



BOARD of CLALLAM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES for the week of May 15 – 19, 2023

16
MAY 23 2023

WORK SESSION – 9 a.m.

The work session convened at 9 a.m., Monday, May 15, 2023. Present were Commissioners Ozias, Johnson, and French and Deputy Administrator Reyes. Administrator Sill was excused.

Items of discussion per the agenda published May 11 were:

- Calendar/Correspondence
- Agreement with Hoch Constructions, Inc, for Clallam County EV Charging Station Project
- Call for bids to be received no later than Tuesday, June 13, 2023 at 10 a.m. regarding Clallam County Landscape Improvements Project
- Emergency Operation Center - Joint Public Safety Facility Project update
- Agreement with State of Washington County Road Administration Board for the road improvements to Edgewood Drive between Reddick and Rife Roads
- Review of upcoming Timber Sales TCB 23 and Power Plant
- American Forest Research Council presentation
- Resolution appointing Michael E. McAleer to the Board of Equalization
- Agreement amendment 2 with Black Diamond Water District for American Rescue Plan Act ARPA funds
- Discussion on proposed budget revisions to be considered on May 30
- Discussion of proposed supplemental appropriations to be considered on May 30
- Discussion of proposed budget emergencies to be considered on May 30

Meeting concluded at 12:48 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CLALLAM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Chair Ozias called the meeting to order at 10 a.m., Tuesday, May 16, 2023. Also present were Commissioners Johnson and French and Deputy Administrator Reyes. Administrator Sill was excused.

REQUEST FOR MODIFICATIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Amended: 5b Notice that the following supplemental appropriations will be adopted by Resolution on May 30

Added: 5d Notice that the following budget reductions will be adopted by Resolution on May 30

ACTION TAKEN: CRJm to adopt the agenda as modified, CMFs, mc

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Kenneth Reandeau, Port Angeles, commented on item 4a
- Sula Jacobs, Olympic National Park, commented on Hurricane Ridge Lodge
- Ed Bowen, Clallam Bay, commented on items 1d, 4a, and 5c
- Tammy Dziadek, Port Angeles, commented on Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1a Approval of vouchers for the week of May 8
- 1b Approval of payroll for the period ending April 30
- 1c Approval of minutes for the week of May 8
- 1d Letter of support to the Puget Sound Partnership for Dungeness monitoring
- 1e Proclamation Recognizing the week of May 15-21, 2023 as Peace Officers' Memorial Week

ACTION TAKEN: CRJm to adopt the consent agenda as presented, CMFs, mc

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REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

- CMO noted he will read the Proclamation Recognizing the Week of May 15-21, 2023 as Peace Officers' Memorial Week at the Peace Officers' Memorial Week Ceremony this Friday, May 19, 2023 at 1:30 p.m. at the Liberty Bell
- CMF commented on Olympic Region Clean Air Agency Board Meeting, Olympic Community Action Programs Board Meeting, Clallam Transit Search Committee, and Timber Sales TCB 23 and Power Plant
- CRJ commented on Timber Sales TCB 23 and Power Plant
- CMO commented on WSAC Board Meeting and Planning Retreat, and Timber Sales TCB 23 and Power Plant

CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS

2a Agreement with Jefferson County Noxious Weed Control Board for weed control services

ACTION TAKEN: CRJm to approve, CMFs, mc

ADMINISTRATION

3a Resolution establishing salary and benefits for elected officials

ACTION TAKEN: CRJm to adopt, CMFs, mc

PUBLIC WORKS

4a Call for hearing to be held Tuesday, June 6 at 10:30 a.m. regarding a proposed Ordinance for the Clallam Bay / Sekiu Sewer System

ACTION TAKEN: CRJm to adopt, CMFs, mc

4b Bid award letter and authorize for Chair to sign the contract once available for the 2023 Hot Asphalt and Css-1 Liquid Asphalt Supply Contract

ACTION TAKEN: CRJm to adopt and authorize the Chair to sign the contract once available, CMFs, mc

BUDGET

5a Notice that the following budget revisions will be adopted by Resolution on May 30:

