



STATE OF WASHINGTON
— OFFICE OF GOVERNOR JAY INSLEE —

October 4, 2023

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Through: Mr. Willie Nunn
Regional Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Region 10
130-228th Street Southwest
Bothell, WA 98021-9796

Dear President Biden:

Under the provisions of Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207 (Stafford Act), implemented by 44 CFR § 206.36, I am requesting you declare a Major Disaster for the state of Washington due to damages incurred by devastating wildfires beginning August 18, 2023, through August 25, 2023. *This disaster has destroyed more primary homes than any other wildfire in Washington state history.* Events of this severity and magnitude exceed the recovery capability of the state and impacted local governments and supplemental federal assistance is required. I am specifically requesting assistance from the Individual Assistance Program for Spokane County. This request for assistance includes Mass Care and Emergency Assistance, Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program, Disaster Unemployment Assistance, Disaster Legal Services, Disaster Case Management and the Individuals and Households Program. We are also seeking assistance from the Small Business Administration.

We are also requesting direct federal assistance from the following agencies for support to disaster survivors:

- United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) - For assistance with debris management activities, with a focus on preventing debris and contaminants from impacting local waterways.
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) - For assistance in testing debris for asbestos and other contaminants, enabling the proper handling and disposal of debris to limit

contamination of surface and ground water. The local Clean Air Agency requires asbestos testing for all debris prior to removal and disposal.

- Federal Voluntary Agency Liaison - For assistance in delivering services to survivors.

The following information highlights the severity and magnitude of this disaster:

- 369 primary homes were destroyed and a total of 447 primary homes were damaged;
- Spokane County homeowners insurance rate is estimated at 50.22 percent;
- Two fatalities and multiple injuries;
- Significant disruptions to lifesaving, life-sustaining and essential community services;
- Patients and staff at a state-operated 367-bed inpatient psychiatric hospital and a residential rehabilitation center, were forced to shelter in place for five days with limited power;
- Hundreds of individuals evacuated for more than 96 hours;
- At least 227 people stayed in congregate shelters at the peak of the incident;
- More than 20,000 acres burned; and
- Reduction in property value is estimated at more than \$150 million across 759 impacted parcels in Spokane County.

Weather Conditions

Two wildfires in Spokane County ignited and spread rapidly on August 18, 2023. Multiple days of record or near-record temperatures leading up to the incidents primed the landscape for extreme fire behavior. Near the time of the fire ignitions, a dry cold front moved through the region bringing windy and abnormally dry conditions which aided the rapid fire spread.

July and early August had been dry across Spokane County. Average precipitation amounts at Spokane International Airport (KGEG) from July 1 to August 18, 2023, was 0.67 inches. KGEG received 0.18 inches of precipitation during the 45 days leading up to mid-August, most of that falling July 10, 2023 (0.12 inches). This resulted in a deficit of 0.49 inches of precipitation. In northern Spokane County, Deer Park (KDEW) had a similar deficit of 0.52 inches from July 1 to August 18, 2023. The dry summer weather pattern resulted in moderate drought conditions spreading into Eastern Washington in the weeks leading up to the wildfires.

Anomalously hot temperatures occurred in Eastern Washington in the days leading up to the wildfires in Spokane County. From August 14 through 17, 2023, record or near-record temperatures were observed at many locations including KGEG. Temperatures in the upper 90s to low 100s °F along with low relative humidity primed fine fuels to be much more receptive to wildfire. A daily record of 102 degrees was set August 15, 2023, and a record tying 101 degrees on August 16, 2023.

The combination of receptive fuels and adverse atmospheric weather conditions can be quantified by the Hot-Dry-Windy Index (HDWI). The HDWI identifies regions where it will be

more difficult to manage wildland fire. The observations in Eastern Washington on August 17 through 18, 2023, were around the 95th percentile in the 30-year climate record.

Weather Impact Timeline

From the period of August 18 through August 25, 2023, Washington state experienced two deadly and massively destructive wildfires which were the result of abnormally dry and windy conditions.

Beginning August 16, 2023, and continuing through the incident period, the National Weather Service (NWS) issued multiple weather statements affecting dozens of counties in the state. These included fire weather watches, red flag warnings and notices for “critical fire weather conditions.” As the critical fire weather consisting of abnormally dry and breezy conditions approached, the NWS weather briefings listed expected impacts as “major” for Eastern Washington.

On August 18, 2023, extreme fire weather conditions, including sustained winds exceeding 20 mph and frequent gusts surpassing 30 mph, led to explosive fire behavior for both the Gray Fire and Oregon Road Fire which ignited on this day. Due to the high wind speeds, aerial firefighting operations were limited, with most support coming from the hundreds of firefighters working on the ground. Several other fires began on or around August 18, 2023, within the county and in other areas of the state, further straining critical firefighting resources.

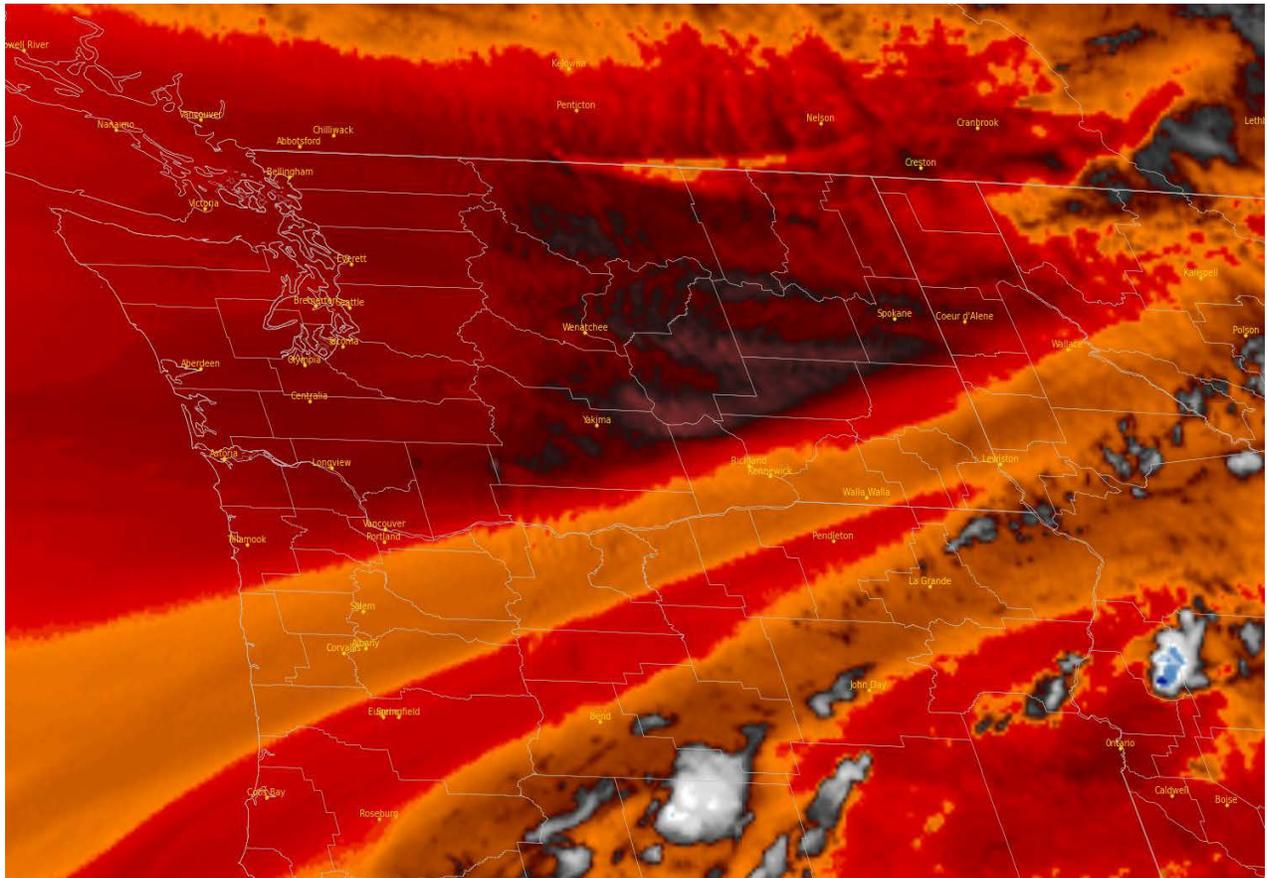


Figure 1. Lower atmosphere water vapor satellite imagery from GOES-18 around the ignition time of the fires on August 18, 2023. Dark reds and browns in Eastern Washington signify extremely dry air.

On the evening of August 18, 2023, a cold front moved through the region, bringing cooler temperatures and continued high wind conditions. In addition, relative low humidity levels plummeted during the time of the wildfire ignitions, further exacerbating extreme fire behavior and rapid fire growth. The relative low humidity and dew point measurements taken on August 18, 2023, were near-record values based on an 82-year period. A near-record value was also taken on August 18, 2023, for precipitable water, a measurement of how dry the atmosphere is at a given time.

As the fires continued to spread, the entire city of Medical Lake, with a population of nearly 5,000, and multiple surrounding communities were forced to evacuate as the Gray Fire rapidly spread, destroying homes, buildings, and infrastructure. In the north end of Spokane County, the Oregon Road Fire was also raging, forcing the evacuation of hundreds of individuals and families in the rural community of Elk. In total, an estimated 3,000 homes and other structures were threatened by the two fires. By the evening of August 18, 2023, numerous homes were destroyed, businesses were damaged, and infrastructure sustained significant damage. Numerous roads were closed, including Interstate 90, as the Gray Fire burned to the east, jumping across the interstate and damaging roadway infrastructure in the process. Fiber and utility infrastructure were destroyed by the Gray Fire and Oregon Road Fire, leaving an estimated 33,945 customers without power. Customers remained without power for as many as six days.

Breezy winds continued into August 19 and August 20, 2023, causing rapid fire growth and gusts between 10 and 18 mph. As the winds shifted direction, the fires pushed south, impacting the fire's behavior and making progress on containment difficult. Hundreds of homes continued to burn during this timeframe, as responders focused on life safety in the extreme conditions.

Both the Gray Fire and Oregon Road Fire continued to cause substantial damage as the low relative humidity, high winds, and drought conditions persisted August 20 through August 25, 2023. Evacuation levels remained in place due to the severity of the damage and risk to public health and safety. Downed power lines and trees and fire hot spots and flare ups continued as more than 1,500 firefighters worked to contain the flames.

