

**From:** [Gourmet Vegetarian](#)  
**To:** [HWREC Exhibits](#)  
**Subject:** Submission South Obenchain Fire Victim  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 16, 2021 4:59:43 PM

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to testify about our experiences post South Obenchain fire.

The rapidity of the growth of that fire was one of the most frightening experiences we have endured.

The high winds after a weeklong heatwave and low humidity, restarted the contained Worthington fire that became an inferno that eventually burned 32,000 acres around us.

Thanks to the sheriff who drove up our driveway, we left in time, as the county alert system did not activate until 2 hours after we had already evacuated, on the afternoon of September 9th.

We returned 10 days later to a smoking apocalypse.

My husband and I manage a 20 acre property that was almost completely destroyed. Our entire neighbourhood of 6 properties, actually, was destroyed.

We were still extinguishing underground root fires until November, when it finally rained. All of our 5 acre woodlot, fruit trees, gardens and shrubs were subjected to intense heat and either shocked, reduced to cinder or vaporized.

One of our six buildings survived, the only thing left on the mountain, our house; due to luck, miracle and defensible space.

We were also able to rescue our animals, with the help of locals who risked their lives for the task.

We were under-insured, so our workshop, crops and tools cannot be replaced.

We have been surviving on monetary gifts from family and our savings.

We received an initial payment from FEMA for living expenses.

We have paid for our melted well line system, pumphouse and power to be replaced to access water.

We still have no internet, five months on.

Although we have signed our ROE and had 3 'inspection' visits from ODOT and Jackson county officials, no clean-up of debris, scrap metal, hazardous waste or soil has begun. We have no idea when it will begin.

I regret to inform that anything toxic from fire debris has most likely been leached into soil due to extensive rain this Winter.

We feel forgotten about and ignored.

None of the fundraising monies for fire victims has been distributed or offered here.

Two notable exceptions to that exist. Helping Hands International assisted us in sifting debris for valuables and some neighbours shared a \$50. gift card for Walmart, from their church.

We still look out at the destruction of what used to be a verdant and life-filled place. It will take a few years to look anything like it used to.

Thanks for taking the time to read this,  
Deanna Waters Senf and Adam Senf