Sheriff – Jail

- Contracted costs for Norpoint Services to provide courthouse security for the month of March 2023/\$18,865
- Contracted costs for Norpoint Services to provide courthouse security for the month of April 2023/\$20,433

BOCC – Operations – Reallocation of funds for Express Personnel expenses for training newly hired BOCC Analyst/\$13,300

Auditor - To move budget from wages/benefits to Personnel Services to cover temporary replacement for vacated staff positions in Finance, Recording and Licensing/\$9,076

Auditor – Document Preservation – To move budget from wages/benefits to Personnel Services to cover temporary replacement for vacated staff positions in Document Preservation/\$5,950

HHS – Environmental Health – Funding for the replacement of office furniture in the environmental health permit center/\$50,000

NonDept – American Rescue Plan Act – Reallocation of ARPA funding for the ARPA Retention Recruitment Bonus Program which now includes Deputy Prosecuting Attorneys, Nurses and Juvenile Corrections Officers/\$134,200

ACTION TAKEN: CRJm to issue notice, CMFs, mc

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5b Notice that the following supplemental appropriations will be adopted by Resolution on May 30:

HHS – Environmental Health

- FPHS funding to pay for overtime costs to staff members working on the permit center transfer project/\$50,000
- FPHS Water System funding to pay for operations of the water lab/\$38,000
- Receipt of revenue from Department of Ecology for providing services in the Pollution Identification and Control Area/\$35,168

HHS Operations – Receipt of revenue from Department of Commerce for providing services for housing needs/\$150,000

~~Sheriff – Operations~~ – Reduction of Sheriff Operations budget to increase the Sheriff OPNET budget for part of the German Building lease (1 of 2)/\$9,800

Noxious Weed Control – Addition Title II funds will be received for seasonal help, field supplies and equipment/\$17,000

Parks & Facilities – REET 2 – Washington State Department of Commerce grant funding for the Electric Vehicle Charging Stations project/\$67,890

ACTION TAKEN: CRJm to issue notice, CMFs, mc

5c Resolution calling for a hearing to be held May 30 at 10:30 a.m. for the following debatable emergencies:

Sheriff – OPNET Drug – Reduction of Sheriff Operations budget to increase the Sheriff OPNET budget for part of the German Building lease (2 of 2)/\$9,800

Superior Court

- Washington Citizens' Commission on Salaries pay increase for judicial officers as of July 1, 2023/\$17,959
- Current regular time and benefits for Superior Court employees and conversion of Family Juvenile Court Improvement Plan Coordinator position from parttime to fulltime/\$69,908

Parks & Facilities – REET 2

- The Phone System Upgrade project was not completed in 2022 and is carried over into 2023 (1 of 2)/\$177,423
- Additional funds needed to cover the unanticipated bid proposal amount that exceeds the amount covered by grant funds and the current REET 2 budget/\$50,000

Information Tech – Capital Projects - The Phone System Upgrade project was not completed in 2022 and is carried over into 2023 (2 of 2)/\$177,423

NonDepartmental – Funding for a one-time Washington Association of Counties (WSAC) Special Assessment supporting the National Center for Public Land Counties (The Center)/\$25,107

ACTION TAKEN: CRJm to adopt, CMFs, mc

5d Notice that the following budget reductions will be adopted by Resolution on May 30:

Sheriff – Operations - Reduction of Sheriff Operations budget to increase the Sheriff OPNET budget for part of the German Building lease (1 of 2)/\$9,800

ACTION TAKEN: CRJm to issue notice, CMFs, mc

PUBLIC COMMENT

- William Spring, Port Angeles, commented on Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River
- Rod Fleck, Forks, commented on Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River and Encumbered Lands Proviso
- Emily Beals, Sequim, commented on Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River
- Lori Smith, Port Angeles, commented on Adventures in Kayaking and Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River
- Gabriel, Port Angeles, commented on Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River (see attached)
- Ed Bowen, Clallam Bay, commented on Coffee with Colleen, American Forest Research Council presentation, and Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River
- Sue Charles, Port Angeles, commented on Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River
- Jennifer Gallant, Port Hadlock, commented on Port Townsend Paper Company and Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River

