.

The final focus area is preserving Oregon's adequate wildfire response capacity to address the increasing threat of wildfire. Largely, this is a durable and equitable funding question. The Legislature has multiple bills under consideration to address this during the 2024 session. Primary in this effort should be further considerations for financial solvency, as ODF and OSFM do not have readily accessible funds to match the increasing costs of wildfire suppression.

These three tenants: Landscape Resiliency, Fire Adapted Communities and Adequate Response are the foundation for the nation's cohesive wildfire policy and funding strategies. Oregon is well-aligned with national priorities as we continue to focus attention on evolving programs that mitigate and respond to our wildfire challenges.

# Duties of the Wildfire Programs Director

- Oversee implementation of the Wildfire Programs.
- Coordinate activities across all wildfire implementation agencies.
- Ensure compliance with deadlines.
- Monitor and assess the equity of any financial impacts from implementation activities on local jurisdictions.
- Supervise council staff and develop director reports every two months.
- Explore current and future opportunities to reduce wildfire risk.



# Roles of the Wildfire Programs Advisory Council

- Advise and assist the Wildfire Programs Director.
- Monitor Wildfire Programs implementation and evaluate agency reports.
- Advise on changes necessary to dramatically reduce wildfire risk and ensure regional defensible space, building codes and land use applications are appropriate.
- Strengthen intergovernmental and multiparty collaboration including government, stakeholders and the public.
- Assess how Oregon's wildfire risk map may inform building codes and land use laws, rules and decisions in a regionally appropriate manner.
- Assess the application of defensible space requirements to vineyards, crops and other cultivated vegetation.
- Review the findings and recommendations in the DLCD's October 2022 report and make additional recommendations to land use planning, local comprehensive plans, and zoning codes to minimize wildfire risk.
- Report every October to the Governor and appropriate committees or interim committees of the Oregon Legislative Assembly.

# Wildfire Programs Implementation Status

## 2024

Rulemaking requirement 
  Reporting requirement 
  Other implementation requirements.

Date	Responsible Party	Required Action	Implementation Status
Feb. 1 (approx.)	OSFM	Biannual <b>report</b> to wildfire legislative committees/Director/Council on defensible space	<b>(On Track)</b>
Aug. 1 (approx.)	OSFM	Biannual <b>report</b> to wildfire legislative committees/Director/Council on defensible space	<b>(On Track)</b>
October	WPAC	Annual <b>report</b> to Governor/relevant legislative committees	<b>(On Track)</b>
Oct. 1 (at the latest)	DCBS	Must update R327 to ensure the code incorporates the standards and to make any necessary adjustments to the applicability of the standards and permitting requirements in the code	<b>(On Track)</b>

## 2025

Rulemaking requirement 
  Reporting requirement 
  Other implementation requirements.

Date	Responsible Party	Required Action	Implementation Status
Feb. 1 (approx.)	OSFM	Biannual <b>report</b> to wildfire legislative committees/Director/Council on defensible space	<b>(On Track)</b>
Aug. 1 (approx.)	OSFM	Biannual <b>report</b> to wildfire legislative committees/Director/Council on defensible space	<b>(On Track)</b>
October	WPAC	Annual <b>report</b> to Governor/relevant legislative committees	<b>(On Track)</b>

# 2026

Rulemaking requirement  
  Reporting requirement  
  Other implementation requirements.

Date	Responsible Party	Required Action	Implementation Status
Jan. 1	Counties	Required to ensure that all lands within the county that are outside of forest protection districts and susceptible to wildfire have baseline level or higher of wildfire protection	<b>(On Track)</b> ODF & OSFM plan to start organizing this effort during the 2023/24 winter.
Feb. 1 (approx.)	OSFM	Biannual <b>report</b> to wildfire legislative committees/Director/Council on defensible space	<b>(On Track)</b>
Aug. 1 (approx.)	OSFM	Biannual <b>report</b> to wildfire legislative committees/Director/Council on defensible space	<b>(On Track)</b>
October	WPAC	Annual <b>report</b> to Governor/relevant legislative committees	<b>(On Track)</b>

*Note: OSFM biannual defensible space reporting requirement and WPAC reporting requirements do not sunset.*

## *Thank you.*

The Wildfire Programs Director's Report is made possible by the dogged leadership of Oregonians across the state, the Legislature, and the Governor's office, working together to address the rising risk of catastrophic wildfire in Oregon.



## *Governor Tina Kotek Wildfire Program*

900 Court St NE, Suite 254

Salem, Oregon 97301