



September 8, 2025

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Oregon Community Foundation Invests Another \$120,000 in Disaster Readiness and Recovery

Grants Mark Five-Year Anniversary of Labor Day Fires with Focus on Preparedness

PORTLAND, Ore. — Five years after the Labor Day megafires devastated parts of Oregon, 11 nonprofits are receiving new funding to help communities continue to recover and prepare for future disasters. Oregon Community Foundation today announced \$120,000 in new grants from its Disaster Readiness and Response Fund.

The fund is an initiative that emerged from the 2020 wildfires. It provides rapid-response grants for immediate recovery and supports preparedness programs that help build more resilient communities. As a collective giving fund, anyone can contribute to it. An earlier fund to support wildfire recovery after the 2020 fires distributed \$10.8 million over several years.

"The fires of 2020 changed Oregon forever — but they didn't define us," said Kim Koenig, Director of Statewide Community Programs and Disaster Resilience at OCF. "Oregonians came together then, and we're coming together now to prepare for the future. We're not just remembering what happened five years ago. We're reimagining how Oregon shows up for each other long into the future."

Devastating Megafires

The Labor Day fires that began on September 7, 2020 were fueled by high winds and dry conditions that resulted in 1.2 million acres burned, more than 4,000 homes destroyed and 11 deaths. The fires displaced thousands of Oregonians and left widespread destruction across the state, with major impacts in the Santiam Canyon, the McKenzie River corridor and southern Oregon's Rogue Valley.

The new grants support collaborative, community-based organizations that coordinate resources and services for long-term readiness and resilience in seven Oregon counties

affected by the 2020 wildfires: Clackamas, Douglas, Jackson, Klamath, Lane, Linn and Marion.

Recovery Continues

The funding also reflects the ongoing impact of the Almeda Fire in southern Oregon. Grants will support nonprofits that continue to serve survivors, including Talent Maker City, Rogue Food Unites, Firebrand Resiliency Collective, Coalición Fortaleza and United Way of Jackson County.

One person who experienced the devastation firsthand and worked on multiple fronts to respond is Dee Anne Everson, President and Executive Director of United Way of Jackson County. Everson, who also sits on the Board of Directors of Oregon Community Foundation, says funding partners responding to the 2020 wildfires had to collaborate closely to serve communities effectively. Everson adds that those partnerships yielded critical lessons for the future.

"We have to be prepared together," Everson said. "I think we certainly learned that. It's really important in the world of philanthropy to talk to people on the ground who are doing the work. You want to make sure that all of us — wherever we are on the ground doing the work — stay deeply interconnected."

Earlier this year, OCF issued grants to support recovery from flooding in Harney and Douglas Counties and wildfires in the Columbia River Gorge, along with disaster preparedness efforts in Douglas, Lake and Harney counties.

Learn more and donate to the [Disaster Readiness and Response Fund](#) of Oregon Community Foundation.

Full List of New Disaster Readiness and Response Grantees

Clackamas County Voluntary Organization's Active in Disaster | Oregon City | \$10,000

Coalición Fortaleza | Medford | \$10,000

Firebrand Resiliency Collective | Ashland | \$10,000

Glide Revitalization | Glide | \$10,000

Jackson County Community Long Term Recovery Group | Talent | \$10,000

McKenzie Valley LTRG of Lane County | Blue River | \$10,000

Rogue Food Unites | Ashland | \$10,000

Santiam Memorial Hospital | Stayton | \$20,000

Talent Maker City | Talent | \$10,000

United Way of Jackson County | Medford | \$10,000

United Way of the Klamath Basin | Klamath Falls | \$10,000

About Oregon Community Foundation

Since 1973, Oregon Community Foundation has worked to improve the lives of all Oregonians through the power of philanthropy. In partnership with donors and volunteers, OCF strengthens communities in every county in Oregon through grantmaking, scholarships and research. Individuals, families, businesses and organizations can work with OCF to create charitable funds to support causes important to them. To learn more, visit oregoncf.org.

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