

To see the video use this link: <https://youtu.be/X4h7VXwQm-k>

My name is Roger Beyer and I represent Oregon Small Woodlands Association (OSWA). This presentation is intended to provide information on the value to Oregon of the complete and coordinated forest fire protection system, and more directly, the value of the in-kind services provided by landowners.

The map you are now seeing is the Scotts Mills finger of the Beachie Creek fire. The Scotts Mills finger alone would normally be considered a large fire burning about 35,000 acres. In this case it was a small fraction of what the state experienced during the Labor Day fires in 2020.

The thick blue line is Sawtell Rd, and Kokel Corner is on the upper left section of the map, just out of the burned area. There are green and red dots scattered around the area in and near the burn. The 8 red dots represent structures that burned: 7 homes and a shop. The dozens of green dots are where homes are located that did not burn.

The thick yellow line indicates the fire line built in 3 days, completely by volunteers at no cost to the state. This represents about 7 miles out of the 31 miles of total fire line constructed on the perimeter of this fire. There were almost no state resources available in this area as they were all deployed in other sections of this fire or on other fires. Without the hundreds of volunteers who stepped forward, this tragedy likely would have been much worse.

Now to share some specifics about a few of the people that responded.

One person, who grew up in the area and has since moved to Missoula Montana, heard about the situation. He owns a truck with a 500 gallon tank. He packed it up, drove all night and was here ready to work on the second day. He spent the rest of the week here helping his old friends and neighbors.

Another, who has never lived here but whose grandmother's home was threatened, left work as a professional firefighter in John Day and came to help. He also spent the week here, volunteering his time while he could have been on a fire getting paid. Again, at no expense to the state.

Finally, a neighbor whose own home, along with his parent's, aunt's and uncle's homes were being threatened, took two weeks away from his job to help in the effort. When the rest of us needed to go back to work, he was "appointed" fire boss and stayed on the post even after the hired professional crews arrived from out of state.

These are just a few of the people that gave time, money, sweat and tears to help stop this fire when no government resources, which had already been paid for, were available.

Now I would like to summarize some of the in-kind equipment that was used in the effort. Farmers, contractors and local people all pitched in and provided fire trucks, tankers, pumps and heavy equipment.

When the call for help went out, about 35 fire trucks showed up. These ranged from commercial trucks to pickups with tanks and pumps. Many of the pickup systems were donated by a single individual. He is a farmer/diesel mechanic near Molalla. Using more than \$10,000 of his own funds, he personally

outfitted 12 pickups with tanks and pumps. These are now all in the area ready in case they are needed again.

It quickly became evident, we had firetrucks, but very little hose or nozzles. I called the local district forester to see if ODF could let us use some hose. The answer was, "none is available". Again, when that word got out, a local company delivered 1,000 feet of hose, and a box full of adaptors, fittings and nozzles. These items were donated at no cost and are also available for future use.

To fill these fire trucks, tankers and portable tanks, we needed a pumping system. Not one but two volume pumps suddenly appeared at our water reservoir. Only one could be used at time, so we had a spare. The owners did take them back, but they were available for two critical weeks.

To build fire line quickly you need heavy equipment. One local D-6 dozer was in the area and on the ODF contract list. It was deployed the first day. That was the extent of state resources received. Neighbors contacting friends and customers provided seven additional caterpillars and excavators by the next day. None of these cats or excavators are listed by the state as in-kind resources, but they were here building fire line. Each piece of heavy equipment came with an operator and we provided at least one ground person with each for navigation and safety. In two days, they built a fire line that extended from Butte Creek to nearly reaching the Molalla River.

Logistically, ODF can tell you what it takes to run a fire camp on a large fire complex. For them it requires dozens of personnel. A landowner at Kokel Corner has a shop next to the road: it offered a central location and a willing owner. They set up a kitchen with folding tables and chairs. Then with other neighbors helping as staff, went to work. Donations of food and supplies were soon flowing in and they started providing three meals a day for the volunteers. This continued for about ten days as the paid contractors replaced the volunteers.

The location was also a logical spot for staging water and traffic control. The water tankers were parked here so the firetrucks could access them quickly and efficiently. When one was emptied it was replaced by a full one.

To help control access and traffic to the burn area, a resident began keeping track of all vehicles that passed the check point. For safety, he recorded names and license numbers so no one would be lost.

What I have tried to describe is what happens with our complete and coordinated system of wildfire fighting when the state resources have reached the breaking point. These are the in-kind services which local landowners provide when needed. Some have questioned the value and whether landowners who help pay the bill for firefighting should get financial credit for this. I suggest you ask the dozens of homeowners whose homes were saved if they think the landowners should receive a credit.

How to calculate the credit is also a concern. What is the value of resources you hope to never need, but when you do need them, they are available? It is not just the per/hour cost of equipment and operators: that figure is easily calculated. It is the value that the state does not need to provide to have these resources at the ready. In this small area of the Beachie Creek fire alone, well over one million dollars' worth of machinery, which was not on the ODF in-kind list, was donated for use. This same scenario was repeated by others across the landscape of Western Oregon during these trying days. To OSWA, trading the administrative prorated costs of the ODF Fire Division for the in-kind services the landowners provide is a bargain for the State of Oregon.