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- Brian Carnes, Port Angeles, commented on Port Angeles Hardwood and Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River
- Brel Froebe, commented on Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River
- Reed Wendel, Port Angeles, commented on Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River
- Mary Foster, commented on TCB 23 and Power Plant presentation and timber sales
- Wendy Rae Johnson, Port Angeles, commented on Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River (see attached)
- Ed Chadd, Port Angeles, commented on the May 8th and May 15th, 2023 work session and Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River
- Ed Telenick, Sequim, commented on Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River
- Teresa Sesma-Meyers, Port Angeles, commented on Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River
- Rich James, Port Angeles, commented on Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River
- Donni Spring, Port Angeles, commented on school funding and Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River
- Elizabeth Atchair, Port Angeles, commented on Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River
- Glen Wade, commented on TCB 23 and Power Plant Presentation and timber sales
- Corina Stoker, Clallam County, commented on Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River
- Mike Doherty, Port Angeles, commented on TCB 23 and Power Plant presentation and timber sales and wildfires (see attached)
- Constance Farr, Clallam County, commented on taking the time to think about Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River
- Nina Sarmiento, Port Angeles, commented on Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River
- Kenneth Evans, Port Angeles, commented on Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River
- Peter Stedman, Port Angeles, commented on Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River
- Ryan Qualls, Port Angeles, commented on Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River
- Jessica Elofson, Port Angeles, commented on Power Plant and TCB 23 – Elwha River

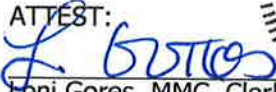
The meeting concluded at 12:51 p.m. and continued to 9 a.m., Monday, May 22, 2023.

There are no Zoom chat logs for the week of May 15.

The Board of Commissioners attended WSAC Virtual update, Joint Meeting with Clallam County PUD, Board of Health Meeting, Coffee with Colleen, Clallam Transit System Meeting, Clallam County Prevention Summit, Olympic Peninsula Academy Flagpole Dedication Ceremony, Peace Officers' Memorial Week Ceremony, and Peninsula Behavioral Health Annual Gala during the week of May 15.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 23rd day of May 2023.

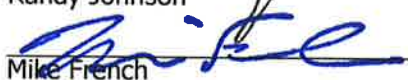
ATTEST:


Loni Gores, MMC, Clerk of the Board



BOARD OF CLALLAM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Mark Ozias

Randy Johnson

Mike French

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS:

ARS Administrator Rich Sill
CMO Commissioner Mark Ozias
CRJ Commissioner Randy Johnson
CMF Commissioner Mike French

m moved
mc motion carried
s seconded

BOCC Regular Meeting
Public Comments
5-16-23

Hello, my name is Gabriel, I'm 11 years old and I'm here with my mom. I am a student at Dry Creek Elementary.

When I was 7 my family lived in a house with a backyard forest. It was magical to me that whenever I wanted I could go and sit under the shade of a pine tree. We took walks with our saint Bernard everyday and I would pretend that clusters of trees were families. Mom, dad, brother, sister.

But one day we woke to falling trees and machines and within a month our magical backyard forest was no more.

Mom tree, dad tree, brother tree, sister tree. They were all gone.

Five months ago I moved to Port Angeles permanently with my mom from Oregon because every summer was one long heat wave.

During my last summer in Oregon, I remember laying in bed staring at the ceiling thinking about my backpack waiting for me by the door in case the fires got too close. This town isn't like that yet but it will be if something doesn't change soon.

Our species developed a poor way of living not knowing it would slowly make our home uninhabitable but that was a long time ago and we know better now. We need to reverse as much damage as possible before it's too late. And that starts with you as powerful people in charge of important things. We need you to do what you can even if there are hard decisions to make for the sake of all our futures. I, for one, want a future and not one where I have to wear an oxygen tank or send my grandkids to mars. That may sound unrealistic but realistically speaking that is the path we are on.

