

# Climate and Environment Policy Advisory Committee (CEPAC)

## Draft Minutes

March 12, 2026, 5:00 – 7:00 PM

51 Winburn Way Ashland, OR 97520

### 1. Call to Order

- **COMMITTEE MEMBERS-** Mark Morrison, Sharon Dohrmann, Jennie Christopherson, Gary Shaff, Kip Barret, Maya Baerg, Sidney Brown
- **PRESENT: OPEN POSITIONS: 2**
- **ABSENT:** n/a
- **CITY COUNCIL:** Bob Kaplan
- **STAFF:** Chad Woodward

### 2. Consent Agenda.

- Minutes- Approved.
  - *Motion to approve by Baerg, seconded by Dohrmann. Approved by Dormann, Baerg, Morrison, Brown, and Shaff. Passed 5-0 (Christopherson and Barret arrived after the vote).*

### 3. Public Forum

- Julie spoke presented concerns about glyphosate use in city medians, noting that 19 herbicide treatments occurred in the last 6 months of 2025, with 13 using glyphosate. She proposed volunteering to analyze pesticide application data and explore alternatives, citing examples from Portland and Eugene.

### 4. New Business – Adaptability and Resiliency – Presentation by Chris Chambers – City of Ashland Division Chief, Forestry Division

- Chris Chambers then delivered a presentation on the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), highlighting Ashland's high wildfire risk and the need for community resistance rather than resilience. He explained the history of Ashland's previous wildfire protection efforts, including the successful Ashland Forest Resilience Stewardship Project, and outlined the new CWPP's vision of strengthening community ties while ensuring safety during wildfires.
- More specifically, Chambers discussed the plans for achieving a 90% level of building resistance to ember attacks in the next ten years. This would require significant investment estimated at \$80 million.
- Other key areas discussed included the wildfire risk assessment program, evacuation systems, outreach to vulnerable populations, and securing funding, with the council having passed a wildfire risk reduction fee. The group addressed structural hardening programs, noting past challenges with

FEMA funding and the importance of vegetation management in reducing fire risk.

- Chambers also discussed the potential acquisition of the Madron Ridge property, a 1,1000-acre site west of Ashland, which Western Rivers Conservancy wants to buy and convey to a government agency. Ashland outlined the benefits of city ownership, including wildfire protection, ecological diversity, and training opportunities, noting that maintenance would cost approximately \$96,000 annually over 10 years.
- It was noted that a letter of support from CEPAC would be helpful on future grant applications.

## 5. **Updates/Announcements**

- Staff Update – Woodward:
  - Woodward presented data on the home energy score pilot program, reporting 32 completed scores with potential for significant cost reductions and emissions decreases through weatherization upgrades, while also addressing feedback about the scoring system's presentation and privacy concerns.
  - Woodward updated on the carbon pollution impact fees, 22 applicable applicants have been identified for new residential projects, with about half choosing gas appliances for fireplaces, cooktops and hot water.
- Council Update – Kaplan:
  - Kaplan provided updates on new electric rates approved, including a 3.8% increase for residential households, and mentioned the upcoming Natural Gas Franchise Ordinance discussion on April 7th regarding a potential new franchise agreement with Avista.

## 6. **Old Business – Expand Awareness of City Incentives and Programs**

- The group reviewed incentive program performance, noting that permitting delays are not an issue as previously thought. They discussed reallocating a small marketing budget to increase awareness of available incentives, with current data showing 243 incentives worth \$163,253 distributed year-to-date, which is on track to meet the \$250,000 budget. Woodward noted success in heat pump installations reaching 88 units this year so far.
- *A motion was made by Morrison and seconded by Dorham to extend the meeting by 15 minutes to continue the meeting beyond 7:00 pm. The motion passed 7-0. Approved by Dormann, Baerg, Morrison, Brown, Shaff, Christopherson and Barret.*
- The committee discussed challenges with the package terminal heat pump (PTHP) incentive program. The group explored options for reallocating budget from underutilized solar and PTHP funds to support marketing and outreach

efforts, particularly targeting apartment owners and HVAC installers. The committee agreed to have staff research available budget options and report back at the next meeting, with a specific focus on exploring external help for outreach activities.

