



KATE BROWN
Governor

September 14, 2020

President Donald J. Trump
United States of America
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Through: Mike O'Hare, Regional Administrator
FEMA Region 10
130 228th Street SW
Bothell, WA 98021-9796

Dear Mr. President:

Under the provisions of Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207 (Stafford Act), and implemented by 44 CFR § 206.36, I request that you declare a *major disaster* for the State of Oregon for the counties listed below as a result of a windstorm and wildfire disaster that began on September 7, 2020 and is continuing. This event also includes extensive damage caused by straight-line winds, and was exacerbated by drought and low humidity conditions. I request that you expedite this declaration without the need for complete preliminary damage assessments pursuant to 44 CFR §206.33 (d) and 44 CFR §206.36 (d).

I am specifically requesting Public Assistance Category B, emergency protective measures including congregate/non-congregate sheltering and direct federal assistance, for the following Oregon counties: Benton, Clackamas, Clatsop, Columbia, Coos, Deschutes, Douglas, Hood River, Jackson, Jefferson, Josephine, Klamath, Lake, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Multnomah, Polk, Tillamook, Umatilla, Wasco, Washington, and Yamhill (some of these are counties which – while not directly impacted by the wildfires – are providing mass care assistance to persons and animals being evacuated from the severely affected counties). I may request additional counties be added based on further assessment of the damage and impacts. I will follow-up with a separate request for Public Assistance Category A, and the Permanent Work Categories once better assessments have been made of the debris removal and permanent repairs that need to be made to public infrastructure.

I am requesting Individual Assistance for the counties of Clackamas, Douglas, Jackson, Klamath, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, and Marion. I may request additional counties be added to these based on further assessment of the damage and impacts.

I am also requesting the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) statewide.

President Donald J. Trump
September 14, 2020
Page 2

This request is in follow-up to my September 10 request for an emergency declaration, which you granted. That related declaration is FEMA-3542-EM-OR. I am grateful for all the assistance the federal government is providing to the State of Oregon by means of the previous emergency declaration.

I further request 100% federal funding for all aspects of assistance provided for which FEMA has this latitude, including direct federal assistance, to include assistance already provided under FEMA-3542-EM-OR through September 30, 2020. I believe that the magnitude of this disaster, especially when viewed in the light of the impacts that the COVID-19 event has had on the state economy, and state and local budgets warrants this level of assistance. COVID-19 has continued to negatively impact state revenues and economic recovery. We are currently repurposing state budgets, expecting decreased tax revenue and facing a financially weaker economy. The addition of devastating wildfires throughout Oregon is further overwhelming an already fragile economy.

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Oregon as reported by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis has been published through the first quarter of 2020 (released on July 7, 2020) estimated at \$254 billion. This was down 4.4% quarter over quarter due to the economic impacts of the COVID 19 Pandemic.

Please also see Enclosure 1, FEMA Form 010-0-13 (OMB Control Number 1660-0009), *Request for Presidential Disaster Declaration; Major Disaster or Emergency*.

On September 7th, Oregon experienced high winds, extremely low humidity levels with many counties under drought conditions. Wind damages to public utilities sparked additional fires throughout Oregon. High winds continued for several days, helping fires grow to historic proportions. To date, over one million acres have burned out of control in areas that are inaccessible due to terrain and weather. In many areas of the state, entire cities have been burned over. The communities of Detroit, Talent, Glide, Phoenix, Blue River, Mehema, Mill City, Idanha, Lyons, and Gates have been devastated as fast-moving fires moved across those cities. These fires continue to burn mostly uncontrolled due to a national and regional lack of firefighting resources. Enclosure 2 is a weather statement providing additional details.

The ability to perform search and rescue operations to look for missing persons or fully assess the loss of life have been hampered by the ongoing hazardous fire conditions. These conditions make it virtually impossible for teams to accomplish these critical tasks.

I verbally declared a statewide State of Emergency due to imminent threat of wildfire on August 19, 2020 and followed up with a written Executive Order on August 20, 2020. Local Emergencies have also been declared by the counties of Clackamas, Douglas, Jackson, Jefferson, Josephine, Klamath, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Multnomah,

President Donald J. Trump
September 14, 2020
Page 3

Tillamook, Umatilla, and Washington; and a Tribal declaration by the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians.

