

BACKGROUND

The 2020 fire season in Oregon burned well over one million acres of private, tribal, state and federal lands. The state, in coordination with partners at multiple jurisdictional levels, has deployed a wildfire recovery structure to address a range of near-, mid-, and long-term recovery needs. Specifically, coordination on natural and cultural resources post-fire recovery is occurring through the Natural and Cultural Resources Recovery Task Force (NCRRTF). The task force is convened by the Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, and serves as the coordination and implementation mechanism for State Recovery Function (SRF) 7 “to integrate state assets and capabilities to help local governments, tribal governments, and impacted communities address long-term environmental and cultural resource recovery needs after large-scale and catastrophic incidents” (2018 Oregon Disaster Recovery Plan).

The NCRRTF convened a sub-group of technical staff to review the existing assessments of post-fire impacts, and summarize information about high-priority actions needed in the next two years to help address and mitigate for impacts to natural and cultural resources. The assessment synthesis built upon U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management rapid assessments for federal lands, along with Erosion Threat Assessment/Reduction Team reports and a Water Quality/Drinking Water Supply Resource report, which assessed impacts and needed actions on state and private lands. The synthesis covers 10 fire areas: Archie Creek, Beachie Creek, Holiday Farm, Riverside, 242, Almeda, Brattain, Echo Mountain, South Obenchain, and White River—rely on the federal assessments and/or the Water Quality/Drinking Water Supply Resource report to estimate impacts and needed actions.

The assessment synthesis summarized impacts and high-priority actions related to two critically important categories—human life and safety, and protection of drinking water/source-water supply areas. Several priority actions for these categories are common across fire areas and, if implemented in the next two years, will help reduce risk of impacts to human life and safety, drinking water supplies, and source-water areas.

This state funding estimate is designed to specifically address new funding needed to plan and implement work on non-federal lands, to ensure that Oregonians are not left behind in the work to address priority natural resource issues. To develop this state funding estimate, information about impacts from the assessment synthesis was paired with estimated cost information for high-priority actions. The cost of implementing these actions over the next two years was calculated across the 10 fire areas included in the assessment synthesis, and extrapolated to four additional areas (i.e., Indian Creek, Lionshead, Thielsen, and Slater). The NCRRTF worked with state agencies to identify existing programs that may be able to serve as vehicles to support and fund the categories of priority actions below. The notes below describe existing agency programs that—if new funding is made available—can help deliver the needed services, either through direct technical assistance from the agency, or through the transfer funds via grants and other mechanisms to local communities to complete the work. ***The funding needs outlined in the table below are new funding requests, as opposed to funding that already is available via existing agency programs. The state cost estimate for natural and cultural resources recovery related work between 2021 and 2023 totals approximately \$86 million.***

A companion request for natural and cultural resources recovery needs on federal lands has being submitted to Oregon’s Congressional delegation. This federal funding request also includes the costs below for non-federal lands. If some funding is made available by Congress for recovery work on non-federal lands, it could reduce the amount of state funding requested from the Oregon Legislature during the 2021 session.

Category	Amount	Agencies	Programs that could be a vehicle if new funding is available	Notes about how agency programs could support priority needs if new funding is available
Human life/safety and drinking water/source-water: Culvert repair and replacement, culvert cleaning, and storm proofing of roads to reduce life/safety risk such as flooding, debris plugs, etc.	\$2 million	ODOT	ODOT Local Agency Fund Allocation	With new funding ¹ , ODOT could use its current program to allocate and distribute funding to cities and counties, with appropriate accountability measures in place, for these on-the-ground actions.
		OWEB	OWEB Fire Grant Program	With new funding ¹ , OWEB could provide grants for on-the-ground post-fire recovery actions, such as culvert repair and replacement, to non-profits, local governments, tribes and other eligible applicants.
		ODFW	ODFW Fish Passage Program	With new funding ¹ , ODFW could provide technical assistance for fish-passage projects (i.e., culvert repair and replacements) and funding for implementation.
		ODF	ODF Private Forests Program	With additional funding, ODF stewardship foresters can provide technical assistance to support project planning and scoping of funding sources for road-related projects.
Human life/safety: Hazard tree removal on land and removal of navigational hazards in waterways	\$1.75 million	ODOT	ODOT Debris Removal	ODOT is removing all hazard trees that are a threat to public infrastructure (e.g., roads, sidewalks, paths, etc.) and hazard trees that are a threat to rebuilding destroyed homes and businesses. A funding gap exists for hazard trees along waterways that present a threat to recreational use or could result in flooding of private homes. With additional funding, ODOT could provide assistance, coordination of resources, or hazard tree removal in those areas.
		OSMB	OSMB Waterways Program	With additional funding, this program can provide technical assistance and coordination resources, along with funding for on-the-ground actions, to address extraordinary hazards to navigation.

¹ Eligibility requirements of existing funding sources for agency programs may not align with post-fire recovery priorities in the next two years. New funding targeting human life/safety and drinking water/source-water priorities would avoid delays in planning and implementing these on-the-ground actions.