- Woodward is to email all known property renters and HVAC companies with information about this program. Woodward is also to call the 20 largest property managers/rental owners before next meeting.

**7. Meeting Adjourned at 7:15.**

# 2025 Ashland Community Wildfire Protection Plan

Photo credit: Darren Campbell



CEPAC Meeting: March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026

CWPP Contractor:



*Funded by a grant from the USDA Forest Service*

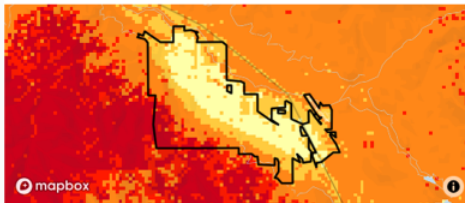
## Ashland has a **very high risk** of wildfire—higher than 97% of communities in the US.

↓ Choose from the topics below to learn more

### Understand your risk

#### Risk to Homes

Where are homes at risk of wildfire?



#### Wildfire Likelihood

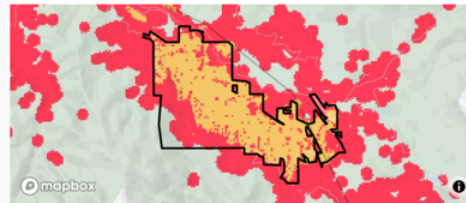
How likely is a wildfire in this area?



### Reduce your risk

#### Risk Reduction Zones

Which actions are most effective to reduce risk?



#### Vulnerable Populations

Who is most at risk and how do you reach them?



No surprise,  
Ashland is in  
the middle of  
the target



OPINION

DAVID WALLACE WELLS

# Which City Burns Next?



***We must recognize that our communities were developed in a climate and environment that no longer exist.***

***Now is the time to invest in long-term, economically efficient solutions, rather than short-term, risk-averse tactics.***

***We have to live with wildland fire. We don't have to live with fire in our communities.***

***From: Calkin, et al., 2023, Wildland-urban fire disasters aren't actually a wildfire problem.***

# What is a CWPP?

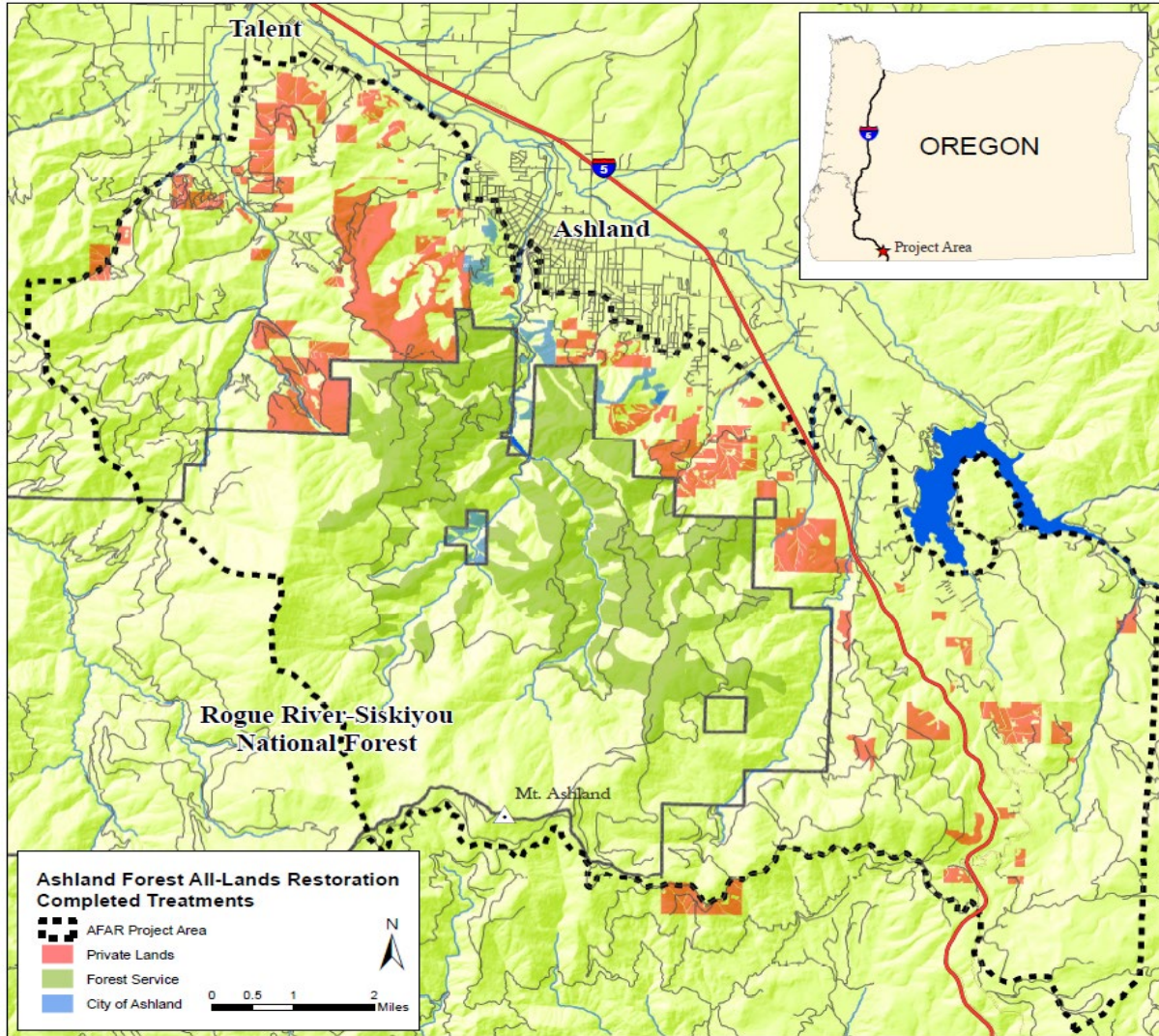
1. Community's strategic plan to avoid a wildfire disaster
2. Key to unlock grant funding
3. Directs U.S. Forest Service to consider community priorities in the City's watershed
4. A CWPP requires collaboration, measures to reduce structural ignitability, and prioritizing fuel reduction areas (HFRA, 2003)

