

## Inside this Issue

- 1** Feature Article:  
Understanding Federal  
Post-Fire Resources
- 5** FEMA Draft for Comment:  
"Building Private-Public  
Partnerships"
- 5** Online Training Calendar

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# News from Region 10



**Figure 1: Marion County, Ore. - September 16, 2020 - US&R Massachusetts Task Force 1 searches homes in Marion County Oregon in response for the wildfires. Photo courtesy of Dominick Del Vecchio / FEMA.**

## Understanding Federal Post-Fire Resources

**By FEMA Region 10: Brett Holt, Senior Stakeholder Relations Specialist, and Laura McSweeney, Disaster Operations Lead**

**Editors' Note:** *A similar version of this article was originally posted on the [Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network Blog](#) on November 19, 2020. Along with the [Post-Fire Resource Round-Up Blog](#) and [Wildfire Recovery Graphic Blog](#) this third blog in our post-fire resource series helps to provide additional help to those who are recovering from fire or planning and preparing their communities. This article expands the original blog to include the extensive work that FEMA Mitigation staff have performed in support of wildfire recovery.*

The unprecedented 2020 wildfire season in Oregon has had a serious and devastating impact to so many communities. The state of Oregon received 14 Fire Management

Assistance Grants (FMAGs) in five days in early September. On September 10, 2020 the State of Oregon received an Emergency Declaration for eleven counties. This was followed by a Major Disaster declaration on September 15. Needless to say, a lot of resources, both in personnel and funding, are being provided to Oregon in the response and, now, recovery to the wildfires.

We'll be the first to ask, "what does this declaration or that declaration mean for me, my business, my community?" Government programs can be complex and confusing. Eligibility, application periods, and other requirements make it challenging for people who don't typically work with FEMA or government.

We'll provide some clarity about these declarations and the programs authorized, as it relates to the wildfires in Oregon this year.

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Post-Fire Resources – (cont'd)

But this is not an exhaustive list of every program. Certainly, some are for specific counties, some programs may be authorized later, and in some cases, key deadlines to register for assistance will have passed by the time of publication. The most important thing that a wildfire-impacted community can do is to keep up communication with their local emergency management officials to understand availability of and timeline to implement these and other programs.

**What Happens After an Emergency Declaration?**

The state’s request for an Emergency Declaration was authorized on September 10, this allowed for the expansion of FEMA’s coordination role with the state and tribes. FEMA and federal partners helped on several fronts, with staff supporting virtually, at the FEMA Region 10 Regional Response Coordination Center in Bothell, Washington and physically co-located with the Oregon Office of Emergency Management in Salem, Oregon.

Support to the state included Urban Search and Rescue (US&R), sheltering, feeding, reunification, housing and mental health support. Two large US&R teams with K9 search capabilities, Disaster Medical



**Figure 2: Salem, Ore. - September 13, 2020 - Region 10 administrator Mike O’Hare meets with FEMA personnel in the Oregon Office of Emergency Management Emergency Coordination Center. Photo courtesy of David Yost / FEMA.**

Assistance Teams (DMATs), and Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Teams (DMORTs) deployed to the state. These teams support local search and medical operations in the counties with the greatest potential loss of life.

Non-congregate and traditional sheltering were provided through the American Red Cross and other entities. Non-congregate sheltering included locations where each individual or household have living space that offers some level of privacy, such as hotels, motels or dormitories.



**Figure 3: Portland, Ore. - September 14, 2020 - Red Cross volunteers working in a shelter at the Oregon Convention Center. Photo courtesy of Dominick Del Vecchio / FEMA.**

**What Happens After a Major Declaration?**

Additional federal support the state requested was authorized with the Presidential Major Declaration, which not only brings additional assistance from FEMA, but also from agencies such as Housing and Urban Development (HUD), U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The declaration authorized three FEMA response and recovery programs to assist Oregon governments and survivors affected by the wildfires: Individual Assistance (IA), Public Assistance (PA) and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). In the case of IA and PA, only a few programs were

initially authorized for the state, and others would be considered as FEMA and state staff were able to conduct damage assessments in the communities.

**Here is a summary of the programs offered through IA, PA, and HMGP:**

**Individual Assistance.** This assistance is to individuals and households, which may include:

[Individuals and Households Program](#)

[Crisis Counseling Program](#)

[Disaster Case Management](#)

[Disaster Unemployment Assistance](#)

[Disaster Legal Services](#)

[Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#)

IA is available for those affected by wildfires in Clackamas, Douglas, Jackson, Klamath, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, and Marion counties. Individuals were encouraged to apply for disaster assistance at [www.disasterassistance.gov](http://www.disasterassistance.gov). The last day to apply was November 30.

In addition, FEMA Disaster Survivors Assistance Teams are physically in impacted counties to assist Oregonians with questions and help apply for assistance. The locations change as the need changes in the communities.