State and Local Impacts and Response

The Washington State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) Alert and Warning Center conducted real-time monitoring and information dissemination of all National Weather Service (NWS) weather warnings and briefings, evacuations, road disruptions and electrical outages and coordinated essential support to emergency activities throughout the entire incident period. Throughout that period, state agencies and local jurisdictions were also activating Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) and Emergency Coordination Centers (ECCs) and declaring states of emergency. The SEOC was already activated in response to several disasters, including coordinating the responses to multiple wildfires burning throughout the state and processing Emergency Management Assistance Compact requests to support the response efforts to the Maui wildfires. Simultaneously, the SEOC coordinated resource requests and information in support of impacted jurisdictions as the high winds and extreme fire behavior increased leading up to August 18, 2023. The SEOC continued its activation throughout the incident period to respond to life safety and property preservation resource requests. On August 19, 2023, the SEOC raised its activation level to 1 – Full Activation in response to the immediate lifesaving and property preservation needs of Spokane County caused by the Oregon Road and Gray wildfires. During the incident period, weather conditions were increasingly conducive to spreading the wildfire, with windspeeds recorded in excess of 30 mph, extremely low relative humidity and high temperatures. Additionally, the wildfire produced hazardous air quality conditions to much of Spokane County and degraded air quality statewide. Spokane County recorded five of the top 10 cities in the world with poor air quality on August 19, 2023. State agencies coordinated efforts to support transportation, search and rescue, mass care, logistics and external affairs related to the damaging wildfires. State agencies and departments utilized state resources to do everything reasonably possible to assist affected political subdivisions to respond to and recover from the event. The Washington State Military Department's Emergency Management Division (EMD) coordinated incident-related assistance to the affected areas.

As wildfires continued to cause extensive damage across the state, I signed Emergency Proclamation 23-05 on August 19, 2023, proclaiming a State of Emergency in all areas of the state and directed that the plans and procedures in the *Washington State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan* be implemented. Furthermore, as a result of the incident, I also

ordered the Washington National Guard and the State Guard into active state service to provide incident response support.

To support individuals and families impacted by the wildfires, I signed Emergency Proclamation 23-06 on August 31, 2023, directing, ordering and authorizing the Secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services to extend Family Emergency Assistance Program benefits to all individuals and families in the Pend Oreille, Spokane and Whitman County areas affected by wildfire. I further ordered the Secretary to also extend emergency assistance benefits to individuals and families who apply for and are eligible to receive benefits each month. The Disaster Cash Assistance Program (DCAP) was activated on September 1 and is set to end on September 29, 2023. Through September 14, 2023 a total of \$13,171 in DCAP funds was distributed to 32 households, averaging \$411 per household.

To further support individuals and families recover, I allocated \$2,500,000 from my Governor's Emergency Assistance Fund to help pay for asbestos testing for uninsured properties with debris and for Disaster Case Management. I also directed the state's Department of Commerce to allocate \$2,900,000 of emergency funds to assist in private property debris removal.

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) coordinated with the impacted jurisdictions on road closures, detours, and inspections of the damaged infrastructure and roadway systems. WSDOT maintenance crews also assisted with setting up traffic control operations and detours. Alternate State Route detours were forced to close as the wildfire threat continued to increase in the region during the incident period. The damage to roadways in the affected areas is severe – currently estimated at \$1,500,000 – making emergency repairs potentially eligible for Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Emergency Relief funds. The damage includes Interstate 90 guardrails, signs and fencing across a 13-mile stretch of roadway. There is also downed timber and additional hazardous trees that will need to be removed prior to making repairs and restoring the disturbed natural areas adjacent to the highway.

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) police officers and supervisors also took part in responding to the Gray and Oregon Road Fires to include working the night shift and supporting Spokane County with roadblocks, evacuations, and looting prevention patrols in wildfire impact zones from August 21, 2023 through August 27, 2023. The Washington State Patrol also augmented local law enforcement capabilities at evacuation and fire control points throughout the incident period.

The Washington Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Community Services Division (CSD) provided direct outreach to disaster survivors beginning August 22, 2023 in Spokane. The DSHS staff responded to two American Red Cross Shelters and staffed the Spokane County Disaster Assistance Center (DAC) from August 25, 2023 to September 1, 2023. During the response window, CSD made 222 contacts and completed 61 in-person case actions, which included benefit replacement, Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card replacement, applications, changes of circumstances, and reviews.

The Washington State Department of Health supported local and tribal jurisdiction resource requests by providing air purifiers to combat the hazardous air quality caused by the toxic wildfire smoke as well as providing behavioral health support to Spokane County.

Washington Technology Solutions (WaTech), the consolidated technology services agency for the state, worked on restoring the primary and secondary fiber connections to state facilities impacted by the Gray Fire.

The Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner issued an emergency order on August 24, 2023, to protect property insurance policyholders in the areas of the state impacted by the Gray and Oregon Road Fires. The order directs companies to provide grace periods for up to 45 days for non-payment of premium, cease from canceling any policy for non-payment, unless requested by the policyholder, and suspend the 45-day notice requirement for renewal notices.

Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOADs) aided individuals and families impacted by fires. In addition to staffing Disaster Assistance Centers, the support provided consisted of donations of monetary and goods donations (food, clothing, tools, hardware, etc.), debris cleanup and salvage, mental health services, client casework and volunteer and donations management.

Washington EMD supported Spokane County Emergency Management with the coordination and establishment of a Disaster Assistance Center (DAC). Between August 25, 2023, to September 1, 2023, the DAC served approximately 300 individuals by providing critical aid resources. More than 33 government and nonprofit agencies and organizations supported the DAC. State agencies present included the Washington State Department of Licensing, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Social and Health Services, Employment Security Department, and the Office of the Insurance Commissioner. Nonprofit and faith-based organizations present included the American Red Cross, HOPE Animal-Assisted Crisis Response, Salvation Army, Samaritans Purse, United Methodist Committee on Relief, Northwest Baptist Disaster Relief, Billy Graham Rapid Response Team, and many other Washington state and National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster. Spokane County agencies supporting the DAC included the Spokane Regional Health District, Community Health Association, County Behavioral Health, Regional Clean Air Agency, Neighborhood Action Program, Veterans Affairs, Sheriff's Office Chaplain, and County Emergency Management.

Individual Assistance

On August 28, 2023, the state requested a joint FEMA-State Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) for Individual Assistance (IA) with FEMA Region 10. The joint FEMA-State PDA for IA began August 30, 2023 in Spokane County and was completed on September 8, 2023. The joint FEMA-State PDA IA teams validated that the extreme wildfires that occurred during the incident period caused substantial uninsured and personal property losses and catastrophic losses for communities in Spokane County. A complete table of the findings from the joint FEMA-State PDA is in Enclosure A. Key findings during the joint FEMA-State PDA are noted in the table and text below.

	Assessed Damage Level to Primary Homes				
County	Destroyed	Major	Minor	Affected	Total
Spokane	369	2	15	61	447

- Total estimated cost of Housing Assistance and Other Needs Assistance is \$5,659,123.
- Spokane County homeownership rate is estimated at 64.58 percent.
- Spokane County insured rate is estimated at 50.22 percent.
- While the Total Taxable Resources (TTR) in Washington state is high and the IHP Cost-to-Capacity (ICC) ratio may appear low, this disaster must be taken into consideration with the unprecedented burden that recent disasters have placed on local and state resources. The communities that were most heavily impacted by this deadly and record-breaking wildfire disaster are overwhelmed.
- State and county resources are unable to address the immense recovery needs of individuals who lost homes and those that have experienced significant trauma.
- The state and county resources are insufficient to adequately support the estimated 1,000 individuals displaced by this disaster. Furthermore, there are insufficient resources to help individuals rebuild their homes and replace their lost belongings, particularly for those who have no insurance or are underinsured.
- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research, released a report June 1, , describing the Spokane Housing Market Area as having tight sales housing market conditions. The overall sales vacancy rate is estimated at 0.7 percent, down from 2.1 percent in 2010. Additionally, the limited supply of for-sale inventory, combined with the significant rise in population growth and demand for housing, has led to the decline in the vacancy rate. The report states that existing home sales prices in the Spokane Housing Market Area have increased an average of 10 percent annually since 2015. This disaster has further exacerbated the tight housing market by damaging or destroying 447 homes, challenging survivors to locate affordable housing in the community as they look to rebuild.

The information that follows provides further justification concerning my request to approve the Individual Assistance Program to expeditiously address the immediate needs of the displaced and impacted survivors.



Spokane County

From August 18 through August 25, 2023, two wildfires, the Oregon Road Fire and the Gray Fire, tore through Spokane County, destroying approximately 369 homes and causing damage to dozens more. Both fires exhibited erratic and extreme fire behavior including wind driven runs, crown fires, and long-range spotting as high winds and low humidity contributed to rapid fire growth. Driven by strong and gusting winds, the fires burned hundreds of acres in less than an hour by the time Level 3 “go now” evacuations were issued. On August 18, more than 5,000 individuals were evacuated in the city of Medical Lake and surrounding communities due to the

Figure 2. Before (top) and after (bottom) satellite imagery taken of a neighborhood in the city of Medical Lake showing widespread destruction from the Gray Fire. Photo taken on August 28, 2023. Source: Spokane Image Consortium and FEMA.

Gray Fire and in the unincorporated rural community of Elk due to the Oregon Road Fire. Tragically, two individuals died fleeing the fires. A third individual sustained burns to an estimated 30 percent of their body after their truck failed from the intense heat as they were escaping the flames, only surviving after being picked up by another individual fleeing the Oregon Road Fire.

Spokane County Emergency Operations Center activated on August 18 in response to the damaging wildfires and the need to coordinate resources for life safety and property preservation.

Spokane County declared a State of Emergency on August 19, 2023, as the fires continued to spread. On August 18, FEMA approved a Fire Management Assistance Declaration for the Gray Fire due to the substantial threat to public infrastructure and private property, with more than 2,000 homes threatened. On August 19, 2023, FEMA approved a Fire Management Assistance Declaration for the Oregon Road Fire.



Figure 3. The foundation and a garage are all that remains of a home destroyed by the Oregon Road Fire in the rural community of Elk. Photo taken during the state Preliminary Damage Assessment August 2023.

The Gray Fire had far-reaching impacts on both infrastructure and communities in the affected region. The Eastern State Hospital, a psychiatric facility with 367 beds, endured four days of sheltering in place without primary power sources and operating on generator power as firefighting efforts battled vigorously against the flames to prevent their advance. The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) arranged for buses for possible evacuations and the Washington National Guard sent 20 members to assist with evacuating patients and staff if needed. The Martin Hall Juvenile Detention Center was also in the evacuation zone, but forced to shelter in place with buses sent to the facility on standby in the event they were needed.

Similarly, the Lakeland Village Residential Habilitation Center faced imminent danger from the fire, prompting the activation of the DSHS' Emergency Command Center. Plans were developed to transfer medically fragile residents to local nursing homes and hospitals, if required, with most residents ultimately sheltering in place alongside Eastern State Hospital patients and staff. The Gray Fire severely damaged primary and secondary fiber connections for both Lakeland Village and the Eastern State Hospital, resulting in limited telecommunication service.

The two wildfires resulted in significant impacts to community infrastructure, adversely impacting the community's ability to reside within the impacted community safely and securely. A boil water notice was issued for residents of the city of Medical Lake on August 18, 2023, as the Gray Fire destroyed potable water access points and threatened to contaminate water with wildfire debris. The fire also affected water treatment and pumping operations at city facilities. The boil water advisory stayed in place for most areas until the end of August, including several homes through September 5 due to the extensive destruction and loss of pressure.



Figure 4. Before (left) and after (right) satellite imagery taken of a neighborhood in the city of Medical Lake showing widespread destruction from the Gray Fire. Photo taken on August 28, 2023. Source: Spokane Image Consortium and FEMA.

