

ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

EXTERNAL MEMO
RECEIVED

To: Leon Page, County Counsel
From: Michelle Anderson, County Emergency Manager *MLA*
Date: December 11, 2024
RE: Status Report, Item 27 for December 17, 2024 Agenda: Review the Need for Continuing the Local Emergency

CLERK OF THE BOARD
COUNTY OF ORANGE
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



The Airport Fire began on September 9, 2024 and was deemed 100% contained on October 5, 2024.

County Proclamations and Ordinance Status

- The Orange County Board of Supervisors proclaimed a Local Emergency on September 10, 2024, and continued the local emergency proclamation at the November 5, 2024 meeting
- The Orange County Health Officer proclaimed a Local Health Emergency on September 13th and renewed it on 20th; the Orange County Board of Supervisors ratified the health emergency proclamation on September 24, 2024, and continued the local health emergency on November 5th and December 3rd. The continuation of the local health emergency is be considered by the Board of Supervisors on the December 17th agenda as Item 21.
- On October 8, 2024, the Orange County Board of Supervisors adopted an Urgency Ordinance for the Airport Fire Debris Removal Program.

Costs

Estimated response costs and damages for public agencies include:

City/District	Estimated Response Costs & Damages Reported 11/5/2024	Estimated Response Costs & Damages Reported 12/11/2024	Change
Orange County Fire Authority* (OCFA)	\$67,000,000	\$68,130,000	\$1,130,000
Orange County CEO	\$35,527	\$45,640	\$10,112
Orange County Community Resources (OCCR)	\$19,269	\$19,269	\$0
OCCR - OC Animal Care	\$42,840	\$42,840	\$0
OCCR - OC Parks	\$152,825	\$152,825	\$0
Orange County Counsel	\$47,778	\$47,778	\$0
Orange County Health Care Agency (HCA)	\$47,414	\$51,412	\$3,998
Orange County Public Works (OCPW)	\$12,580,299	\$12,580,299	\$0
Orange County Sheriff-Coroner (OCSD)	\$1,926,755	\$1,934,877	\$8,122
Orange County Social Services Agency	\$46,657	\$46,657	\$0
Orange County Waste and Recycling	\$6,592	\$6,592	\$0
Rancho Santa Margarita	\$35,519	\$36,338	\$819
Trabuco Canyon Water District	\$1,001,000	\$1,001,000	\$0
Operational Total	\$82,942,475	\$84,095,526	\$1,153,051

* OCFA entered into a cost share agreement with the United States Forest Service (USFS), the State of California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire), and the Riverside County Fire Department for costs related to this incident. Because they are a separate government entity, no additional information is included here; it can be obtained through a request to OCFA.

The OCSD Emergency Management Division is actively facilitating the submission of these costs and supporting documentation from each agency to the California Office of Emergency Services Recovery Unit in pursuit of California Disaster Assistance Act funding or Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance. The Cal OES Recovery Unit conducted an on-site visit with all agencies listed in the table above on December 4, 2024 and follow-up documentation is being provided by those agencies to Cal OES. No eligibility determination has been made at the time of this status report submission.

Recovery Efforts

Phase 1 (Hazardous Debris Removal) has been completed through the assistance from the California Office of Emergency Services and the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), OCPW, HCA Environmental Health, and Orange County Waste & Recycling. This work included the USFS cabins impacted by the fire.

Phase 1.5 (Watershed Protection) works was completed from November 4th-8th with the assistance of the Department of Water Resources and California Conservation Corp. Work was conducted in collaboration with OCPW, HCA Environmental Health, and the Water Emergency Response of Orange County. This work included installing 5,950 linear feet (equivalent to 1.13 miles) of compost socks and 500 straw wattles. This work included the USFS cabins impacted by the fire.

Phase 2 (Private Property Debris Removal [PPDR]) Orange County has requested direct assistance for private property debris removal from Cal OES. Both Orange and Riverside counties have been tentatively advised that direct assistance may not be available, although technical assistance and potential reimbursement through California Disaster Assistance Act funds may be available. The County has submitted additional information to Cal OES to support direct assistance.

Taking into account that direct assistance may not be available, OCPW, in coordination with CEO's office, has begun moving forward with the plan to perform PPDR using the County's emergency debris removal contracts that were authorized by the Board on October 22, 2024.

- Right of Entry forms have been finalized by County Counsel.
- The County began soliciting participation in PPDR (by County) from affected property owners in Holy Jim, Long Canyon, and El Cariso the week of November 25, 2024.
- OCPW confirmed with the USFS that no additional permits are needed for work on the federal lands and leased cabins on November 27, 2024.

Post Fire Debris Flow Planning

Watershed Emergency Response Team Report (WERT; private lands)

CalFire and the California Geological Survey published the Watershed Emergency Response Team (WERT) 2024 Airport Fire (CA-ORC-127883) on October 25, 2024. This report presents the results of a rapid evaluation of post fire geologic and hydrologic hazards to life-safety and property (i.e., collectively known as "Values-at-Risk" or "VARs") for private lands affected by the Airport Fire. These threats can include flooding, debris flows, erosions, and other hazards. The report includes preliminary emergency protective measures needed to avoid or minimize threats to life-safety and property. The full report is available to the public at:

<https://app.box.com/s/11tq7s11ogov37ceshxa5kdbdhipfmu/file/1683004722491>

Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER; National Forest Service lands)

The Forest Service—Cleveland National Forest completed a Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) post-fire assessment of the Airport burned area and affected watersheds to determine their response, soil conditions, potential threats, and recommended BAER emergency stabilization measures and actions on National Forest System (NFS) lands. BAER emergency treatments and activities are designed to decrease possible impacts to critical values from the burned areas during rainstorm events such as: human life and safety, property, critical natural resources, and cultural resources. While the final report has not yet been released, a summary report is available to the public at:

<https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-publication/cabdf-southern-california-postfire-baer-2024/airport-postfire-baer-assessment-report-summary-released-12-11-2024>

Orange County Airport Fire Post-Fire Debris Flow Plan

Based on the WERT and BAER report, a collaborative group of Orange County agencies was convened to develop and approve a post-fire debris flow plan that will be presented to the impacted communities on December 12, 2024. The plan includes triggers for protective measures, including but not limited to evacuation warnings and orders that may be implemented by Unified Command consisting of the OCSD, Orange County Fire Authority, and Orange County Public Works. Once the plan has been presented to the community members, information will be posted onto the OCSD Emergency Management Division website.

Additionally, the County is undertaking the following pro-active measures in advance of winter storms:

- OCPW is meeting with Trabuco Canyon Water District to finalize the plan to protect their facility and wells on Trabuco Canyon Road from potential debris flows. Work could begin as early as next week.
- OCPW plans to offer technical assistance to affected property owners by suggesting temporary mud flow/flood protections.
- OCPW is reaching out to Team Rubicon to perform pre-storm preparation activities, including drain cleaning and installation of temporary protections on private properties.

Recommended Action

Approve continuation of Local Emergency for the Airport Fire; and order review to determine need for continuing local emergency for February 11, 2025 at 9:30 a.m. and every 60 days thereafter until terminated.

cc: Interim County Executive Officer Michelle Aguirre
Clerk of the Board Robin Stieler
Undersheriff Jeff Hallock, Sheriff-Coroner Department