It is getting hotter every year, everyone in this room knows that. Humans breathe in oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide. Which is what trees turn back into oxygen and make breathable for us again. We've known this since the late 1700s. It's not new information and you don't need a whole lot of science to see that cutting down trees is heating up the planet to uncomfortable temperatures. Last weekend there were six deaths in Kings county alone, all due to heat-related illness. There's got to be a way to make a profit from forests and breathe at the same time. And we could figure it out if you postponed the TCB23 cutting and power plant in the Elwha watershed. Making a decision that stops this constant deforestation is the first step to saving our futures. We need you. That's all, thank you.

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL
Dana Brown-Davis, C.M.C.

COUNTY COURTHOUSE
311 Grand Avenue, Suite #105
Bellingham, WA 98225-4038
(360) 778-5010



Public comment
Wendy Rae Johnson
5/14/23

COUNCILMEMBERS
Barry Buchanan
Tyler Byrd
Todd Donovan
Ben Elenbaas
Carol Frazey
Kaylee Galloway
Kathy Kershner

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL

May 9, 2023

Hilary Franz, Commissioner of Public Lands
Washington State Board of Natural Resources
Jay Guthrie, NW Region Manager, DNR
Laurie Bergvall, Assistant Region Manager, DNR
Chris Hankey, Baker District Manager, DNR

Dear Commissioner Franz, Board of Natural Resources, and DNR staff,

The Whatcom County Council appreciates DNR's commitment to engaging county governments regarding the management of our state public lands. Over the past few years, Whatcom County has received significant community response regarding DNR's management of state-owned forests, especially in the context of project climate impacts for our region. The County Council values our forestry economy and we believe improved forest management strategies are needed to proactively restore forest health and bolster our community's resilience to future climate impacts.

First, we support a strong timber industry in Whatcom County that produces high quality wood products while providing employment opportunities in the forests and mills of Northwest Washington. Whatcom County supports actively managing forestlands for multiple co-benefits including enhancing watershed resilience, supporting jobs in the woods, expanding recreational opportunities, restoring fish and wildlife habitat, and producing wood products in perpetuity. We value the ecosystem services and climate benefits that our public lands provide, especially mature forests with significant biodiversity and structural complexity. We do not believe these economic and ecological values are mutually exclusive, and we welcome innovative approaches that better balance the many uses and benefits that our forests provide.

Going forward, we ask three things of DNR:

1. Explore co-management opportunities with Whatcom County

Whatcom County is committed to ensuring that the protection of critical forests and the expansion of climate resilient forest management practices does not burden the local timber economy but rather enhance it. We believe in order to accomplish these goals, DNR must expand its consultation with stakeholders, local governments, tribes, and community members. Whatcom County is eager to continue working with DNR to facilitate community dialogue about the stewardship of our forests.

Whatcom County is the trust beneficiary for roughly a third of DNR land in the county. Most of these "State Forest Trustlands" once belonged to Whatcom County, and were deeded to DNR to be managed on our behalf. Unfortunately, DNR's current protocol for approving timber sales doesn't require any consultation with Whatcom County (unless the sale is within the Lake Whatcom watershed). We believe more proactive engagement with County Council and county staff would help ensure DNR's forest management planning efforts are more consistent with our natural resources objectives. Importantly, such consultation will help improve public buy-in for DNR forest management, which will thereby lead to greater certainty for the agency.

2. Take advantage of the various programs the Legislature has provided

We believe DNR should expand its forest management toolbelt to better balance intensive timber production with ecological and watershed resilience to future climate impacts. Whatcom County Council does not believe that maintaining climate-resilient forests should come at the cost of our schools or other beneficiaries. The Washington State Legislature just allocated \$70 million from Climate Commitment Act (CCA) revenue to allow DNR to protect mature, structurally-complex forests, which includes an estimated \$20 million to protect up to 2,000 acres of forestland. Whatcom County Council understands pausing harvest or selecting forests for inclusion in the CCA proviso may delay funding for our local beneficiaries for years or decades. We are committed to offset any potential negative impacts to our local beneficiaries, including the Mount Baker School District. The legislature also allocated \$10 million for DNR to conduct more thinning treatments that improve forest health, which is needed across state lands in the Mount Baker Foothills. **We are supportive of this program being utilized in Whatcom County and are eager to work with DNR to identify which parcels should be included.**