During the response efforts, a total of four shelters were established including three by the American Red Cross and one by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to support those affected by the wildfire crisis. These shelters facilitated the registration of 227 individuals seeking assistance and provided refuge for 1,195 overnight stays. In response to the basic needs of those sheltered, the teams served a total of 1,926 meals and 4,404 snacks. Additionally, 323 households received essential emergency supplies, while 5,185 wildfire kits containing vital tools such as shovels, rakes, work gloves and water were distributed to further aid in disaster recovery. The humanitarian effort also included addressing welfare inquiries, with 21 inquiries fully resolved, and a substantial call volume of 546 calls received at the call center for various inquiries ranging from information requests to donations. As of September 19, 2023, 293 cases were opened and the Red Cross deployed 176 staff and volunteers to provide assistance.



Figure 5. Before (left) and after (right) satellite imagery taken of a neighborhood in the city of Medical Lake showing widespread destruction from the Gray Fire. Photo taken on August 28, 2023. Source: Spokane Image Consortium and FEMA.

In addition to the direct wildfire threat, the thick toxic smoke produced from the wildfires created hazardous and very unhealthy air quality conditions across Spokane County. On August 19, 2023, five locations across Spokane County were listed in the top 10 locations with the worst air quality worldwide. All libraries in the city of Spokane served as clean air shelters during the incident period, although one library was forced to close on August 19, 2023, due to unhealthy air quality in the building. A local homeless shelter opened its doors to all as it acted as a clean air shelter for the public as well. The YMCA Camp Reed facility evacuated attendees due to poor air quality. On August 21, 2023, there were 11 hospital visits and two admissions related to wildfire smoke.

In response to the urgent need for emergency animal sheltering during the incident period, Spokane County Emergency Management collaborated with the American Humane Society to establish a temporary refuge for evacuated and displaced livestock and other farm animals at the Spokane County Fairgrounds until August 30, 2023. An essential aspect of this operation was the

provision of complimentary animal feed and hay, with support provided by the Washington Cattlemen's Association, ensuring the welfare of the sheltered animals. Recognizing the magnitude of the situation, the Newport Fairgrounds in neighboring Pend Oreille County also played pivotal roles in providing shelter for animals affected by the unfolding crisis. By August 21, 2023, these combined efforts had resulted in the successful accommodation of approximately 250 cattle, 300 horses and 750 birds, spanning a diverse array of poultry and show species across these designated shelter locations. The ongoing threat of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza necessitated diligent oversight and coordinated management, which was executed by a collaborative team comprised of Spokane County staff, the American Humane Society, and the local Animal Response team. In addition, vital resources were sourced from the Washington State Department of Agriculture's State Veterinary Office, thereby contributing to the combined efforts of ensuring the safety, care, and well-being of the sheltered animals throughout this challenging period.



Figure 6. A destroyed home and motorcycle in the city of Medical Lake following the Gray Fire. Photo taken during the state Preliminary Damage Assessment August 2023.

The fire's aftermath left many residents in Medical Lake without power for as long as six days, necessitating

meal replacement. To address the increased demand for food in the affected population, Second Harvest Inland Northwest organized special mobile markets, supporting 917 families at various locations across Spokane County and distributing additional food to local food banks. Utility companies deployed more than 150 employees to restore power and natural gas lines, but many homes and shops were too damaged or destroyed to have power restored. Several fires caused extensive damage to utility infrastructure, with more than 335 poles and two miles of utility lines needing replacement. Transportation was also severely impacted, with road closures affecting outbound fuel transport and major highways including State Route 904, State Route 902 and Interstate 90 closed in both directions for multiple days.



Figure 7. Melted siding on a home in the city of Medical Lake following the Gray Fire. Photo taken during the state Preliminary Damage Assessment August 2023.

Numerous closures and the serious threat posed by each wildfire disrupted both government and public activities. Beginning August 18, 2023, and throughout the incident period, music venues,

community events, food trucks, restaurants and recreational guides and outfitters throughout the county were forced to close or reschedule due to the threat from the wildfires and hazardous air quality caused by the wildfire smoke. The Women, Infants and Children office located on Fairchild Air Force Base office closed and evacuated on August 18, 2023, due to the threat caused by the Gray Fire.

The Medical Lake School District canceled activities on August 21, 2023. The city of Spokane took measures to safeguard residents by closing all municipal golf courses and aquatic centers due to poor air quality. One of Washington’s largest parks, Mount Spokane State Park, was forced to close to the public due to proximity to the Oregon Road Fire. City and county parks were also closed due to the hazardous conditions caused by either the wildfire smoke or substantial damage to the property. The city of Medical Lake Waterfront Park, one of the most popular parks in Spokane County, remained closed to the public as of September 8 due to wildfire-caused damages. The Silver Lake Camp and Retreat Center, a popular venue offering retreats for churches, schools, summer camp and various youth camps, suffered significant damage to their property including the destruction of five of its cabins, five homes and equipment. Children and staff at the Silver Lake Camp evacuated as the fire approached. Additionally, the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation reported at least 74 known historic properties within the Gray Fire area that sustained damage.

The Level 3 “go now” evacuations ordered for the city of Medical Lake area were downgraded on August 21, 2023, yet due to substantial downed trees, hazard trees, and downed utility poles and infrastructure across the roadways, access remained limited for several days after. The Oregon Road Fire evacuation level 3 was not downgraded until August 25, 2023. More than 21,000 acres have burned as of September 18, 2023, with more than 1,500 fire fighting personnel working to reach full containment of both fires. An estimated 1,000 individuals remain displaced due to this disaster.



Figure 8. Only the driveway and foundation remain of a home destroyed in the rural community of Elk by the Oregon Road Fire. Photo taken during the state Preliminary Damage Assessment August 2023.

Disaster Impacted Population Profile

The table below shows the disaster impacted population profile of Spokane County. Notably, the median household income in Spokane County (\$65,772) is substantially lower than the state (\$84,247) and national average (\$69,717). Additionally, the population with a disability in Spokane County (16.3 percent) is higher than the state (13.1 percent) and national (13 percent) average. The pre-disaster unemployment rate in Spokane County (6.3 percent) is higher than the state (5.9 percent) and national (3.9 percent) values.

Category	United States	State of Washington	Spokane County
Resident Population	331,449,281	7,705,281	539,339
Median Household Income	\$69,717	\$84,247	\$65,772
Population 65 Years Old and Older	16.8%	16.2%	16.8%
Population Under 18	22.1%	21.6%	21.8%

Category	United States	State of Washington	Spokane County
Population with a Disability	13.0%	13.1%	16.3%
Households Receiving Food Stamps (SNAP)	24.9%	25.1%	24.9%
Below poverty level (All Families)	12.8%	9.9%	11.2%
Pre-Disaster Unemployment Rate	3.9%*	5.9%	6.3%
Language Other Than English Spoken at Home	21.6%	20.8%	7.7%

Sources: 2021 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, 2020 Decennial Census, * = Data from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control’s (CDC) Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) can be used to identify communities that will need additional support to recover after a disaster based on factors including poverty, lack of access to transportation and crowded housing at the census tract level. The SVI score ranges from 0 (lowest vulnerability) to 1 (highest vulnerability). The 2020 SVI value for Spokane County is 0.52, indicating a medium to high level of vulnerability.

The disaster impacted population profile, combined with the SVI score for Spokane County, indicates the community requires additional federal assistance to support the recovery from this disaster.

Washington State Recent Disasters

Washington state has experienced numerous devastating disasters over the past two years, resulting in three major disaster declarations. There are currently seven “open” federally declared disasters being coordinated and managed through the Joint Field Office, highlighting the repetitive major disasters Washington has experienced in recent years and resulting ongoing recovery work. Some of the major disasters the state has recently experienced include the COVID-19 pandemic, droughts, severe weather impacts such as flooding, wind damage, landslides, wildfires, Avian Influenza (ongoing) and the European Green Crab infestation (ongoing). These disasters combined have significantly strained Washington’s ability to respond to the Gray and Oregon Road wildfires.

Since January 2022, Washington state has experienced three Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Major Disaster Declarations, nine Small Business Administration (SBA) declarations and 10 FEMA Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) declarations. Additionally, since January 2022, I’ve signed 10 Governor’s State of Emergency Proclamations, not including amendments, related to current and recent emergencies in the state. To assist Washington state in the response and recovery from these incidents, other federal funding and assistance have been made available including a number of Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Emergency Relief declarations and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE-Seattle District and USACE-Walla Walla District) PL84-99 Emergency Flood-fighting and Advance

Measures operations. While the assistance provided in response to the impacts from the recent disasters provides some relief for recovering communities, it does not meet the needs of our affected local jurisdictions.

Below is a brief description of some of the most costly and damaging events which have adversely affected the State of Washington and its residents in the past 24 months.

2023 Disasters

May 2023 State Route 504 Landslide

On May 14, 2023, record high temperatures caused rapid snowmelt in the Cascade Mountains, resulting in a landslide occurring near Johnston Ridge Observatory that severely damaged a portion of State Route (SR) 504 and demolished a bridge on SR 504 in Skamania County, necessitating repair of the roadway surface and replacement of the bridge. The landslide damage and its effects continue to impact the life and health of the people in the state of Washington, as well as the property and transportation infrastructure. On June 5, 2023, I signed Governor's Proclamation 23-03, proclaiming a State of Emergency existed in Skamania County.

July 2023 Extreme Weather and Flooding

On July 10, 2023, a severe thunderstorm producing heavy rain and lightning caused flash flooding and started multiple fires, resulting in damage to portions of US 2 and SR 28 in Douglas and Grant Counties. The flooding and lightning-caused wildfires caused damage to guardrails, highway signs, guideposts and roadway infrastructure, resulting in road closures. On July 24, 2023, I signed Governor's Proclamation 23-04, proclaiming a State of Emergency existed in Douglas and Grant Counties.

2023 Wildfires

The 2023 Washington wildfire season saw an excess of 155,503 acres burned and more than 370 homes and dozens of other buildings destroyed. The 2023 wildfire season destroyed more primary homes than any other wildfire season in Washington state history. The 2023 wildfire season consisted of 27 state fire mobilizations. Under these mobilizations, the state has shouldered a significant portion of the financial burden for fire suppression. Due to the high level of threat and extreme fire behavior, FEMA approved seven FMAG declarations in 2023. The Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) responded to 1,855 fires. Firefighting expenditures for DNR are still being totaled at this time. The Washington State Patrol expects firefighting expenditures to exceed \$25 million in 2023. The exact state expenditures resulting from the 2023 wildfire season are still being totaled at this time.

The Oregon Road Fire and Gray Fire in Spokane County began on August 18, 2023, and quickly damaged or destroyed approximately 447 primary homes, killed two individuals, and displaced more than 1,000 individuals. The scale of destruction is immense and has exhausted all local and state resources to adequately support the response and recovery to this major disaster. Additional

federal assistance is required to support the impacted communities from this unprecedented disaster.