# 2004 to 2025: Changing Priorities

1. 2004 Ashland CWPP focused on watershed and forest values
2. Time was limited to engage full community
3. The wildfire picture has radically changed since 2004
4. Major shift to community preservation due to increasing urban conflagrations in wildfire-prone areas.

# 2004 to 2025: Building on Success

1. Ashland Forest Resiliency Stewardship Project, or AFR, created a model of success for community wildfire mitigation in forests.
2. AFR initially planned for 7,500 acres at a cost of \$12 million. Final project covered 14,000 acres and raised \$33 million, a testament to success attracting funding and enabling more work.



# The CWPP Vision

**Vision Statement:** *We envision a future where Ashland's fabric, economy, and spirit not only withstand wildfire—but grows stronger and more connected because of it. In this future, residents, students, workers, visitors, and pets remain safe during wildfires and return quickly to undamaged homes, schools, businesses, and gathering places.*

## Thematic Goals

***Stronger Together, Safer Forever*** – **Inspire and mobilize** the Ashland community through trust, shared leadership, and open dialogue to achieve 90% risk reduction within 10 years.

***Strengthen What Matters, Track What Counts*** – **Harden Ashland's highly valued resources and assets (HVRAs)** to wildfire through data-informed strategic planning, regular risk assessments, and monitoring progress.

***Smart Standards, Big Results*** – **Revise municipal codes** to align with the 90% risk reduction goal by integrating clear compliance timelines and financial assistance for eligible populations.

***Strengthen Our Core, Fund the Mission*** – **Establish a reliable local funding mechanism** and build core capacity to partner, secure, manage, and match essential risk reduction resources.

***Meaningful Work, Massive Impact*** – **Secure funding** to support wildfire risk assessments, implement inclusive community engagement initiatives, create and maintain resilient forests, and fund structure-hardening and defensible space work.