**Figure 4: Gates, Ore. - October 1, 2020 - A Disaster Survivor Assistance (DSA) specialist meets with residents affected by fires in Gates Oregon. Photo courtesy of Patsy Lynch / FEMA.**

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Post-Fire Resources – (cont’d)

**Public Assistance.** This assistance is to state, tribal and local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations for emergency work and the repair or replacement of disaster-damaged facilities, which may include:

- Debris removal
- Emergency protective measures
- Roads and bridges
- Water control facilities
- Buildings and equipment
- Utilities
- Parks, recreational, other facilities

PA was made available for many counties in Oregon. A complete list can be found on the [Oregon Wildfire Disaster site](#). FEMA coordinates with the Oregon Office of Emergency Management with outreach to local jurisdictions and tribes on PA.

Hazardous material and debris cleanup were one of the initial priorities from communities. Under PA, hazardous materials were removed on public and private properties. General debris removal from public property is in progress in coordination with local governments.

**Hazard Mitigation Resources**

Hazard mitigation is accomplished through several programs: Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), Floodplain Management and Insurance (FM&I), Hazards Performance and Analysis (HPA), Community Mitigation Planning and Community Education and Outreach Program (CEO).

**Hazard Mitigation Grant Program**

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) is available statewide following a disaster declaration and is administered by the State. Interested applicants apply through their local emergency management

or county office to the State Hazard Mitigation Officer at Oregon Emergency Management. The application period is currently open, and applications are due to FEMA by September 15, 2021. Please refer to the state website for more information.

The Community Planning FEMA Integration Team (FIT) member analyzed the local hazard mitigation plans and the Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP) for mitigation priorities to assist the long term recovery partners, HMGP and 406 mitigation in project development.

Community Education and Outreach (CEO) promotes sustainable recovery and reduction of future hazard losses. This is accomplished by developing public and private partnerships to advance education, outreach, and community resilience in support of the Hazard Mitigation Strategy; and by providing hazard mitigation public information and advice. CEO provides mitigation information to the survivors of impacted communities through External Outreach Sites (EOS) f/k/a Disaster Recovery Centers (DRC), which is an Individual Assistance Program. A bilingual CEO Specialist was deployed to work in the COVID environment while adhering to the recommendations and guidelines in place to protect herself and the public.

A publications list was produced with links and QR Codes. Once a QR Code reader is downloaded by a survivor, the CEO Specialist assisted them in locating appropriate publications for their specific needs. Publications provided included information on building a personal emergency supply kit; implementation of mitigation techniques for the future; building codes fact sheets; preventing and

preparing for wildfires; information on the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and the Office of Emergency Management for Oregon. Publications were also available in Spanish:



*QR Code - Flooding Follows Fires – Spanish Fact Sheet*

Floodplain Management and Insurance (FM&I) delivers technical assistance to local floodplain administrators to ensure compliance requirements for building codes and ordinances following a disaster declaration are met. In coordination with the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD), FEMA Floodplain Management developed Substantial Damage Training Webinars to assist communities. Post-wildfire risk assessment and technical assistance needs discussions are being hosted by DLCD for several communities. National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) virtual training is being offered to local insurance agents, realtors and lenders. The next round of training will take place in February 2021.

FM&I also supported the Direct Housing Mission, Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) and Public Assistance by providing maps detailing the flood risk associated to a specific site to aid in determining site eligibility.

Hazards Performance and Analysis (HPA) provides technical assistance to the Public Assistance Program and

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### Post-Fire Resources – (cont'd)

local applicants to identify and develop PA Mitigation projects also known as 406 Mitigation. Disaster impact data is collected to analyze future risk and develop products that help guide and inform recovery in order to reduce impacts from future events. Research is conducted to analyze performance of buildings and infrastructure for loss avoidance studies and best practices.

Staff are participating in the multi-agency Erosion Threat Assessment Response Team (ETART) and will use data collected for analysis to identify higher risk vulnerabilities and longer-term mitigation recovery actions in those communities directly affected by the burn scars. Community Story Book Maps were created using GIS containing layers of valuable data that gives recovery stakeholders the capability to understand the impacts of the wildfires and increased risk from the impacts.



**Figure 5: Lane County, Ore. – November 8, 2020 – Burned areas along Forest Service Road 19. – Photos courtesy of Jack Malone / FEMA.**

HPA is trying to coordinate multiple aspects to mitigation on this disaster. First, fire impacted infrastructure, such as the wooden posts for the guard rail in the photo above. Those posts could be reinstalled using metal posts which would not burn during a future fire event. Second, the forested areas that burned severely will no longer perform their natural function of stabilizing the watershed

through absorbing precipitation and holding the soil in place against the erosive forces of the precipitation. Therefore, HPA is continuing to coordinate with ETART to identify those similarly impacted areas to explore collaborative funding opportunities for soil stabilization and erosion mitigation.