Date	2023 State Fire Mobilizations	Impacted County / Tribe
5/27/2023	Tenth Street Fire	Douglas
6/13/2023	Benton Complex Fire	Franklin
6/13/2023	Ruppert Road Fire	Benton
6/13/2023	Hat Rock Fire	Walla Walla
6/19/2023	Oasis Fire	Walla Walla
6/24/2023	Matson Fire	Asotin
6/27/2023	Methow Fire	Chelan
6/29/2023	Moran Fire	Stevens
7/2/2023	Rest Haven Fire	Yakima
7/2/2023	Tunnel Five Fire	Skamania
7/3/2023	OIE Highway Fire	Benton
7/4/2023	McEwan Fire	Mason
7/10/2023	Baird Springs Fire	Grant
7/12/2023	Wagner Road Fire	Whitman
7/20/2023	Badger Road Fire	Douglas
7/21/2023	Newell Road Fire	Klickitat
7/25/2023	Wawawai Fire	Whitman
7/29/2023	Eagle Bluff Fire	Okanogan
7/31/2023	West Hallett Fire	Spokane
7/31/2023	Pine Hollow Fire	Yakima
8/14/2023	Trinity Fire	Benton
8/14/2023	*Pre-positioning of State Resources	Kittitas/Klickitat
8/14/2023	Toothaker Fire	Benton
8/18/2023	Winona Fire	Whitman
8/18/2023	Gray Fire	Spokane
8/18/2023	Oregon Road Fire	Spokane
9/2/2023	Yellepit Fire	Benton

2023 FMAG #s		
FM-5467	Tunnel Five Fire	Skamania
FM-5468	McEwan Fire	Mason
FM-5469	Baird Springs Fire	Grant
FM-5470	Newell Road Fire	Klickitat
FM-5472	Eagle Bluff Fire	Okanogan
FM-5479	Gray Fire	Spokane
FM-5481	Oregon Fire	Spokane

2022 Disasters

December 2021 and January 2022 Winter Weather and Flooding

From December 26, 2021, to January 15, 2022, a strong series of winter storms, windstorms, and atmospheric rivers impacted the state over a multi-week period. During this 21-day period, 18 major rivers exceeded flood stage, and record or near-record snow amounts were observed. This disaster came on the heels of record-breaking flooding and mudslides (DR-4635) occurring between November 5 – December 2, 2021, and causing widespread and significant damage across the state. The continuous series of severe storms beginning December 26, 2021, resulted in excess of \$25 million in preliminary damages to public infrastructure across the state. In response to these impacts and my request, you declared disaster DR-4650-WA for public assistance on March 29, 2022.

January 2022 (and continuing) Invasive European Green Crab Infestation

In early 2019, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) began work on establishing a framework for a management response to the European green crab. Initially native to the northeastern Atlantic Ocean, the European green crab is a globally damaging invasive species that is able to survive in a wide range of water. Once they become permanently established, European green crabs have disturbed native habitat, displaced and outcompeted resident native species, altered natural food webs, and decimated shellfish and other aquatic industries. On January 19, 2022, I signed Governor's Proclamation 22-02, ordering the WDFW to begin implementation of emergency measures as necessary to affect the eradication of or to prevent the permanent establishment and expansion of the European green crab. As of August 2023, WDFW has captured or removed 137,700 European Green Crabs this year alone and nearly 250,000 in 2022.

May 2022 (and continuing) Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)

In May 2022, the Washington Department of Agriculture confirmed the presence of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in several backyard flocks across Washington state. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife has since confirmed cases of the disease in wild birds. Avian influenza, also known as bird flu, refers to the disease caused by infection with avian (bird) influenza (flu) Type A viruses. The HPAI is extremely infectious, difficult to contain and deadly to birds, resulting in an 80 percent mortality rate. Significantly, HPAI is also potentially zoonotic, posing a substantial public health risk should HPAI-infected birds unintentionally enter the food system. The spread of HPAI poses a significant economic impact to Washington state with commercial poultry and egg production being a top 10 commodity representing a more than \$220 million industry. The largest outbreak of HPAI in Washington state began May 2022 and has required a considerable joint state and federal regulatory response to manage. Response to HPAI in Washington state remains ongoing, with dozens of HPAI-positive backyard premises in multiple counties and more than 1 million affected birds. On December 14, 2022, HPAI was detected among a large commercial flock, representing the first commercial detection in Washington state.

2022 Wildfires

The 2022 wildfire season saw more than 154,222 acres burned and at least 6 homes and 16 other buildings destroyed. The 2022 wildfire season consisted of 15 state fire mobilizations and three FEMA approved FMAG declarations. Under these mobilizations, the state has shouldered a significant portion of the financial burden for fire suppression. The Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) responded to 865 fires. Firefighting expenditures for DNR are estimated at more than \$43.5 million. The Washington State Patrol reported firefighting expenditures exceeded \$5 million.

Date	2022 State Fire Mobilizations	Impacted County / Tribe
4/7/2022	Spring Street Fire	San Juan
7/26/2022	Ragged Butte Fire	Douglas
8/1/2022	Vantage Highway Fire	Kittitas
8/3/2022	Williams Lake Fire	Spokane
8/4/2022	Lind Fire	Adams
8/4/2022	Riparia Fire	Whitman
8/9/2022	Mohr Canyon Fire	Douglas
8/11/2022	Canyon Road Fire	Yakima
8/12/2022	Miller Road Fire	Whitman
8/18/2022	Wagner Road Fire	Whitman
8/24/2022	Blankenship Fire	Asotin
9/9/2022	Goat Rocks Fire	Lewis
9/10/2022	Bolt Creek Fire	Snohomish, King
9/14/2022	Montesano Health and Rehabilitation Fire	Grays Harbor
10/16/2022	Nakia Creek Fire	Clark, Skamania

2022 FMAG #	FMAG Name	Impacted County / Tribe
FM-5447	Lind Fire	Adams
FM-5455	Bolt Creek Fire	Snohomish, King
FM-5456	Nakia Creek Fire	Clark, Skamania

July 2022 Lieser Road Overpass Damage

On July 7, 2022, the Lieser Road overpass spanning SR 14 was severely damaged when a vehicle with an over-height load struck the overpass where it crosses SR 14 near milepost 4.2 in Clark County. The damage sustained to the SR 14 overpass will require replacement of one overpass girder and repair of another girder. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) took emergency measures, closing travel lanes to restrict traffic from driving over the damaged girder. WSDOT estimated the cost to repair the damage from the collision is more than \$2 million. On September 28, 2022, I signed Governor’s Proclamation 22-04, proclaiming a State of Emergency existed in Clark County.

September 2022 State Route 506 Overpass Damage

On September 22, 2022, the State Route 506/108 bridge over Interstate 5 (SR 506 overpass) was severely damaged when a vehicle with an over-height load heading northbound on I-5 struck the SR 506 overpass where it crosses I-5 near milepost 60 in Lewis County. The damage sustained to the SR 506 overpass required replacement of one span of the structure. The Washington State Department of Transportation took emergency measures, closing travel lanes to restrict traffic from driving over the damaged girder. The State Department of Transportation estimates the cost to repair the damage from the collision is more than \$1 million. On September 29, 2022, I signed Governor's Proclamation 22-05, proclaiming a State of Emergency existed in Lewis County.

November 2022 Severe Winter Storm, Straight-line Winds, Flooding, Landslides and Mudslides

Widespread flooding impacted several counties in the state beginning November 3, 2022, and continuing through Nov. 8, 2022. This disaster resulted in widespread and significant damage to public infrastructure, causing millions of dollars in damage. More than 250,000 customers lost power during this incident period due to extreme winds. Record-breaking precipitation flooded and damaged numerous roadways across the state. In response to the widespread damage, you declared disaster DR-4682-WA for public assistance on January 12, 2023.

December 2022 Extreme Weather and Flooding

A series of atmospheric river events struck Washington state between December 18 and December 28, 2022, producing straight-line winds, ice, extreme cold temperatures and heavy rainfall. This, coupled with extreme tidal and wave actions along coastal shorelines, resulted in coastal flooding, saturated soils, and landslides in several counties across the state. These storms caused significant damage to homes and businesses, road damage, prompted road closures and detours, and led to extensive damage to public utilities and electrical power systems, threatening public health and safety. The State Department of Transportation estimated the costs of repairs exceed \$3 million. On January 31, 2023, I signed Governor's Proclamation 23-01, proclaiming a State of Emergency existed in Chelan, Clallam, Grays Harbor, Island, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Okanogan, Pacific, Pierce, Snohomish, Stevens and Whatcom Counties.

Other Disasters

Additional disasters that have adversely impacted our state in the past two years include historic wildfires, landslides, severe weather, drought, flooding, fisheries disasters, agricultural disasters and significant public health emergencies. While most of these incidents did not qualify the state to receive Major Disaster Declarations - Public Assistance or Individual Assistance, cumulatively they have led to hundreds of millions of dollars in response and recovery costs and continue to impose a burden on communities.

Fisheries Disasters

Fisheries in Western Washington have experienced sudden and unexpected large decreases in fish stock biomass multiple times in recent years. The economic impact from these fisheries disasters has significantly impacted several Tribes and dozens of communities across the state. Many fisheries have been unable to operate multiple years in a row because of low fish returns, causing detrimental impacts to annual fishery income. The low fish stock biomass also impacts the availability of fish for important ceremonial and subsistence food source purposes that many community and tribal members depend on in the winter months. During the past 24 months, 10 commercial fisheries disasters have been declared, requested or remain pending for Washington state under section 308(b) of the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act and section 312(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

In accordance with 44 CFR § 201.4, FEMA approved the Washington State Enhanced Hazard Mitigation Plan on Oct. 1, 2023. I certify that state and local government obligations and expenditures for this incident comply with all cost share requirements.

Below is a list of the federally declared disasters and other undeclared incidents for the state since 2022:

FEMA Declared Major Disasters & Emergencies 2022-Present	
Declaration Date	Event
January 2022	Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds, Flooding, Landslides and Mudslides (DR-4635)
March 2022	Severe Winter Storms, Snowstorms, Straight-line Winds, Flooding (DR-4650)
January 2023	Severe Winter Storms, Straight-line Winds, Flooding, Landslides and Mudslides (DR-4682)

Undeclared (and other Federal Agency declared) Emergencies and Disasters 2022-Present	
Incident Date	Event
January 2022	Winter Weather and Flooding (<i>State of Emergency & SBA Declaration</i>)
January 2022 (ongoing)	Green Crab Infestation (<i>State of Emergency</i>)
March 2022	Drought (<i>USDA Declaration</i>)
April 1, 2022	Drought (<i>USDA Declaration</i>)
April 15, 2022	Drought (<i>USDA Declaration</i>)
April 2022	Spring Street Fire (<i>SBA Declaration</i>)
July 2022	Lieser Road Overpass Damage (<i>State of Emergency</i>)
September 2022	SR 506 Overpass Damage (<i>State of Emergency</i>)
September 2022	Bolt Creek Wildfire (<i>SBA Declaration</i>)
October 2022	Main Street Fire (<i>SBA Declaration</i>)

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden Jr., President

October 4, 2023

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Undeclared (and other Federal Agency declared) Emergencies and Disasters 2022-Present	
Incident Date	Event
November 2022	Winter Weather and Flooding (<i>State of Emergency</i>)
April 2023	Severe Storms, Flooding and Freezing Conditions (<i>SBA Declaration</i>)
July 4, 2023	Drought (<i>USDA Declaration</i>)
July 11, 2023	Drought (<i>USDA Declaration</i>)
July 25, 2023	Drought (<i>USDA Declaration</i>)

I have designated Stacey McClain of the Washington State Military Department, Emergency Management Division, as the State Coordinating Officer for this request. He will work with FEMA and is authorized to provide any further information, assurances, requests or justifications on my behalf.