Additionally, there are other opportunities to conserve naturally-regenerated forests without adversely impacting the trust beneficiaries, such as the Trustland Transfer Program that was just updated and revitalized in the 2023 legislative session. DNR's carbon project also offers an attractive model to provide consistent revenue to trust beneficiaries while protecting the many co-benefits associated with mature, structurally-complex forests. We encourage DNR to further explore opportunities to use these programs to balance the various benefits that our forests provide.

3. Pause the Brokedown Palace Timber Sale until December 31, 2023, when DNR identifies the acres that will be transferred out of trust status as a part of this program. This will provide the time necessary to evaluate possible inclusion of this parcel in the Climate Commitment Act program.

In recent months, we have received significant community response regarding DNR's proposed Brokedown Palace Timber Sale, located along the Middle Fork Nooksack River. The Whatcom County Council shares some of the concerns that have been raised regarding potential impacts to water quality and salmon recovery. We recognize that certain forests have greater ecological value than others, whereas other forests are more suited for continued commercial timber production. We believe the mature, unplanted stands included within the sale boundaries are worth more standing (notably, these stands appear to overlap with the State Forest Trustland that is supposed to be managed on our behalf).

Brokedown Palace could be a prime candidate for protection under the CCA program that was just established by the legislature. Logging this forest now would negate opportunities to include the forest in the CCA program, Trustland Transfer Program, or carbon project; therefore, we ask DNR to pause the timber sale until the sale can be further evaluated.

Thank you for working with us as we engage the public on this very important topic. We look forward to future collaboration.

Sincerely,



Barry Buchanan, Chair
Whatcom County Council

Cc: Correspondence file
AB2023-273

Public Comment Mike Doherty 11-14-23

Public
Comment
Mike
Doherty
5/10/23

SOURCE WEEKLY

VOLUME 27 / ISSUE 17 / APRIL 27, 2023

FREE

Oregon's
controversial
wildfire risk map
was withdrawn after
public outcry.
What happens next?



PLUS

A NOVEL IDEA
TURNS 20

BEND FARMERS MARKET
CHANGES HOURS

SMITH ROCK'S
NEW MASTER PLAN



high or extreme risk of wildfire. About 80,000 of those risk of wildfire. It also included much of the land surrounding Bend and Redmond into the WUI.

The Fire Risk Map

The map itself is meant to track hazards, breaking down burn probability, likelihood of experiencing a fire and predicted flame intensity. Its model is purely about potential fire and not about the current state of improvements on a parcel. Properties where people have created defensible space can still be in areas deemed an extreme hazard.

"We actually do not need to look at the land in its current condition, like if it's irrigated today, we actually needed to look at that land base through the lens of, what if that was a neighborhood based on the environmental setting and the vegetation that's likely to be there? If they develop that piece of irrigated ag, can they just plant an entire conifer forest all through the community and not worry about it?" said Chris Dunn, a professor at Oregon State University who led the team that created the map.

The fire risk map was drafted as a collaboration between the state, OSU and Pyrologix, a private company that specializes in wildfire risk assessment. It relies on scientific models that have been used and refined since the 1970s, data from the National Land Fire on vegetation and recorded weather behavior from stations across Oregon. The map identified 15 different types of zones called fire occurrence areas that have similar patterns of wildfire and vegetation.

Goals of the map didn't mesh up with the expectations of the public, who often saw the map as the final declaration of fire risk rather than a measurement of how susceptible an area is. The appeals process allows the Oregon State Fire Marshal to assess an individual property and, if it's deemed safe, clear landowners of making specific improvements. Accounting for the management of individual properties is both impossible and outside of the scope of the project laid out under SB762, Dunn said. It's also difficult for an individual to impartially assess their risk.

"Nobody can step out their door, look at a landscape and say, 'This is the likelihood that I'm going to experience a fire.' We just can't do it, it's not possible, which is why we have to rely on other tools," Dunn said.