We estimate that up to 500,000 people were under evacuation notice during the height of fire activity, with an estimated 40,000 people – and an unknown thousands of animals – actually evacuated out of dangerous areas. Many of these evacuees have not returned to their homes, and most do not have homes to return to. As with all disasters, some of the evacuated Oregonians are sheltering with friends and family, many are choosing to stay in vehicles, some have found shelter in motel and hotel rooms, and others are staying in congregate shelters which are being operated in a manner that honors COVID-19 protocols.

Based on very limited information we are able to estimate that thousands of businesses and homes have already been destroyed. Overhead utility infrastructure, including power lines and communications, have been extensively damaged and in many places are inoperable. There have been losses to transportation routes. Much of Oregon's air quality is hazardous to health. Medically-fragile people already facing challenges with COVID-19 are further endangered by the unhealthy air quality.

Hundreds of thousands of Oregonians were without electrical power at the height of this event, and we can anticipate that many communities burned over by the fires will not have basic utilities restored for months.

The impacts to critical electrical power infrastructure are extensive and may be long-lasting, and currently no one can get into many of the areas impacted due to fire conditions.

Downed trees and wildfires closed many major transportation routes around western Oregon including portions of Interstate 5 and U.S. 101. Closures include portions of Oregon Highways 8, 62, 126, 138, 211, 224, 242; and U.S. 20 and U.S. 97.

Firefighting resources became completely exhausted during this event, and because both California and Washington State are experiencing similar wildfire emergencies, Oregon's requests for assistance from neighboring states were, for days, going unfilled.

High per capita impacts of this event are anticipated in much of rural Clackamas, Douglas, and Jackson counties, the North Santiam Canyon of Linn and Marion Counties, and the McKenzie River Valley of Lane County east of Springfield. Preliminary damage assessments are impossible to perform at this time in these counties due to inaccessibility, unsafe conditions, ongoing lifesaving response activities, firefighting response and due to both state and local resources being overwhelmed.

While we are doing the best we can under these disaster circumstances to conduct damage and impact assessments, I cannot provide joint Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) data at this time. We have been unable to conduct a PDA due the fact that the areas impacted are largely not accessible because the fires are still vigorously burning in most cases, with very low percentages of containment, and due to the fact that the local and Tribal emergency management personnel who help lead these efforts are still managing the response phase of the event.

The following information is furnished on the nature and amount of State, local, or Indian tribal government resources that have been or will be used to alleviate the conditions of this disaster:

- The *State Emergency Operations Plan* (State EOP) was implemented for this event, and the State Emergency Coordination Center (State ECC) which had already been activated for COVID-19 transitioned with additional state resources into managing this wildfire and high wind event.
- In addition to fire and police agencies at the state level, many other agencies which lead or assist in our Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) have been activated and are vigorously supporting the state response via the State ECC.
- I activated the National Guard for firefighting, search and rescue, emergency medical assistance, security, and traffic control.
- Oregon Department of Human Services – with support from the American Red Cross – is managing mass care in the affected and reception areas.
- The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) is working with local governments to provide care to evacuated livestock, usually at county fair sites outside of the evacuation areas.
- In response to reports of price gouging in lodging rates and other essential consumer goods and services for Oregonians who have evacuated fire areas, I have issued Executive Order 20-42, to help protect consumers from price gouging.
- The Office of State Fire Marshal and Oregon Department of Forestry have been conducting damage and impact assessments to the extent that resources are available and these assessments can be safely done.
- The American Red Cross and other organizations that comprise the Oregon Voluntary Agency Organizations Active in Disaster (ORVOAD) have been assisting local communities with emergency feeding and a portion of the extensive mass care needs that exist.

- EMAC assistance from other states have included firefighting assets, public information assistance, emergency management operations personnel, and first responder communications equipment from other states.

The State of Oregon has no state Individual Assistance (IA) Program to assist with housing and the other individual and family needs that are covered by the FEMA IA Program.

The American Red Cross and many other non-governmental organizations have provided thousands of volunteer hours and dollars to support the response efforts. Shelters have been established throughout Oregon, some within a moment's notice. Due to the rapid escalation and movement of wildfires, we are still gaining situational awareness on where displaced survivors have fled. Currently, the American Red Cross has 15 open shelters, with almost 2,000 survivors in congregate shelters, and is currently monitoring nine independent shelters. Last night, the Red Cross housed 2,210 people in 1,170 hotel rooms and they expect the number to continue to rise. World Central Kitchen and Salvation Army are also providing on the ground resources to conduct mass feeding operations.