Very truly yours,



Jay Inslee
Governor

Enclosures (7)

- A: Estimated Stafford Act Requirements for Individual Assistance and Preliminary Damage Assessment Cost Estimate Worksheet
- B: Estimated Assistance from Other Federal Agency Programs
- C: OMB No. 1660-0009/FEMA Form 010-0-13
- D: NWS-Spokane Executive Weather Summary
- E: State Emergency Proclamations
- F: September 14, 2023 Request for Time Extension to FEMA Associate Administrator Bink
- G: September 18, 2023 Request for Time Extension Approval

ENCLOSURE A TO MAJOR DISASTER REQUEST

Estimated Stafford Act Requirements for Individual Assistance and Preliminary Damage Assessment Cost Estimate Worksheet

Preliminary Damage Assessments (PDA) - Individuals and Households Program (IHP) Cost Calculator													
STATE/TRIBE/TERRITORY:	Washington												
INCIDENT START/END DATE(S):	8/18/2023-8/25/2023												
INCIDENT TYPE:	Fire												
Number of Private Roads & Bridges Out:	0												
What percent of the Affected damage level dwellings will be eligible for IHP?	80%												
County Name	Destroyed	Major	Minor	Affected	Affected Getting Assistance	Total	% Owner	% Insured	(Incident Type Flood) % Insurance	% Low Income	HUD FMR for 2 bedroom - 1 month (Link)	HUD FMR for 2 bedroom - 2 month	
Spokane	369	2	15	61	49	435	63.58%	50.22%			\$ 1,198.00	\$ 2,396.00	
TOTAL/AVERAGE	369	2	15	61	49	435	63.6%	50.2%			\$ 1,198.00	\$ 2,396.00	

National Average Award Amount and Comparison		
Average Minor Damage Award Amount		Comparison
\$	3,587.86	\$ 3,587.86
Rounded Average ONA Amount		Comparison
\$	1,600.00	\$ 1,600.00
Average Major Damage Award Amount		Comparison
\$	16,051.37	\$ 16,051.37
Average Affected Damage Award Amount		Comparison
\$	1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00
Destroyed Max Award Amount (Replacement Assistance)		\$ 41,000.00
ONA Referral Rate		100%

Individuals and Households Program Cost Estimate

County	TEMPORARY HOUSING (RENTAL ASSISTANCE) COST ESTIMATE			
	Eligible Rent (Pre-Disaster Renters) - 2 month	Rent (Pre-Disaster Renters) - 2 Month Cost Estimate	Eligible Rent (Owners w/Minor, Major, or Destroyed) - 2 month	Rent (Owners w/Major or Destroyed) - 2 month Cost Estimate
Spokane	70	\$ 167,720.00	122	\$ 292,312.00

REPAIR COST ESTIMATE					
Eligible Repair (Owners w/Affected)	Repair Costs (Owners w/Affected Cost Estimate)	Eligible Repair (Owners w/Minor)	Repair Costs (Owners w/Minor) Cost Estimate	Eligible Repair (Owners w/Major)	Repair Costs (Owners w/Major) Cost Estimate
15	\$ 22,500.00	5	\$ 17,939.30	1	\$ 16,051.37

REPLACEMENT COST ESTIMATE		TOTAL Housing Assistance (HA) Estimate
Eligible Replacement (Owners w/Destroyed)	Replacement Cost (Owners w/Destroyed) Cost Estimate	
117	\$ 4,797,000.00	\$ 5,313,522.67

OTHER NEEDS ASSISTANCE (ONA) Cost Estimate			Total Estimated Federal Share (75%)	Total Estimated State Share (25%)	Total Estimated HA and ONA (100%)
Eligible ONA (All Renters and Owners w/Affected, Minor, Major, Destroyed)	ONA (All Renters and Owners w/Affected, Minor, Major, Destroyed) Cost Estimate	TOTAL ONA			
216	\$ 345,600.00	\$ 345,600.00	\$ 259,200.00	\$ 86,400.00	\$ 5,659,122.67

Preliminary Damage Assessments (PDA) - Individuals and Households Program (IHP) Cost Estimates Summary

STATE/TRIBE/TERRITORY:

Washington

INCIDENT START DATE(S):

8/18/2023-8/25/2023

INCIDENT TYPE:

Fire

ESTIMATED HOUSING ASSISTANCE (HA)	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS (Uninsured)	COST	TOTAL COST	CATEGORY TOTAL COST
TEMPORARY HOUSING				\$ 460,032.00
Rent (Pre-Disaster Renters) (Owners w/Minor, Major or Destroyed) - 2 month	192		\$ 460,032.00	
REPAIR ASSISTANCE				\$ 56,490.67
Repair Costs (Owners w/Affected)	15	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 22,500.00	
Repair Costs (Owners w/Minor)	5	\$ 3,587.86	\$ 17,939.30	
Repair Costs (Owners w/Major)	1	\$ 16,051.37	\$ 16,051.37	
REPLACEMENT ASSISTANCE				\$ 4,797,000.00
Replacement Cost (Owners w/Destroyed)	117	\$ 41,000.00	\$ 4,797,000.00	
Total Estimated Housing Assistance (HA)	330		\$ 5,313,522.67	\$ 5,313,522.67
ESTIMATED OTHER NEEDS ASSISTANCE (ONA)				
	NUMBER (Uninsured)	COST	TOTAL COST	CATEGORY TOTAL COST
ONA (All Renters and Owners w/Affected, Minor, Major, and Destroyed)	216	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 345,600.00	
Total Estimated Other Needs Assistance (ONA)	216		\$ 345,600.00	\$ 345,600.00
Total Estimated Federal Share (75%)		\$ 259,200.00		
Total Estimated State Share (25%)		\$ 86,400.00		
Total Estimated HA and ONA (75% Federal Share)			\$ 5,572,722.67	
Total Estimated HA and ONA (100% Costs)			\$ 5,659,122.67	

ENCLOSURE B TO MAJOR DISASTER REQUEST

Estimated Assistance from Other Federal Agency Programs

County / Tribal Area	SBA Home Loans	SBA Business Loans	FSA Loans	NRCS	FHWA	USACE	BIA	OTHER
Spokane	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	\$1,500,000	TBD	TBD	TBD
Totals	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	\$1,500,000	TBD	TBD	TBD

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
Federal Emergency Management Agency
REQUEST FOR PRESIDENTIAL DISASTER DECLARATION
MAJOR DISASTER OR EMERGENCY

Enclosure C

OMB Control Number 1660-0009
Expires 06/30/2023

1. Request Date Oct 4 2023

Burden Disclosure Notice

Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 9 hours per response. The burden estimate includes the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and submitting the form. This collection of information is required to obtain a benefit. You are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding the accuracy of the burden estimate and any suggestions for reducing the burden to: Information Collections Management, Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, 500 C Street SW, Washington, DC 20472, Paperwork Reduction Project (1660-0009). **NOTE: Do not send your completed form to this address.**

Completion of this form including applicable attachments satisfies legal requirements for emergency and major disaster declaration requests under 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170 and 5191, respectively, as implemented at 44 C.F.R. §§ 206.35 and 206.36. Failure to use this form may result in a failure to meet these requirements and/or a delay in processing the request.

2a. Name of State (as defined in Stafford Act 102, 42 U.S.C. § 5122) or Indian tribal government requesting declaration. Washington State	2b. Population (as reported by 2010 Census) or estimated population of Indian tribal government's damaged area(s). <u>6,724,540</u>
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3. Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's Name Governor Jay Inslee	4. Designation of State or Tribal Coordinating Officer upon declaration (if available) and phone number State Coordinating Officer - Stacey McClain 253-512-7071
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5. Designation of Governor's Authorized Representative or Tribal Chief Executive Representative upon declaration (if available) and phone number
 Governor's Authorized Representative - Stacey McClain 253-512-7071

6. Declaration Request For: Major Disaster (Stafford Act Sec. 401) Emergency (Stafford Act Sec. 501 (a))

7. Incident Period: Beginning Date Aug 18, 2023 End Date Aug 25, 2023 or Continuing

If requesting a "continuing" incident period, enclose an official statement from a qualified Federal Government agency acknowledged as a national authority in a specific incident field (e.g., United States Geological Survey for seismic incidents, the National Weather Service for flooding).

7b. Type of Incident (Check all that apply)

Drought Earthquake Explosion Fire Flood Hurricane Landslide Mudslide
 Severe Storm Snowstorm
 (rain, high water, wind-driven, rain, hail, lightning) (Must include Enclosure D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data) Straight-Line Winds
 Tidal Wave Tornado Tropical Depression Tropical Storm Tsunami Volcanic Eruption Winter Storm
 Other (please specify) _____

8. Description of damages (Short description of impacts of disaster on affected area and population). Include additional details in enclosed Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's cover letter.

Two wildfires ignited on August 18, 2023 in Spokane county, WA, rapidly growing due to the high winds and critical fire weather conditions. The fires collectively damaged or destroyed 447 primary residences, more than any other wildfire in Washington state history. The fires burned more than 20,000 acres and forced more than 5,000 individuals to evacuate. Two individuals lost their lives due to the fires and one individual sustained major burns. The wildfires causes significant damages to public utilities and electrical power systems, infrastructure and property, resulting in widespread utility outages and the closure of major roadway travel corridors for multiple days. The disaster has caused significant disruptions to life-saving, life-sustaining and essential community services. he fires have resulted in a property value reduction of more than \$150 million across 759 impacted parcels in Spokane county.

9. Description of the nature and amount of State and local or Indian tribal government resources which have been or will be committed. Include additional details in enclosed Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's cover letter.

As the wildfires continued to burn uncontrollably, I signed Emergency Proclamation 23-05 on Aug. 19, 2023, proclaiming a State of Emergency exists in all areas of the state and directed the plans and procedures in the Washington State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan be implemented, I also ordered into active state service the National Guard and the State Guard. I signed Emergency Proclamation 23-06 on Aug. 31, 2023 to add a statutory waiver, allowing for individuals to receive additional state assistance from the Family Emergency Assistance Program and authorizing the Disaster Cash Assistance Program, administered by the state Department of Social and Health Services. To further support recovery efforts, I allocated \$2.5 Mil of the Governors Emergency Assistance Fund and directed State Department of Commerce to provide \$2.9 Mil for debris removal.

10. Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment*

Individual Assistance Dates Performed **Requested** Aug 28, 2023 **Start** Sep 30, 2023 **End** Sep 8, 2023

Individual Assistance Accessibility Problems (Areas that could not be accessed, and why)

Public Assistance Dates Performed **Requested** Oct 2, 2023 **Start** Oct 3, 2023 **End** TBD

Public Assistance Accessibility Problems (Areas that could not be accessed, and why)

11. Programs and Areas Requested

Individual Assistance N/A Individuals and Households Program Crisis Counseling Program Disaster Unemployment Assistance
 All Disaster Case Management Disaster Legal Services Small Business Administration (SBA) Disaster Assistance

For the following jurisdictions, specify programs and areas (counties, parishes, independent cities; for Indian tribal government, list tribe(s) and/or tribal area(s)) If additional space is needed, please enclose additional documentation).