Consumer and Business Services.

"While we met the bill's initial deadline for delivering on the map, there wasn't enough time to allow for the type of local outreach and engagement that people wanted, needed and deserved. Once this round of refinements is complete, we are planning to bring a draft of the updated map to communities for discussion and input," Makumoto said in a statement when he mixed the map.

"What happened when the state wildfire risk map came out was that coincidentally at the time some insurers were not pulling out of the market entirely, but they were reducing their risk by not renewing some policies."

—Kenton Brine

In June 2022, the State of Oregon released a wildfire risk map that charted the levels of wildfire risk for every property in Oregon. Along with it came a notice to property owners in the wildland-urban interface, a zone of transition between wilderness and developed land, informing them that their property had been identified as at high or extreme risk for wildfires and that they may be subject to defensible space or building code requirements in the future. The risk map received sudden and intense backlash, including thousands of messages to the Oregon Department of Forestry and at least 750 appeals. The public's complaints largely involved potential impacts to property value, insurance increases and disputing the level of risk assigned to them.

The ODF scheduled to have community meetings around the state to explain the map's purpose and function, but canceled the first planned session in Grants Pass after ODF received a voicemail threatening pre-listening sessions to digital-only. On Aug. 4, 2022, Oregon State Forester Cal Makumoto announced ODF would remove the current iteration of the map and wildfire notices sent to property owners.

The wildfire risk map is the product of Senate Bill 762 from the 2021 legislative session, developed at the request of then-governor Kate Brown and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources, in the wake of the massive fires of 2020 that killed at least 11 people in Oregon.

Among the bill's goals: improving wildfire preparedness by developing fire-safe building standards, developing responses to wildfires and increasing the state's ability to help do that," said Derek Gasperini, public affairs officer at ODF. "For many property owners, the notices were such a thing. It definitely was a surprise and there was some consternation just because of the confusion around the map's purpose. We had the map to identify where building codes for home hardening, and defensible space were to be applied. But those agencies did not yet have the rules or codes in place."

Hundreds of people in Central Oregon spoke against the map at an ODF community event at the Deschutes County Fair and Expo Center in August, shortly after state officials withdrew the map. The map identified all of Deschutes County as moderate, high or extreme risk at an ODF community event at the Deschutes County Fair and Expo Center in August, shortly after state officials withdrew the map. The map identified initial map identified that 120,267 tax lots in Oregon at public feedback until it'd been actually produced. That timeframe meant there wasn't a map to shop around for a year to draft the map. The short Gov. Brown signed the bill into law in July 2021, giving state agencies a year to draft the map. The short deadline in SB762.

Gov. Brown signed the bill into law in July 2021, giving state agencies a year to draft the map. The short deadline in SB762.

The Insurance Factor

Rising insurance costs and depreciating property values were the impetus for many of the complaints about the map. Some people told ODF their premiums had already been raised, saying that their agents told them the map guided their decisions. Others said their insurers decided not to renew, citing the map. The Oregon Department of Financial Regulation looked into these claims by submitting a data call — a formal inquiry where insurers are required by law to answer truthfully — asking all insurers in Oregon if they used or intend to use the map. Every insurer said they don't plan on using the map, and no new proposed rate filings filed to the ODFR have mentioned the map as a factor for raising rates.

"None of those companies use the state wildfire risk now, for a couple reasons. One, none of them even knew it existed, and it didn't exist until last year. And secondly, the models, the rating models that insurers use are far more sophisticated," said Kenton Brine, president of the NW Insurance Council.

Insurers' models, often supplied by a third-party vendor, account for things the state's wildfire risk map doesn't, like how close and efficient the nearest fire department is, the defensible space around it and whether nearby homes might contribute to fire spreading, Brine said. Those models are also competing in a competitive market, and each company will assess risk differently. Generally though, home insurance costs in fire-prone areas have crept up over the past few years as wildfires increased in size and destructiveness.

"What happened when the state wildfire risk map came out was that, coincidentally at the time, some insurers were not pulling out of the market entirely, but they were reducing their risk by not renewing some policies," Brine said.