Human life/safety: Closures of high-risk areas, warning signs, and community alert/warning systems	\$1.75 million	ODF	ODF State Forests Program	With additional funding, ODF staff can provide assistance to local and other jurisdictions and coordinate on priority actions.
		ODOT	ODOT Maintenance and Operations	With additional funding to support cities, counties, and private access roads, ODOT can help support any priority closure needs with staff, equipment sharing, and technical expertise.
		OSMB	OSMB Policy and Environmental Program	With additional funding, this program can support waterway closures to boating in certain extraordinary circumstances under OSMB's jurisdiction, and provide technical assistance and coordination resources to partners.
		OPRD	OPRD Communications Division	With additional funding, OPRD can provide expertise and capacity to local and other jurisdictions and coordinate on priority closures.
		BizOR	Special Public Works Fund	With new funding ¹ , this fund may be an appropriate vehicle for funding activities such as an emergency phone/warning system, by serving as match to municipalities for FEMA funded infrastructure and hazard mitigation programs. Statutes and rules set caps on grant amount and eligibility requirements regarding federal disaster relief assistance.
Human life/safety: Geo-technical analysis to further assess risk of landslides, debris flows, etc.	\$1.25 million	DOGAMI	DOGAMI Landslide/Debris Flow Program, DOGAMI Flood and Channel Migration Program, and DOGAMI Geohazard Risk Assessment Program	With new funding ¹ , these DOGAMI programs can provide landslide and debris flow inventory and assessment expertise; expertise for flood and channel migration inventory and assessment; and risk assessments and mitigation analysis.
Human life/safety and drinking water/source-water: Drinking water intake protection and repair and system monitoring	\$6.5 million	DEQ	Oregon Section 319 Nonpoint Source Implementation Grants	With new funding ¹ , DEQ could provide grants for on-the-ground actions, such as erosion control and sediment control projects upstream of intakes, especially for smaller systems. Grants can be provided to public water systems, nonprofits, local governments, watershed councils, soil and water conservation districts, OSU Extension, and small landowners.
			DEQ Watershed Management and Drinking Water Protection Programs	With additional funding, staff from these DEQ programs (including basin coordinators at local/regional level) can provide expertise/technical assistance to support use of source water assessments and erosion threat assessments , risk reduction opportunities, key landscape locations, and restoration prioritization, as well as assistance for small public water systems. (DEQ also provides technical assistance in support of OHA's grant programs.)

		OHA	Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF)	With additional funding, this fund, which supports loans to local communities, can assist with planning, design, and construction of drinking water infrastructure projects. Additionally, the DWSRF can fund small-scale additions or replacement of equipment and instrumentation needed by small water systems (i.e., serving ≤300 connections) to ensure continued operation and protection of public health. The DWSRF is implemented in partnership between OHA and BizOR, and is particularly relevant to public and privately-owned community water systems and non-profit non-community water systems (i.e., 15+ connections or serving 25+ year-round residents). Depending on the source of funds for expense reimbursement, the DWSRF may be able to meet FEMA match requirements. Note: Forgivable loan awards are possible, but the amount available for these is limited by federal regulations.
		BizOR	Special Public Works Fund (SPWF)	With new funding ¹ , this fund may be an appropriate vehicle for drinking water system infrastructure repair funding for municipal entities. This fund also can support projects linked to preserving a watershed, such as restoration work. SPWF is able to serve as match for FEMA funded infrastructure and hazard mitigation programs. Note: Monitoring and other Operations and Maintenance costs are ineligible for SPWF. Statutes and rules set caps on grant amount and eligibility requirements regarding federal disaster relief assistance.
Drinking water/source-water: Development of restoration plans with landowners	\$0.5 million	OWEB	OWEB Fire Grant Program	With new funding ¹ , OWEB could provide grants to develop restoration plans for on-the-ground post-fire recovery actions to non-profits, local governments, tribes and other eligible applicants.
		ODF	ODF Landowner Assistance Program	With additional funding, ODF can provide technical assistance to support on-the-ground restoration programs (e.g., Forest Stewardship Programs [USFS], Environmental Quality Incentives Program [NRCS], and Emergency Forest Restoration Program [FSA]).
		ODFW	ODFW Western Oregon Stream Restoration Program (WOSRP)	With additional funding, ODFW can provide technical assistance for design of on-the-ground projects focused on instream fish habitat.