For States, identify Federally-recognized Tribes in the requested counties (if applicable).
Spokane Tribe of Indians

Please see **Enclosure A: Supplemental Information for Individual Assistance** for additional information in support of this request*.

**Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request*

11. Programs and Areas Requested (Continued)

Public Assistance N/A Debris Removal (Category A) Emergency Protective Measures (Category B) Permanent Work (Categories C-G)* (not available for Emergency Declaration Requests)

For the following jurisdictions, specify programs and areas (counties, parishes, independent cities; for Indian tribal government, list tribe(s) and/or tribal area(s)). If additional space is needed or your request includes different categories of work for different jurisdictions; please enclose additional documentation.

Spokane County is requesting the following assistance: United States Army Corps of Engineers- For assistance with debris management activities, with a focus on preventing debris and containments from impacting local waterways.

Environmental Protection Agency- For assistance in testing of debris for asbestos and other contaminants, enabling the proper handling and disposal of debris to limit contamination of surface and ground water. The local Clean Air Agency requires asbestos testing for all debris prior to removal and disposal.

For States, identify Federally-recognized Tribes included in the requested counties (if applicable).
Spokane Tribe of Indians

Please see **Enclosure B: Supplemental Information for Public Assistance** for additional information in support of this request*.

Indemnification for Debris Removal Activity

I do not anticipate the need for debris removal.

I anticipate the need for debris removal, which poses an immediate threat to lives, public health and safety. Pursuant to Sections 403 and 407 of the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170b & 5173, the State or Indian tribal government agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the United States of America for any claims arising from the removal of debris or wreckage for this disaster. The State or Indian tribal government agrees that debris removal from public and private property will not occur until the landowner signs an unconditional authorization for the removal of debris.

Request for Direct Federal Assistance

I do not request direct Federal assistance at this time.

I request direct Federal assistance for work and services to save lives and protect property, and:

a. I request the following type(s) of assistance:
Private Property Debris removal assistance.

b. List of reasons why State and local or Indian tribal government cannot perform, or contract for, required work and services. This unprecedented wildfire disaster, exceeds the capabilities and resources of the local governments, and the mutual aid, Conflagration, and state resources which have been made available.

c. In accordance with 44 C.F.R. § 206.208, the State or Indian tribal government agrees that it will, with respect to direct Federal assistance: (1) Provide without cost to the United States all lands, easements, and rights-of-ways necessary to accomplish the approved work; (2) Hold and save the United States free from damages due to the requested work, and shall indemnify the Federal Government against any claims arising from such work; (3) Provide reimbursement to FEMA for the non-Federal share of the cost of such work in accordance with the provisions of the FEMA-State or FEMA-Tribe Agreement ; and (4) Assist the performing Federal agency in all support and local jurisdictional matters.

Request for Snow Assistance

N/A I request snow assistance.

Snow assistance for the following jurisdictions (Specify counties, independent cities or tribes and/or tribal areas).

Please see **Enclosure D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data** for additional information in support of this request*.

*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request

11. Programs and Areas Requested (Continued)

Hazard Mitigation* Statewide **OR**

For the following specific counties, parishes, independent cities or tribes and/or tribal areas.

12. Mitigation Plan Information*

a. Mitigation Plan Expiration Date 09/30/2028 b. Type of Plan Enhanced Standard

13. Other Federal Agency Programs

I do not anticipate requirements from Other Federal Agencies I do anticipate requirements from Other Federal Agencies

Please see **Enclosure C**: Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs for additional information in support of this request*.

14. Findings and Certifications

I certify the following:

- a. I have determined that this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local government or Indian tribal government and that supplementary federal assistance is necessary.
- b. In response to this incident, I have taken appropriate action under State or tribal law and have directed the execution of the State or Tribal Emergency Plan on Aug 19, 2023 in accordance with the Stafford Act.
- c. The State and local governments, or Indian tribal government will assume all applicable non-Federal share of costs required by the Stafford Act.

15. List of Enclosures and Supporting Documentation

- Cover Letter Enclosure A (Individual Assistance)* Enclosure B (Public Assistance)*
- Enclosure C (Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs) Enclosure D (Historic and Current Snowfall Data)
- Additional Supporting Documentation State Emergency Proclamations, NWS-NOAA Executive Weather Statement, Extension Letter



Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's Signature

October 4, 2023

Date

If anyone except the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive signs this document, please provide the documentation that establishes that this individual has the legal authority to act on behalf of the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive.

*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request



Executive Weather Summary

Extreme Weather Conditions Contributing to Wildfire Impacts

18 August - 25 August 2023

For FEMA Region X Preliminary Damage Assessment - Spokane County

Andrew Brown, Warning Coordination Meteorologist; **Chad Shafer**, Science and Operations Officer;
Laurie Nisbet, Meteorologist; **Daniel Butler**, Meteorologist
National Weather Service, Spokane, Washington

Event Synopsis

Two wildfires in Spokane County ignited and spread rapidly on 18 August 2023. Multiple days of record or near-record temperatures leading up to the incidents helped prime the landscape for extreme fire behavior. Near the time of the fire ignitions, a dry cold front moved through the region bringing windy and abnormally dry conditions which aided the rapid fire spread.

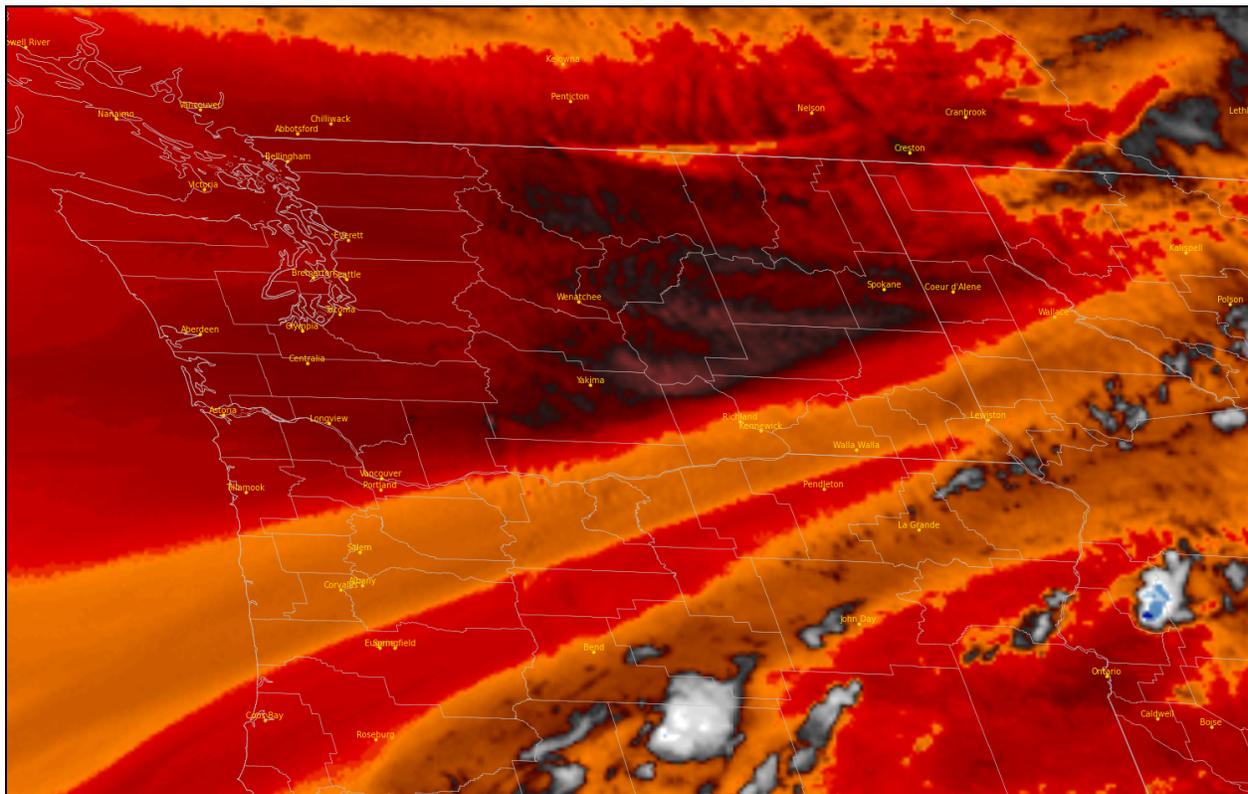


Fig 1: Lower atmosphere water vapor satellite imagery from GOES-18 around the ignition time of the fires on 18 August 2023. Dark reds and browns in Eastern Washington signify extremely dry air.

I. Climate Factors

July and early August had been dry across Spokane County. Average precipitation amounts at Spokane International Airport (KGEG) from 1 July to 18 August are 0.67". KGEG received 0.18" of precipitation during the 45 days leading up to mid August, most of that falling July 10th (0.12"). This resulted in a deficit of 0.49" of precipitation. In northern Spokane County, Deer Park (KDEW) had a similar deficit of 0.52" from 1 July to 18 August 2023. The dry summer weather pattern resulted in moderate drought conditions spreading into eastern Washington (Fig.2) the weeks leading up to the wildfires.

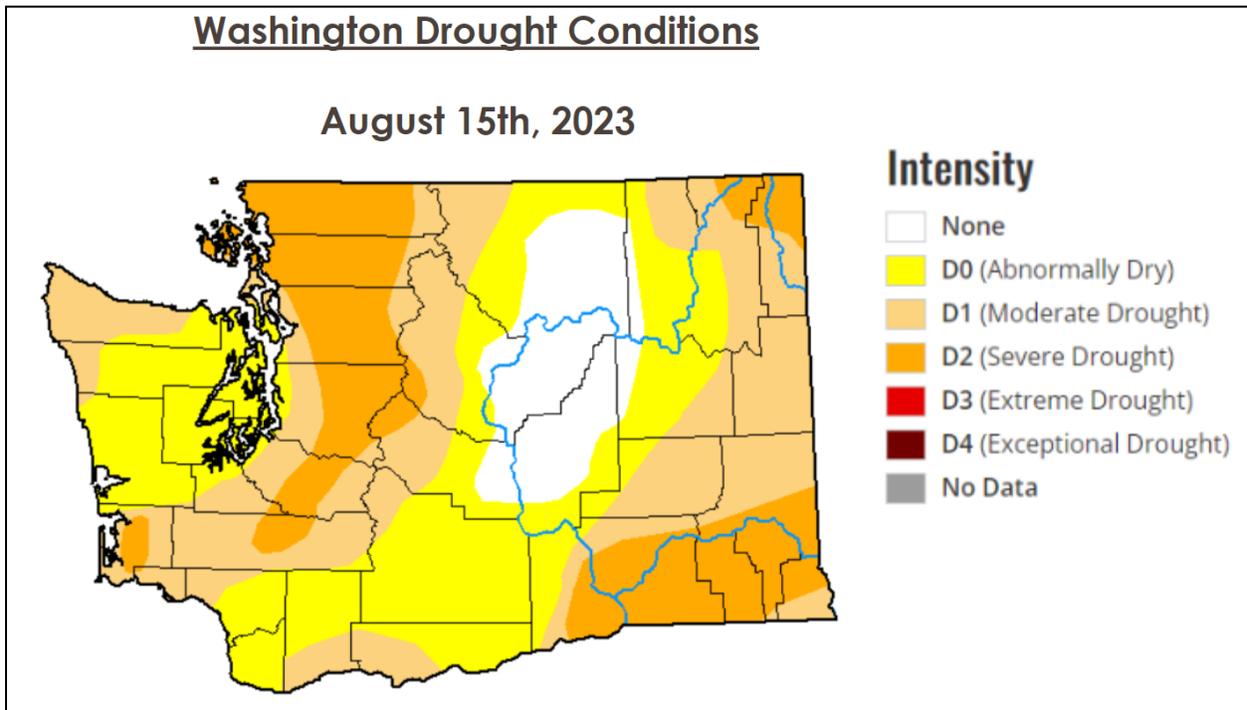


Fig 2: U.S. Drought Monitor shows moderate drought (D1) conditions in Spokane County. Fire danger is heightened in D1 or greater conditions.