Oregon has received four major disaster declarations since May 2019 due to winter storms and flooding and for COVID-19, all of which are still actively in response or recovery:

- FEMA-4432-DR-OR was declared on May 2, 2019 designating Public Assistance for five counties as a result of severe winter storms, flooding, landslides, and mudslides that occurred February 23-26, 2019.
- FEMA-4452-DR-OR was declared on July 9, 2019, designating Public Assistance for six counties as a result of severe winter storms, flooding, landslides, and mudslides that occurred April 6-21, 2019.
- FEMA-4499-DR-OR was declared on March 26, 2020 designating public assistance for emergency protective measures taken to respond to the COVID-19 emergency for all counties, local, and Tribal governments.
- FEMA-4519-DR-OR was declared on April 3, 2020, designating Public Assistance for three counties and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation as a result of severe winter storms, flooding, landslides, and mudslides that occurred February 5-6, 2020. Individual Assistance was also designated for Umatilla County and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

We have also received 16 Fire Management Assistance declarations just in the past month.

During the past 24 months, I have declared 14 States of Emergency (including for droughts) and seven Conflagrations. It's likely been the most active 24 months of disaster activity in modern Oregon history.

For several years, Oregon has experienced an affordable housing shortage throughout the state, both in urban and rural areas. The impacts of these fires will further exacerbate an already critical housing shortage. Our most conservative estimates of homes that have been lost to the fires will be well over 1,000. We expect a large percentage of the significantly damaged or destroyed properties to be uninsured. Enclosure 3 is insurance information that identifies the percentage of homeowners that are uninsured and the percentage of renters that are uninsured. Typically, rural areas of Oregon have a higher percentage of uninsured populations. The most devastated areas impacted by the fires are rural.

The following are initial estimates based on multiple sources of information.

Fire	Counties	Estimated Damaged/Destroyed Residences
Alameda	Jackson	3,257
South Obenchain	Jackson	113
Archie Creek	Douglas	230
Riverside	Clackamas	133
Two Four Two	Klamath	81
Beachie Creek	Marion, Linn, Clackamas	Total: 1,815; Marion: 1,547; Linn: 230; Clackamas: 38
Echo Mountain Complex	Lincoln	499
Holiday Farm	Linn, Lane	Lane: 1,018
Lionshead	Marion, Linn	Total: 779; Marion: 765; Linn: 14

Note: It is important to note that there are three other major fires that we have not been able to get any reports of losses due to active fire conditions: the Holiday Farm Fire, the Lionshead Fire, and most notably the Beachie Creek Fire. The Beachie Creek fire in Marion County has burned over the cities of Detroit, Gates, Idanha, and Lyons. We have identified 1,695 addresses within the fire perimeter. Our conservative estimate is the 80% (1,356) of the addresses are residential.

To address required information on State Fiscal Capacity, I provide the following:

- The 2019 Total Taxable Resources Estimates are the most recently published data and provide estimates through calendar year 2017 when the estimate for the State of Oregon was \$251.7 billion.

President Donald J. Trump
September 14, 2020
Page 7

- The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Oregon as reported by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis has been published through the first quarter of 2020 (released on July 7, 2020) estimated at \$254 billion. This was down 4.4% quarter over quarter due to the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The state has fully implemented all available resources and capabilities to support the ongoing needs such as housing programs and resources provided through financial and in-kind donations.

FEMA staff members have asked me to provide data points as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau or other federal agencies on demographics of the disaster impacted population, including the percentage of the population for whom poverty status is determined; the percentage of the population already receiving governmental assistance, such as Supplemental Security Income and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits; the pre-disaster unemployment rate; the percentage of the population 65 years and older and 18 years and younger; the percentage of the population with a disability; the percentage of the population who speak a language other than English and speak English less than “very well.” That data is presented in Enclosure 4 to this request, *Demographic Data for Counties Requested for Individual Assistance*.

COVID-19 has already made a significant impact on unemployment in Oregon. The fires that have devastated communities throughout the state further exacerbate employment opportunities and economic recovery. This clearly identifies the critical need for unemployment assistance.

We anticipate assistance from other federal agencies will be required throughout response and recovery operations.

I appreciate your consideration of this request in support of Oregonians.

Sincerely,



Governor Kate Brown

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Enclosures:

1. FEMA Form 010-0-13 (OMB Control Number 1660-0009), *Request for Presidential Disaster Declaration; Major Disaster or Emergency*.
2. Weather Statement
3. Homeowner Insurance Information
4. Demographic Data for Counties Requested for Individual Assistance