# CWPP Topics Overview

2025 Ashland CWPP – Topics Overview




CWPP Topic Areas

Community Participation	Community Risk Assessment	Vulnerable Populations	Renters
			

## Community Participation

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CWPP Topic Areas

Community Participation	Community Risk Assessment	Vulnerable Populations	Renters
			

## Community Risk Assessment

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CWPP Topic Areas

Community Participation	Community Risk Assessment	Vulnerable Populations	Renters
			

## Vulnerable Populations

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


CWPP Topic Areas

Community Participation	Community Risk Assessment	Vulnerable Populations	Renters
			

## Renters

2025 Ashland CWPP – Topics Overview





CWPP Topic Areas

Insurance Crisis	Resources and Assets	Residential Risk Reduction	Economic Stability
			

## Insurance Crisis

2025 Ashland CWPP – Topics Overview





CWPP Topic Areas

Insurance Crisis	Resources and Assets	Residential Risk Reduction	Economic Stability
			

## Resources and Assets

2025 Ashland CWPP – Topics Overview





CWPP Topic Areas

Insurance Crisis	Resources and Assets	Residential Risk Reduction	Economic Stability
			

## Residential Risk Reduction

2025 Ashland CWPP – Topics Overview





CWPP Topic Areas

Insurance Crisis	Resources and Assets	Residential Risk Reduction	Economic Stability
			

## Economic Stability

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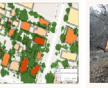



CWPP Topic Areas

Paradigm Shift	Landscape Resiliency	Community Health and Safety	Wildfire Recovery
			

## Paradigm Shift

2025 Ashland CWPP – Topics Overview





CWPP Topic Areas

Paradigm Shift	Landscape Resiliency	Community Health and Safety	Wildfire Recovery
			

## Landscape Resiliency

2025 Ashland CWPP – Topics Overview





CWPP Topic Areas

Paradigm Shift	Landscape Resiliency	Community Health and Safety	Wildfire Recovery
			

## Community Health and Safety

2025 Ashland CWPP – Topics Overview

CWPP Topic Areas

Paradigm Shift	Landscape Resiliency	Community Health and Safety	Wildfire Recovery
			

## Wildfire Recovery



Cutting-edge hazard mapping was created by the City, Rogue Reconnaissance, and Oregon State University using ultra high-resolution aerial data from a method called LiDAR. The risk and hazard assessment will be used to help prioritize areas of the city and to measure progress.

Ladder fuels are a key measure of the potential for crown fire and ember production.

77% of  
respondents say  
action is needed  
as quickly as  
possible



The 2010 Oak Knoll Fire

# CWPP Priority: Prevent an Urban Conflagration

The goal is to achieve meaningful wildfire risk reduction in 10 years. This requires strategically mitigating risk on ~90% of structures in the city.



# Other Key CWPP Content:

1. Public Safety: Evacuation and Wildfire Smoke Exposure
2. Insurance Crisis
3. Water System Flow Analysis
4. Electric Infrastructure Hardening
5. Wildfire Recovery Planning

# WILDFIRE MITIGATION PLAN

May 2022

Prepared For:



Electrical Department,  
City of Ashland, Oregon

Version: DRAFT 05/27/2022  
FINAL 05/31/2022

Prepared By: The logo for Stoddard Power Systems, featuring a stylized orange and blue 'S' shape followed by the text 'STODDARD POWER SYSTEMS' in blue.

Engineers: Jerry Witkowski, P.E.  
Jiajia Song, P.E.  
Martin Stoddard, P.E.



# The insurance Crisis in Ashland threatens Housing, Renters, & Local Businesses

- Ashland property owners face rising premiums (as much as 700%) and shrinking coverage. Inability to get insurance affects property values. Some homeowners are choosing not to have insurance.
- Some insurers will only insure properties that meet fire-resistant standards.
- ~67% of Ashland renters are uninsured – at risk of losing all assets and housing because of wildfire.
- Socially vulnerable residents (low income, seniors, disabled, single parents, and limited-English speakers) are least insured and face displacement.
- Rising insurance costs threaten Ashland's economy – business continuity and housing security are at risk.

# Getting to Work: Next Steps

## Implementation Priorities

**Scaling up wildfire risk assessments** and structure-hardening programs citywide.

**Strengthening evacuation systems** and smoke resilience initiatives.

**Focusing outreach on socially vulnerable populations and renters**, ensuring equitable access to wildfire risk reduction resources.