II. Preceding Vegetation and Fire Danger Conditions

Anomalously hot temperatures occurred in eastern Washington in the days leading up to the wildfires in Spokane County. From 14-17 August 2023, record or near-record temperatures were observed at many locations including KGEG. Temperatures in the upper 90s to low 100s °F (Fig. 3) along with low relative humidity primed fine fuels to be much more receptive to wildfire. A daily record of 102° F was set 15 August, and a record tying 101° F on 16 August.

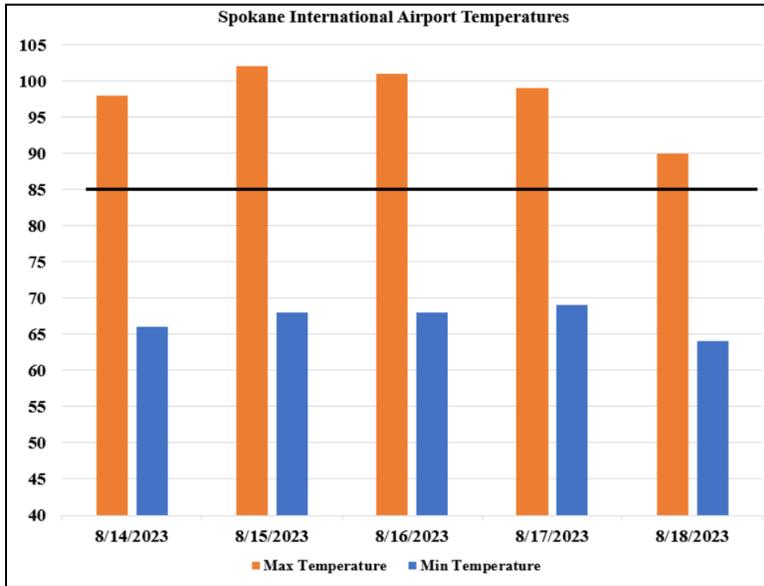


Fig. 3: Temperatures leading up to and following 18 August. The observed temperatures 14-17 August were in the upper 90s to low 100s °F. The black line represents the average high temperature during the period (85° F).

The combination of receptive fuels and adverse atmospheric weather conditions can be quantified by the Hot-Dry-Windy Index (HDWI). The HDWI identifies regions where it will be more difficult to manage wildland fire. The observations in eastern Washington on 17-18 August were around the 95th percentile in the 30-year climate record. (**Fig. 4**)

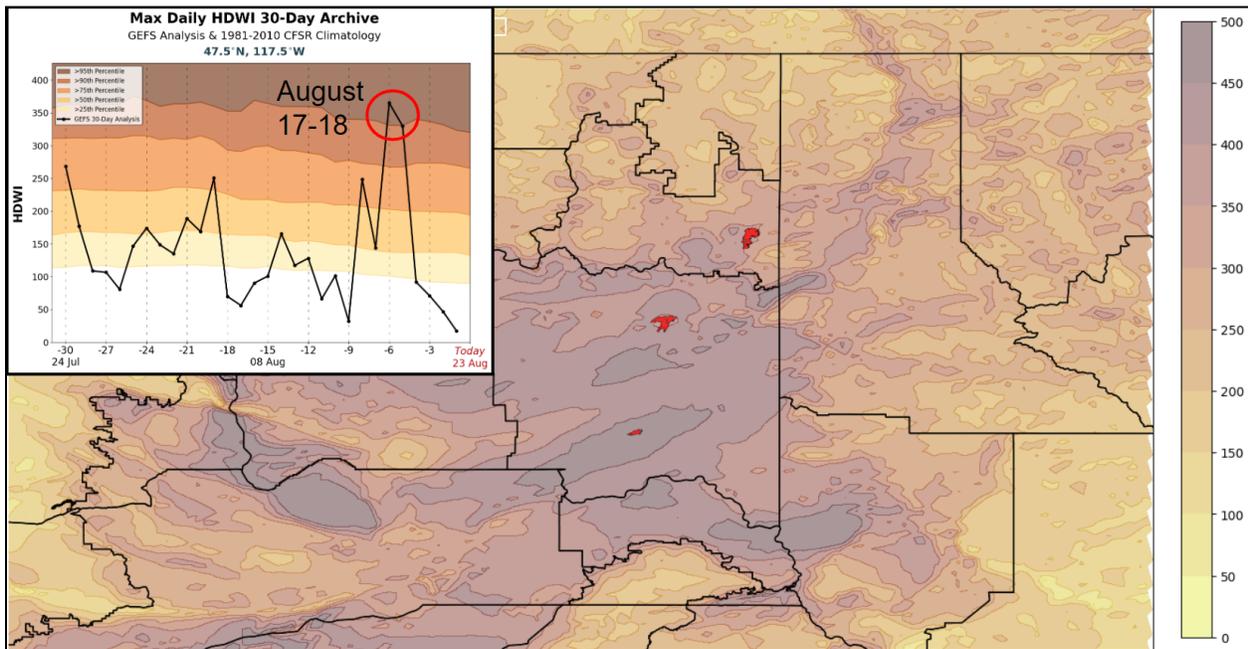


Fig. 4: Hot-Dry-Windy Index (HDWI) at 1400 PDT 18 August 2023 shows above the 95th percentile fire weather conditions relative to the 30 year climate record. Fire perimeters are highlighted in red.

III. Meteorological Timeline & Impacts

During the week leading up to the wildfires, the National Weather Service (NWS) began messaging moderate confidence of dry and breezy conditions expected both Thursday and Friday, 17-18 August. By 15 August, the NWS was advertising high confidence for “critical fire weather conditions”. In addition, a Fire Weather Watch was issued that afternoon which was later upgraded to a Red Flag Warning Wednesday, 16 August. The Red Flag Warning was in effect for central and eastern WA and north Idaho from 10 AM Thursday, 17 August, through 10 PM Friday, 18 August. Due to the high probability of critical fire weather conditions both Thursday and Friday, the NWS upgraded the expected impacts to “major” in all of the weather briefing material to core partners.

An abnormally dry and windy pattern unfolded on 18 August with several factors contributing to the extreme fire behavior that was observed. West-southwest winds increased during the morning hours and continued through the evening as a frontal boundary approached eastern Washington. During this time, sustained winds at or above 20 mph were common with frequent gusts over 30 mph. Additionally, relative humidity values dropped from 30% to 6% near the time of the wildfire ignitions. Low humidity removes moisture from the fine fuels, such as grass and pine needles, which further contributes to extreme fire behavior.

In addition to relative humidity, a measurement of atmospheric moisture content is the dew point. The dew point, along with the atmospheric temperature, is used to calculate the relative humidity. The dew point observed at KGEG between 11:53 AM and 4:53 PM dropped 35°F resulting in the near-record value of 6% relative humidity. In the 82-year period of record at KGEG, there have been only three other days in which relative humidity values were lower. The observed relative humidity of 6% on 18 August was in the 99.999985th percentile of driest relative humidity values recorded at KGEG.

A final measurement that captured how dry the atmosphere was during the afternoon of 18 August is Precipitable Water (PWAT). The nearby National Weather Service Forecast Office in Spokane, WA measured a PWAT of 0.17” from the 1600 PDT weather balloon launch, a record value for 18 August and a near-record value for all summer months.

A cold front moved from north to south during the evening hours on 18 August. This brought an abrupt wind shift along with cooler temperatures. **(Fig. 5)** Breezy north winds accompanied the frontal boundary which brought wind gusts 10 to 18 mph from 19-20 August. As a result, the daytime high temperatures during this time only reached 77-82° F, significantly cooler than the week leading up to the wildfires. The north wind pushed fires due south during this period resulting in the continued closure of Interstate 90 and extending evacuations further south. Temperatures continued to cool midweek as a broad area of moisture approached the region. The favorable weather conditions reduced the fire behavior allowing for road closures and evacuation notices to be lifted by 25 August.

