

ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

EXTERNAL MEMO

To: Leon Page, County Counsel
From: Michelle Anderson, County Emergency Manager *MLA*
Date: August 11, 2025
RE: Status Report, Item 44 for August 12, 2025, Agenda: Review the Need for Continuing the Local Emergency



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, December 17, February 11, April 8, May 14th, and June 24th meetings.
- The Orange County Health Officer proclaimed a Local Health Emergency on September 13th and renewed it on the 20th; the Orange County Board of Supervisors ratified the health emergency proclamation on September 24, 2024, and continued the local health emergency on November 5, December 3, December 17, January 14, February 11, March 11, April 9, May 6, and June 24th. The continuation of the local health emergency is to be considered by the Board of Supervisors on the August 12th agenda as Item 34.
- On October 8, 2024, the Orange County Board of Supervisors adopted an Urgency Ordinance for the Airport Fire Debris Removal Program.

Costs

The costs in the table below will increase in the future as debris removal activities continue. Estimated response costs and damages for public agencies include:

City/District	Estimated Response Costs & Damages Reported 06/24/2025	Estimated Response Costs & Damages Reported 08/11/2025	Change
Orange County Fire Authority* (OCFA)	\$1,130,000	\$1,130,000	0
Orange County CEO	\$45,640	\$45,640	0
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)	\$51,412	\$51,412	0
Orange County Public Works (OCPW)	\$20,533,449	\$20,533,449	0
Orange County Sheriff-Coroner (OCSD)	\$1,934,877	\$1,934,877	0
Orange County Social Services Agency	\$46,657	\$46,657	0
Orange County Waste and Recycling	\$6,592	\$6,592	0
Rancho Santa Margarita	\$36,338	\$36,338	0
Trabuco Canyon Water District	\$1,001,000	\$1,001,000	0
Operational Total	\$25,048,677	\$25,048,677	0

* 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 County continues to facilitate the submission of County costs and supporting documentation to the Cal OES Recovery Unit in pursuit of FMAG-alternative funding through the California Disaster Assistance Act or Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance. No eligibility determination has been made at the time of this status report submission.

Recovery Efforts

Phase 1 (Hazardous Debris Removal): Completed; no change from previous report.

Phase 1.5 (Watershed Protection): Completed; no change from previous report.

Phase 2 (Private Property Debris Removal [PPDR]): Direct assistance was not available through Cal OES so the County has proceeded with County resources, including contractors and coordinating with volunteer organizations. Below please find an update as of August 8, 2025.

- **OC Debris Removal**
 - Long Canyon debris removal has been completed. Confirmation soil sampling will be completed this week with lab results in approximately 2 weeks. Final site walks and sign-off forms will be completed after receipt of official soil confirmation results.
 - Holy Jim debris removal is pending P5 Permits. The contractor will apply for P5 permits next week with a tentative start date for debris removal in week of 8/18/25, with work estimated to be completed within 10-12 working days.
 - El Cariso debris removal completed early on 7/31/25. Final soil sampling has been initiated and results are pending.
- **Riverside County (RC) Debris Removal**
 - Remaining homeowner pre-job property walkthroughs are ongoing.
 - Contractor has fully assessed 127 parcels with varying states of site conditions.
 - Ongoing debris removal of some properties continues with a tentative completion date for the Riverside County properties set late November 2025.
- **Trabuco Creek Road**
 - The road is closed to the public; it is accessible to maintenance, emergency, and owners only.
 - Forestry cabins and trails continue to be closed.
 - Additional erosion control measures are being deployed throughout site.
 - OCPW staff continues to explore options for final disposition of Trabuco Creek Road.

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/11tq7s11ogov37ceshhxa5kbdhxiipfmu/file/1683004722491>

Recommended Action

Approve continuation of Local Emergency for the Airport Fire; and order review to determine need for continuing local emergency for September 23, 2025, 9:30 a.m. and every 60 days thereafter until terminated.

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