### **Housing Assistance Resources**

Prior to the wildfires, availability of housing was challenging. This has been exasperated with thousands of homes burned in the wildfires. The state-led Disaster Housing Task Force, with FEMA support, is working on interim and long-term housing solutions. Currently, the state and FEMA are coordinating with municipalities and counties regarding local ordinance requirements, zoning, transportation requirements, occupancy inspections, setbacks and more.

While a long-term solution is being developed, FEMA approved the use of [Direct Temporary Housing](#) for Jackson, Lincoln, Linn and Marion counties. This interim solution provides temporary transportable housing units for displaced individuals and families. In addition, they are also coordinating the temporary housing effort with floodplain managers, environmental regulators, historic preservation officers, utility providers and other authorities identified by the state or municipalities.

### **Help for Small Businesses**

Many people don't realize that the Small Business Administration (SBA) is a key player in disaster recovery. SBA loans are available to repair business property damage, economic injury, repair homes and replace loss of personal property. The loan interest rates depend on the type of credit available to individuals and businesses. More information on

how to apply and types of loans offered visit the [SBA Disaster Loan Assistance website](#).



**Figure 6: Gates, Ore. - October 8, 2020 - Linda Richison, a Gates, OR resident, holds up a sign alerting people in the area that food and supplies are available. Photo courtesy of Patsy Lynch / FEMA.**

### **Long-Term Recovery**

FEMA's Volunteer Agency Liaisons are currently working with local communities in the establishment of Long-Term Recovery Committees. This is in coordination with the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (NVOAD).

These Committees consist of and are facilitated by community members and generally involve nonprofits, faith-based groups, businesses and community members. The purpose of these committees is to help the needs of individuals as they rebuild their lives. This may include crisis counseling, disaster case management, home construction, donations and other tasks relevant to the community's needs.

These disasters are large, complex and take time due to the magnitude of the multiple communities impacted FEMA is supporting the state in the delivery of these programs. Connect with FEMA Mitigation staff at [FEMA-R10-MIT@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-R10-MIT@fema.dhs.gov) for additional resources and guidance.

*For more information about this disaster, please visit the [FEMA DR-4562-OR Disaster Site](#) & the [Oregon Wildfire Recovery Site](#).*

# FEMA Releases Draft for Public Comment

## Building Private-Public Partnerships Guide

FEMA is seeking content input from community partners on the “**Building Private-Public Partnerships Guide**” draft document. The agency will host a series of 60-minute engagement webinars to discuss the Guide and answer stakeholders’ questions. The webinars will be open to the whole community and advance registration is required.

The purpose of the review is to provide an opportunity for the public to provide substantive content recommendations and refinement of the draft. The results of this review will inform the development of the published version of the guide for whole community use.

FEMA worked on the draft with

associations representing emergency management, government administration and the private sector. The guide provides recommendations and best practices for jurisdictions to establish and maintain a private-public partnership to help coordinate mitigation, response and recovery planning and preparedness. The guide will help public and private sector emergency managers at all levels collaborate to increase community resilience. While the guide is written from a local perspective, any jurisdiction or private entity can use it.

The Draft document is available at [https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/fema\\_building\\_private-public\\_partnerships\\_guide\\_11-10-20.pdf](https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/fema_building_private-public_partnerships_guide_11-10-20.pdf)

*Please submit feedback via email to [NPD-Planning@fema.dha.gov](mailto:NPD-Planning@fema.dha.gov) by December 10, 2020.*

## Ask the Help Desk

The Region 10 Service Center is here to help local community officials and stakeholders with technical, training, mitigation, and mapping questions.

Email [RegionXHelpDesk@starr-team.com](mailto:RegionXHelpDesk@starr-team.com).

## Newsletter Ideas?

Want to spread the word about an upcoming event or recent success story? Let us know what you want to see in future issues! Articles can be up to 500 words and may include pictures.

Email [RXNewsletter@starr-team.com](mailto:RXNewsletter@starr-team.com).



### Online Training

(All times Pacific)

#### CRS: The 2021 Addendum to the CRS Manual

December 15, 10 am  
Online - 1 CEC

#### CRS: Credit for Conservation & Recovery of Threatened & Endangered Species

December 16, 10 am  
Online - 1 CEC

#### STARR: NFIP Basics

January 21, 10 am  
Online - 1 CEC

#### STARR: Tools for Determining BFE

February 18, 10 am  
Online - 1 CEC

To register for online courses, visit STARR’s training site:

[j.mp/starronlinetraining](http://j.mp/starronlinetraining), or email [RXTraining@starr-team.com](mailto:RXTraining@starr-team.com).