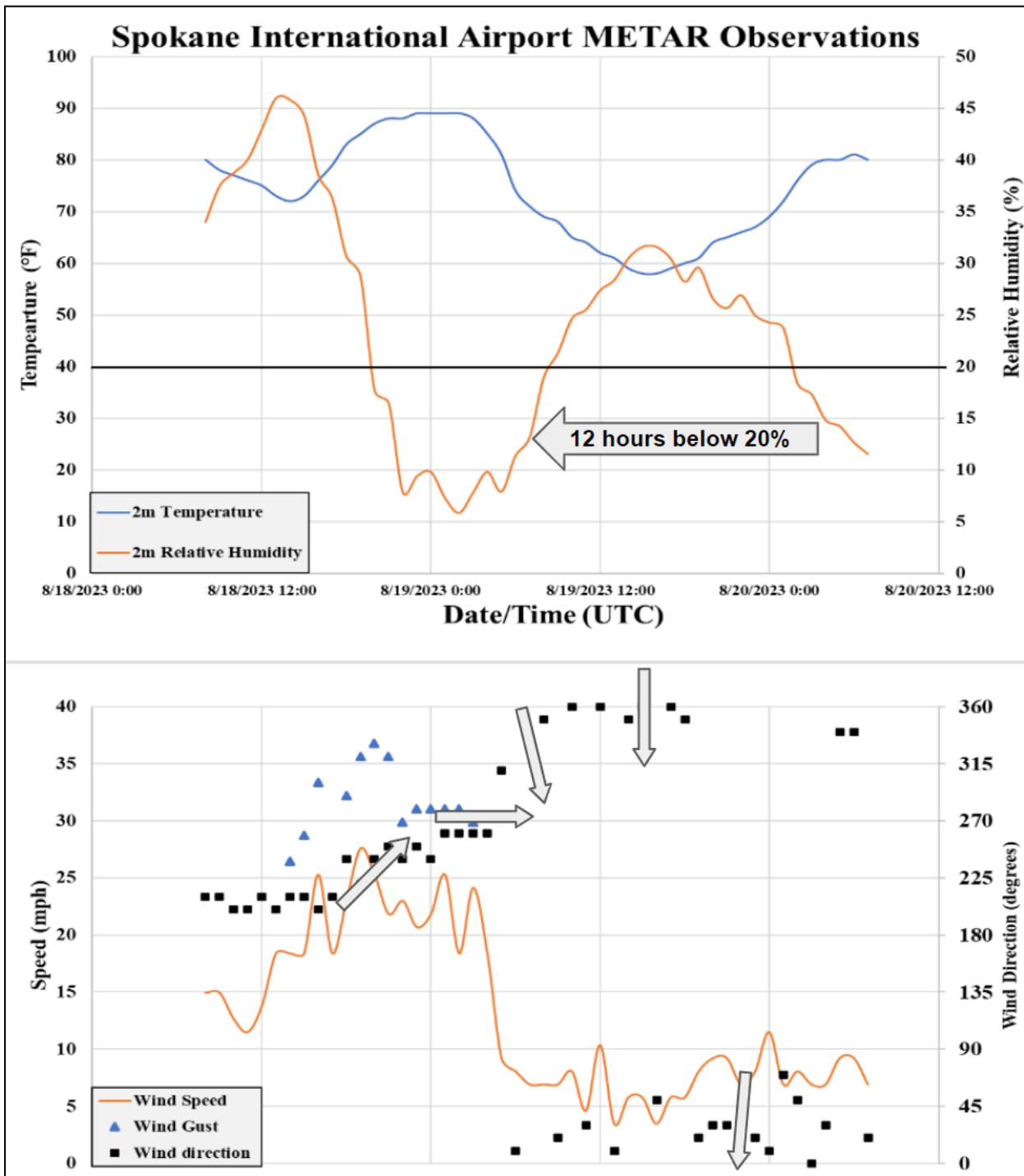


Fig. 5: (Top) Hourly temperature and relative humidity time series from 0000 PDT 18 August to 0000 PDT 20 August. (Bottom) Hourly wind speed, gust, and direction time series from 0000 PDT 18 August to 0000 PDT 20 August. Arrows depict the change in wind direction over time.



STATE OF WASHINGTON
— OFFICE OF GOVERNOR JAY INSLEE —

EMERGENCY PROCLAMATION BY THE GOVERNOR 23-05

2023 Wildfires

WHEREAS, since July 2023, Washington State has been experiencing abnormally dry weather conditions with periods of exceptionally high temperatures throughout the state creating high-risk fuel conditions in many areas; and

WHEREAS, there are multiple ongoing wildfires in Western, Central, and Eastern Washington, and significant wildfire potential is predicted to continue through the remainder of August, September, and October due to the high risk fuel conditions capable of producing multiple significant wildfires which would require the need for additional immediate response in all areas of the state of Washington; and

WHEREAS, current availability of firefighting resources throughout the state of Washington and the Western United States is limited due to existing and projected fire conditions and activities throughout the region, and existing firefighting resources may be committed to fighting wildfires throughout the Pacific Northwest if a large fire outbreak occurs; and

WHEREAS, Washington currently has significant and dangerous fires burning throughout the state, including extremely volatile and dangerous fires burning in Eastern Washington, creating a need to have all necessary firefighting resources readily available; and

WHEREAS, because available firefighting resources may not be adequate to address the current outbreak and future outbreaks of simultaneous large wildfires resulting from the above-noted conditions, the Washington National Guard is needed to assist local jurisdictions and state agencies throughout Central and Eastern Washington, and possibly elsewhere in the state with this public disaster and for the public health, safety, and welfare; and

WHEREAS, the threat to life and property from existing wildfires is significant and has caused and could cause harm to persons as well as extensive damage to homes, public facilities, businesses, public utilities, and infrastructure, all impacting the life and health of people throughout Washington State and all of which affect life, health, property, or the public peace, and is a public disaster demanding immediate action; and

WHEREAS, the Washington Military Department has activated the State Emergency Operations Center, has implemented response procedures, is coordinating resources to support state and local officials in alleviating the immediate social and economic impacts to people, property, and infrastructure, and is continuing to assess the wildfire danger resulting from existing high-risk weather and fire fuel conditions.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jay Inslee, Governor of the state of Washington, as a result of the aforementioned situation and under Chapters 38.52 and 43.06 RCW, do hereby proclaim that a State of Emergency exists in all areas of the state of Washington, and direct the plans and procedures in the *Washington State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan* be implemented. State agencies and departments are directed to utilize state resources and to do everything reasonably possible to assist affected political subdivisions in an effort to respond to and recover from the event. Additionally, the Washington State Military Department, Emergency Management Division, is instructed to coordinate all event-related assistance to the affected areas.

FURTHERMORE, as a result of this incident, I also hereby order into active state service the organized militia of Washington State to include the National Guard and the State Guard, or such part thereof as may be necessary in the opinion of The Adjutant General, to perform such duties as directed by competent authority of the Washington Military Department in addressing this situation.

Signed and sealed with the official seal of the state of Washington on this 19th day of August A.D., Two Thousand and Twenty-Three at Olympia, Washington.

By:

/s/

Jay Inslee, Governor

BY THE GOVERNOR:

/s/

Secretary of State



STATE OF WASHINGTON
— OFFICE OF GOVERNOR JAY INSLEE —

EMERGENCY PROCLAMATION BY THE GOVERNOR

23-06

2023 Wildfires – Family Emergency Assistance

WHEREAS, on August 19, 2023, I issued Proclamation 23-05, proclaiming a state of emergency in all areas of the state of Washington because of abnormally hot and dry weather conditions, high risk fuel conditions, risk of severe and damaging wildfires, and the presence of multiple damaging wildfires in the state; and

WHEREAS, there continues to be multiple ongoing wildfires in Western, Central, and Eastern Washington, and significant wildfire potential is predicted to continue through the remainder of August, September, and October due to the high risk fuel conditions capable of producing additional significant wildfires which would require the need for additional immediate response in all areas of the state of Washington; and

WHEREAS, wildfires currently burning in Washington have burned more than 32,000 acres and have damaged and destroyed homes, businesses, agricultural resources, public and private infrastructure, and other essential community resources throughout Washington, affecting life, health, property, or the public peace, and are a public disaster demanding immediate action; and

WHEREAS, increased large wildfire activity in the Western United States has required the engagement of substantial firefighting resources which might limit the availability of needed resources if additional outbreaks of fires occur, creating a need to have all necessary firefighting resources readily available; and

WHEREAS, RCW 74.04.660(6) gives the Governor authority “during a state of emergency and pursuant to an order from the governor under this subsection,” to extend Family Emergency Assistance Program (FEAP) benefits to individuals and families without children; and

WHEREAS, RCW 74.04.660(6) also allows FEAP benefits for individuals and families to be issued for more than one period of time within any consecutive 12-month period; this authority is separate from, and in addition to, the authority established in RCW 43.06.220; and

WHEREAS, funding for Washington State’s disaster cash assistance program has been made available through September 29, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Military Department, Emergency Management Division is monitoring and coordinating supporting actions through the State Emergency Operations Center, implementing emergency response procedures, coordinating resources to support local officials in alleviating the immediate social and economic impacts to people, property, and infrastructure, and continuing to assess the wildfire danger resulting from existing high-risk weather and fire fuel conditions.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jay Inslee, Governor of the state of Washington, as a result of the aforementioned situation and under Chapters 38.52 and 43.06 RCW, do hereby proclaim that a State of Emergency continues to exist in all areas of the state of Washington, that Proclamation 23-05 remains in effect, and that this Proclamation 23-06 implements the below listed provisions, and I again direct the plans and procedures in the *Washington State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan* be implemented. State agencies and departments are again directed to utilize state resources and to do everything reasonably possible to assist affected political subdivisions in an effort to respond to and recover from the event. My order into active state service of the Washington State organized militia also remains in effect. The Washington State Emergency Operations Center is instructed to continue monitoring the event and coordinating all event-related assistance to the affected areas.

FURTHERMORE, I hereby direct, order and authorize the Secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services to extend Family Emergency Assistance Program benefits to individuals and families without children in the areas of Pend Oreille, Spokane, and Whitman counties affected by wildfire. I further order the Secretary to extend emergency assistance benefits to individuals and families who apply for and are eligible to receive benefits each month. This authorization and order for expansion is effective from August 31, 2023 until September 29, 2023.

Signed and sealed with the official seal of the state of Washington on this 31st day of August A.D., Two Thousand and Twenty-Three at Olympia, Washington.

By:

/s/

Jay Inslee, Governor

BY THE GOVERNOR:

/s/

Secretary of State



STATE OF WASHINGTON
— OFFICE OF GOVERNOR JAY INSLEE —

September 14, 2023

Anne Bink, Associate Administrator
Office of Response and Recovery
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Federal Center Plaza
500 C Street Southwest
Washington, D.C. 20472

Through: Willie Nunn, Regional Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Region X
130 – 228th Street Southwest
Bothell, WA 98021-9796

Re: Time Extension to Request Major Disaster Declaration

Dear Associate Administrator Bink:

Under the provisions of 44 CFR Part 206.36(a), I hereby request a 30-day extension, from September 21, 2023, to October 21, 2023, for the purpose of determining the appropriateness of requesting a major disaster declaration-Individual Assistance for the August 18 through August 22, 2023, wildfires (Gray fire and Oregon Road fire) that impacted individuals in the state of Washington.

Beginning on August 13, 2023, the state experienced a set of weather conditions that significantly raised the wildfire danger throughout the state. These conditions resulted in multiple major fires in and around populated areas on the eastern side of the state. The fires required the evacuation of thousands of individuals and destroyed hundreds of homes.

The local response and recovery efforts associated with these events, along with the wide-spread impacts of these fires have drastically slowed the damage assessment process. Therefore, this additional time is necessary for the state to complete the Initial Damage Assessment, verification, confirmation of insurance data, and analysis of the damage.

Ms. Anne Bink, Associate Administrator

September 12, 2023

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I have designated Stacey McClain, as the State Coordinating Officer and Governor's Authorized Representative for this request. He can be contacted at 253.312.8291 or stacey.mcclain@mil.wa.gov. He will work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and provide further information or justification on my behalf.

We look forward to a favorable response to this request.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Inslee". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "I".

Jay Inslee
Governor



FEMA

SEP 18 2023

The Honorable Jay Inslee
Governor of Washington
P.O. Box 40002
Olympia, Washington 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee:

This is in response to your September 14, 2023, request for a time extension to submit a request for a major disaster declaration for the State of Washington as a result of the Gray Fire and Oregon Road Fire during the period of August 18 to August 22, 2023.

The basis of your request is that the local response and recovery efforts associated with these events, along with the wide-spread impacts of these fires have drastically slowed the damage assessment process. You indicated that the additional time is necessary for the state to complete the Initial Damage Assessment, verification, confirmation of insurance data, and analysis of the damage.

Your request for an extension is approved until October 21, 2023. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding your deadline, please contact Willie G. Nunn, Regional Administrator, FEMA Region X at (425) 487-4607.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Anne Bink", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Anne Bink
Associate Administrator
Office of Response and Recovery