**Building a full-time CWPP implementation team** and a robust tracking dashboard.

**Securing an average of \$8 million annually** for 10 years to fund wildfire mitigation, workforce development, and public engagement.

**Revamping local codes and ordinances** to align with modern wildfire science.

# Top 4 Risk Reduction Barriers to Making Homes Safer from Wildfires

**84%** had no control over their home's safety from wildfire.

Lack of Agency

Almost **1 in 5** residents are living below the federal poverty line and nearly 40% of Ashland households are deemed "cost burdened."  
(ACCESS, 2023)

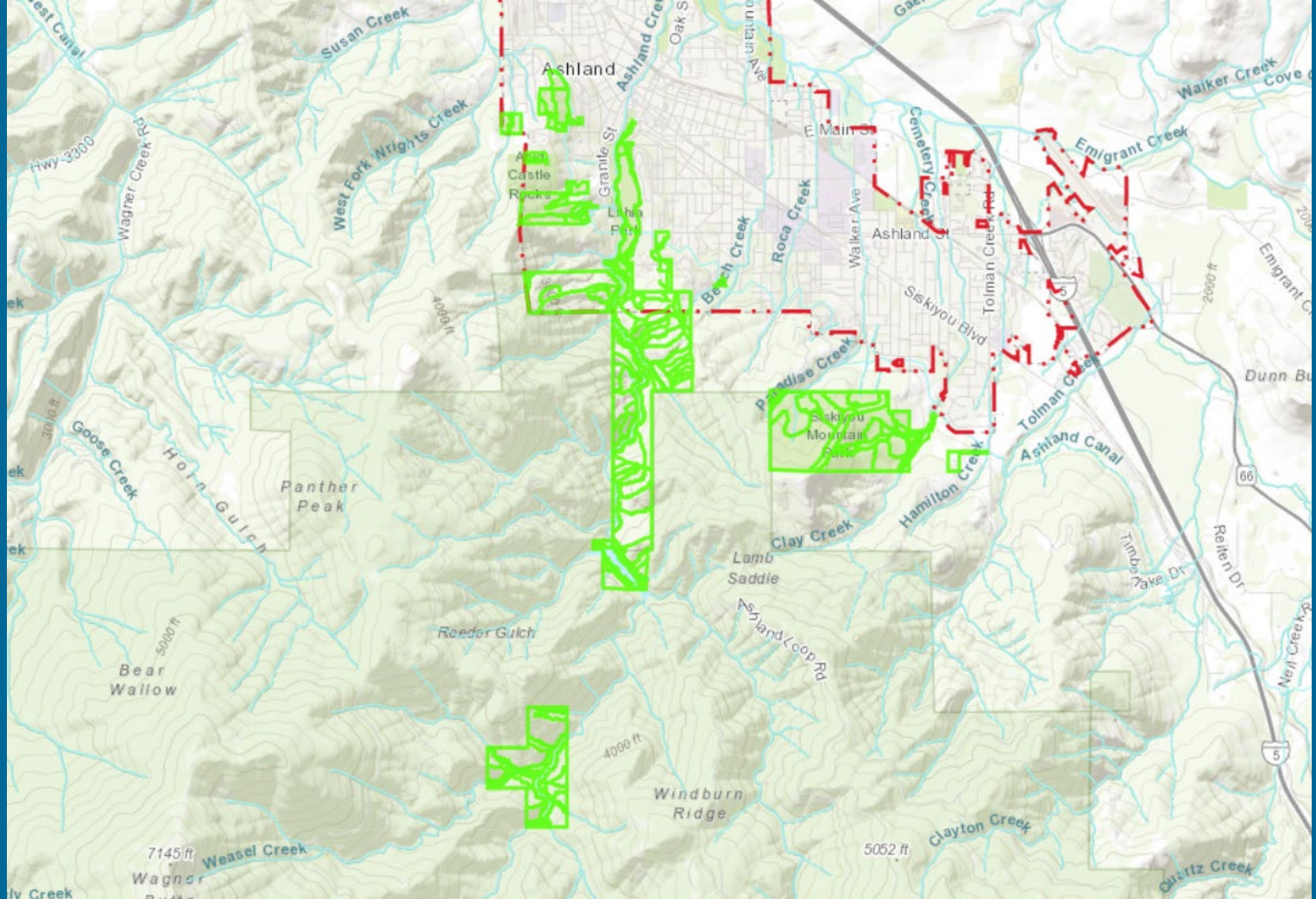
Financial Constraints

Approximately **22%** of SVSPs reported not receiving any wildfire safety information, revealing a major outreach gap, particularly among **apartment dwellers**.