Human life/safety and drinking water/source-water: Stabilization and seeding for erosion control	\$37 million	OWEB	OWEB Fire Grant Program	With new funding ¹ , OWEB could provide grants for on-the-ground actions, such as soil stabilization and erosion control (e.g., seeding, mulching, etc.), to non-profits, local governments, tribes and other eligible applicants.
		ODF	ODF Private Forests Program	With additional funding, ODF stewardship foresters can provide technical assistance to support project planning and scoping of funding sources for stabilization projects.
		ODFW	ODFW Wildlife Division	With additional funding, ODFW district-level wildlife staff can help support private landowners with technical expertise (e.g., seeding guidelines for use in post-fire rehabilitation) and resources such as seed.
Drinking water/source-water: Early detection of invasive species and rapid-response control	\$4.0 million	ODA	ODA Weed Grant Program (administered by OWEB)	With new funding ¹ , this program could provide grants for on-the-ground actions, such as invasive species surveys and treatment/control, to non-profits, local governments, tribes and other eligible applicants.
		ODF	ODF Invasive Species Program	With new funding ¹ , this program could provide cost-share grants for invasive species control and technical support for preventive on-the-ground measures to control the spread of noxious weeds.
Human life/safety and drinking water/source-water: Riparian and upland restoration to stabilize soils and protect water quality	\$10.25 million	ODF	ODF Landowner Assistance Program	With new funding ¹ , ODF could provide grants for on-the-ground actions via the Forest Resource Trust; in addition, new funding would support technical assistance from ODF staff to assist with development of projects that would be funded by on-the-ground restoration and conservation programs (e.g., Emergency Forest Restoration Program [FSA] and Environmental Quality Incentives Program [NRCS]).
		OWEB	OWEB Fire Grant Program	With new funding ¹ , OWEB could provide grants for on-the-ground restoration actions, such as site preparation, tree and shrub planting, and stewardship, to non-profits, local governments, tribes and other eligible applicants.

		DEQ	DEQ Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)	With new funding ¹ , DEQ could provide direct nonpoint source loans or pass-through lending (i.e., bridge funding) from a public borrower to private sub-borrower for riparian and upland restoration projects that have a demonstrable water quality benefit and source water protection projects. (This fund also can support culvert repair/replacement projects and stormwater management projects that have a demonstrable water quality benefit related to a TMDL, stormwater management plan, or other water quality improvement plans.) Also see DEQ watershed management program on p. 3 regarding technical assistance support.
Human life/safety and drinking water/source-water: Floodplain restoration and reconnection to reduce flood risk	\$5 million	OWEB	OWEB Fire Grant Program	With new funding ¹ , OWEB could provide grants for both technical design and on-the-ground implementation of floodplain enhancement and reconnection projects, to non-profits, local governments, tribes and other eligible applicants.
		OEM	State liaison to FEMA Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program	With additional funding, these programs could assist with some/all of these on-the-ground activities, in support of local jurisdictions and partners.
		ODF	ODF Private Forests Program	With additional funding, ODF staff can provide technical assistance to support project planning and scoping of funding sources for projects.
		ODFW	ODFW Western Oregon Stream Restoration Program (WOSRP)	With additional funding, ODFW can provide technical assistance for project planning, permitting and implementation.
Drinking water/source-water: Development of tree seedling/nursery capacity and supply for replanting and associated technical assistance and incentives	\$5 million	ODF	ODF Landowner Assistance Program	With new funding ¹ , ODF could provide grants for on-the-ground actions via the Forest Resource Trust. In addition, new funding also would provide seedlings for landowners and technical assistance to support restoration programs (e.g., Emergency Forest Restoration Program [FSA]).

Human life/safety and drinking water/source-water: Septic repair and replacement to protect water quality	\$9.75 million	DEQ	DEQ Onsite Septic Repair/Replacement Loan Program (Clean Water Loans)	As authorized under ORS 454.779 (enacted in 2016; no sunset date), DEQ awards grants for developing and administering loan programs to provide low-interest loans for on-the-ground repair, replacement, upgrade or evaluation of residential or small business septic systems. Prior funds allocated by the legislature were distributed as pass-through grant funds to a community development financial institution, Craft3, that then leveraged the funds to offer low-interest and deferred payment option loans statewide. New funding ¹ could support DEQ partnering with other agencies (e.g., Business Oregon) to utilize companion authorities or administrative capacity for distributing grants for these purposes.
			DEQ Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)	With new funding ¹ , DEQ could provide direct nonpoint source loans or pass-through lending from a public borrower to private sub-borrower for on-the-ground septic repair and replacement. Qualified Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) also will be eligible to borrow pending a future rule adoption later in 2021.
		OHA	Drinking water source protection grant and loan program (DWSPF)	This program is designed to finance on-the-ground drinking water source protection projects that lead to risk reduction within a delineated source water area or would contribute to a reduction in contaminant concentration within the drinking water source. The program is implemented in partnership between OHA, DEQ, and BizOR. This small program uses federal DWSRF set-aside funds, and would benefit from new or additional funding to expand its use.
Human life/safety and drinking water/source-water: Capacity for cultural resources assessments and protection	\$1.25 million	SHPO	SHPO survey and compliance programs	Additional funding would support staff capacity to complete surveys and compliance reviews for cultural resources.
		ODOT	ODOT Cultural Resources Program	With additional funding, ODOT could support contracting for on-the-ground cultural resources surveys across fire impacted areas, in addition to providing technical expertise from ODOT program staff.