

From: [Martin Lentz](#)
To: [HWREC Exhibits](#)
Subject: Alameda fire aftermath
Date: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 5:01:00 PM

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the aftermath of the Alameda fire in Jackson County and for convening to ask the question, 'How're you doing?'

My wife and I are both retired and lived in one of the Manufactured Home Parks (Pacific Village, immediately north of Phoenix) that was totally destroyed by the fire. Our home was one of 82 in that park. Many of the MH parks that were destroyed contained more and some contained less, and, while I do not know the exact number of MHs that were lost, something like 17 or 18 MH parks were totally or partially burned. This loss was added to the already extreme shortage of affordable housing in the Rogue Valley area.

We are fortunate in that we had adequate insurance coverage that affords us the rent on a temporary place to live until we can get it together enough to purchase or rent a new place to live. This, however, is proving to be difficult since there are few, if any places available in our price range anywhere near where we were living or desire to live. Until that changes we, like so many others, are in limbo and time is running against our temporary living arrangement.

Our desire is to be able to purchase a MH and place it in a rehabbed MH park somewhere in the vicinity of the location of our former home, however, we are told that delivery of new mobile homes in our price range is now backlogged for up to a year and even if we could obtain one there is only one park rehabbed enough to accept applications. The ground rent in this park is now over \$700 per month, well above what we were paying in our old location. As other parks are returned to service I'm sure ground rents will have escalated in these as well, but hopefully not out of reach for retired folks and others with little income to spare.

The main problem we (and, I suppose, many others) are currently facing is that there is no one co-ordinating and making available any information regarding when, or if, the destroyed parks may be re-opening and whether or when there may be vacant spaces available and at what price. Or if they're taking reservations. Such information would go a long way toward re-establishing these communities as affordable housing for those of us who cannot afford a house or rental prices for apartments - which are also in very short supply as well as overpriced. I would expect that a government agency, such as Jackson County, would be the logical choice for such a program, however since county funds are short, they would require financial aid from either the state or federal government - food for thought.

While I'm on the subject of the fire, I am personally acutely aware that it needn't have had the intensity that it did because I am also acutely aware that the fire was fed in large part by acres of unmaintained blackberry vines along the Bear Creek Greenway. While a portion of the

property along the Greenway is held in private hands, much of it is owned and/or in the control of various government jurisdictions including the State of Oregon (ODOT), Jackson County and the municipalities of Ashland, Talent and Phoenix. I used to walk the Greenway bike path in the area the fire consumed and I can truthfully state that I saw little or no control of the blackberry vines by any of these entities - in fact, in many areas windfall from broken cottonwood trees was simply pushed off the trail and into the blackberry vines, adding even more fuel. Notably, the fire spared the pear orchards in the vicinity of the Greenway - no blackberry vines.

Respectfully,

Vern M. Lentz

Angela Lyn Wenner