Inadequate Knowledge

The top barrier reported by **single family residents** was physical difficulty in performing mitigation work, cited by **nearly half (49%)** of respondents

Physical Limitations

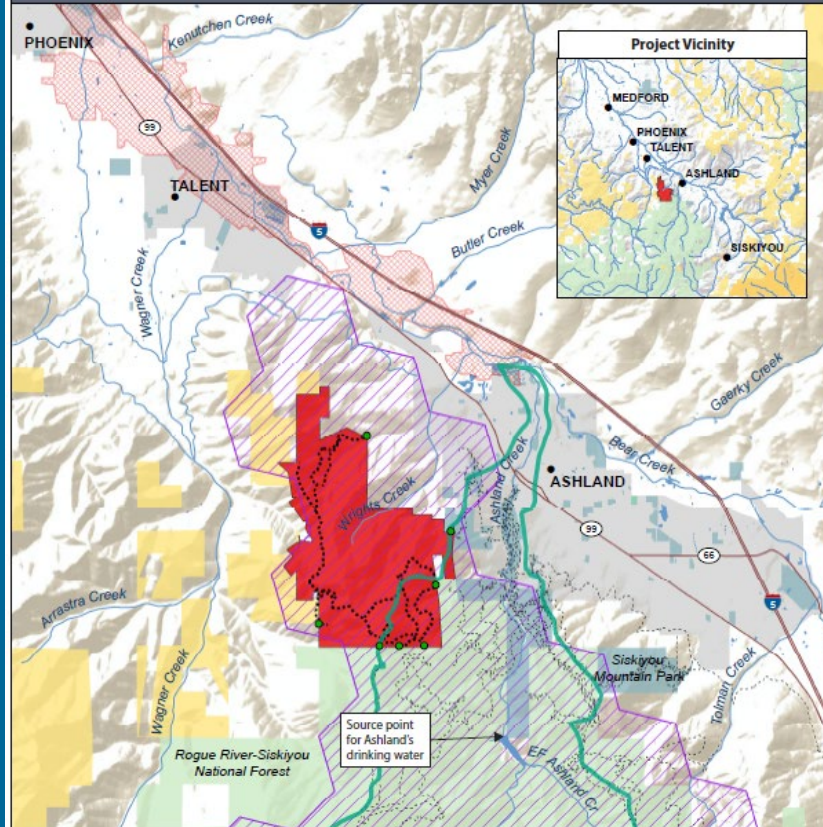


“Maintaining or even promoting the ability of forests to adapt to diverse and unexpected disturbance(s) without losing ecological integrity should become of the highest priority.”

Source: Puettman et.al. 2009. A Critique of Silviculture: Managing for Complexity.

# Madrone Ridge Property

## Madrone Ridge Forest Protection Project Wrights Creek Jackson County, OR



# Madrone Ridge Property

- 2,000 acres bordering Ashland to the west
- Places a significant strategic location for community and watershed wildfire protection under our control
- Preserves ecologically diverse lands from development
- Opens recreation opportunities
- Opportunities for habitat enhancement in Wrights Creek
- City acquires water rights
- No cost to acquire the property, just to maintain it
- Fire and forestry training center
- Lomakatsi partnership allows tribal re-engagement

# Madrone Ridge Property Maintenance

- History of recent fuels reduction and forest restoration under the Ashland Forest Resiliency Project (1,354 acres)
- Long-term maintenance can largely be done with prescribed burning, here's a breakdown:

Acres of prescribed burns completed in last 10 years: 389 ac  
Cost to reburn 389 acres over next 10 years = \$427,900

Acres of fuels reduction completed but NOT included in above acres: 965 ac  
Cost to maintain 965 acres over ten years \$537,987

10-year TOTAL: \$965,887

**Annual Cost: \$96,588 (assuming no training or external grants)**