Brine said some insurers may have assessed whether a property made improvements, but others likely just didn't want to hold the risk of insuring a home in a fire-prone area. He said people will probably have a tougher time finding insurance as providers flee, and that costs could increase. Though he insisted insurance companies aren't using the state's fire risk map at the present time, he did say it could potentially become a variable in a broader assessment of a property in the future.

What Next?

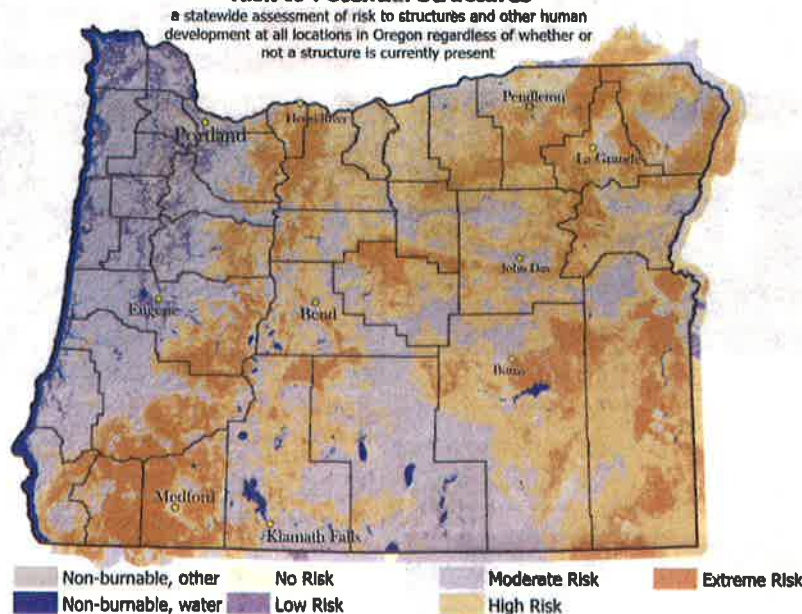
Two years after the creation of the bill and the development of the map, the state's wildfire risk map is in a state of limbo. The Oregon State Fire Marshal pulled the map offline in August, saying it'd return after gathering more public input. OSFM paused the effort indefinitely in January after the legislature introduced bills that could substantially change the map. Senate Bill 80 is the most impactful of the legislation targeted at the map this session.

"It changes the number of hazard zones and changes the name from a risk map to a hazard map so it more accurately reflects what the map is depicting," Gasperini, from the ODF, said. "There are many other things in there and it requires a certain number of community meetings and meetings with county commissioners and planning staff, and basically kind of provides an outline for that public engagement before a map is released."

SB80 is currently referred to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means but passed a work session on April 11 with a recommendation to pass. Another bill that'd impact the wildfire map, Senate Bill 82, prohibits insurers from using the map as a basis for canceling, not renewing or increasing premiums. It also requires insurers to relay information about their wildfire risk mitigation in their underwriting guidelines and rate

Risk to Potential Structures

a statewide assessment of risk to structures and other human development at all locations in Oregon regardless of whether or not a structure is currently present



The state's wildfire risk map is currently in limbo, partly due to proposed legislation that could significantly change it.



Fire rages behind a home in Bend during the 1996 Skeleton Fire, which burned 18,000 acres and damaged or destroyed 30 structures.

plans, and mandates insurers give clients 24 months to repair or replace damaged or lost property if it was directly related to a fire declared an emergency under the Emergency Conflagration Act.

With uncertainty about what a new map would require, Gasperini said there's no clear timeline on when the next iteration of a map might be released. The previous one took over a year and required a lengthy rule-making process. If changes are approved in the legislature it may have to go through a public process to change ODF's administrative rules and conduct

community engagement before a new map is released. In the meantime, though, he said they're looking at a few refinements stemming from public comments.

"I would generally just say that based on the public feedback that we received after the initial release of the map, the two main areas that we've been working on are the concerns related to irrigated lands and the classification differences on adjacent lots," Gasperini said.