

City of Medical Lake *Lessons Learned*

Spokane Region
Gray & Oregon Rd Fires

Presented by
Terri Cooper, Mayor
Sonny Weathers, City Administrator

<https://youtu.be/aNe4LZ0VCoq?feature=shared>



GRAY ROAD FIRE STATISTICS MEDICAL LAKE, WA

- 🔥 START DATE: 8/18/2023
- 🔥 638 PERSONNEL
- 🔥 SIZE: 10,085 ACRES
- 🔥 240 HOMES
- 🔥 326 TOTAL STRUCTURES
- 🔥 ONE FATALITY



OREGON ROAD FIRE STATISTICS ELK, WA

- 🔥 START DATE: 8/18/2023
- 🔥 653 PERSONNEL ASSIGNED
- 🔥 SIZE: 10,898 ACRES
- 🔥 126 HOMES
- 🔥 384 TOTAL STRUCTURES
- 🔥 ONE FATALITY



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SPOKANE COUNTY MEDICAL LAKE & ELK COMMUNITIES SIMULTANEOUS FIRES – 3 HRS

- 🔥 41 MILES APART TAXED RESPONSE TEAMS
- 🔥 HIGH WINDS & SMOKE HINDERED AIR ATTACK
- 🔥 COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS - POOR
- 🔥 366 HOMES TOTAL LOSS / 710 STRUCTURES

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FUNDING RESPONSE

Lessons Learned: TIME

- 🏛️ GOVERNOR'S EMERGENCY FUND
- 🏛️ DEPT COMMERCE → STATE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT → SPOKANE COUNTY EM
- 🏛️ FEMA DECLARATION - SIX MONTHS LATER
- 🏛️ WA STATE - MTCA DEBRIS CLEANUP → DEPT COMMERCE → CITY OF MEDICAL LAKE
- 🏛️ FEMA 2ND AWARD → HUD → COUNTY CDBG →

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REDUCING RISK AND VULNERABILITY



POWER, WATER AND COMMUNICATIONS

- UNDERSTAND WEAKNESSES AND VULNERABILITIES
- INVEST IN BACKUP GENERATORS FOR CRITICAL FACILITIES
- INVEST IN EMERGENCY BROADBAND BACKUP



PRIORITIZE SAFETY

- KNOW YOUR LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TEAM & REVIEW/UPDATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS
- BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS BEFORE THE EMERGENCY HAPPENS
- KNOW AND COMMUNICATE YOUR EVACUATION PLAN



WUI MANAGEMENT

- COMPREHENSIVELY ADDRESS WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE
- ENGAGE IN LOCAL AND STATEWIDE POLICY MAKING
- WILDFIRES SHOULD BE TREATED THE SAME AS OTHER DISASTERS WHEN IT COMES TO TOXIC DEBRIS CLEANUP



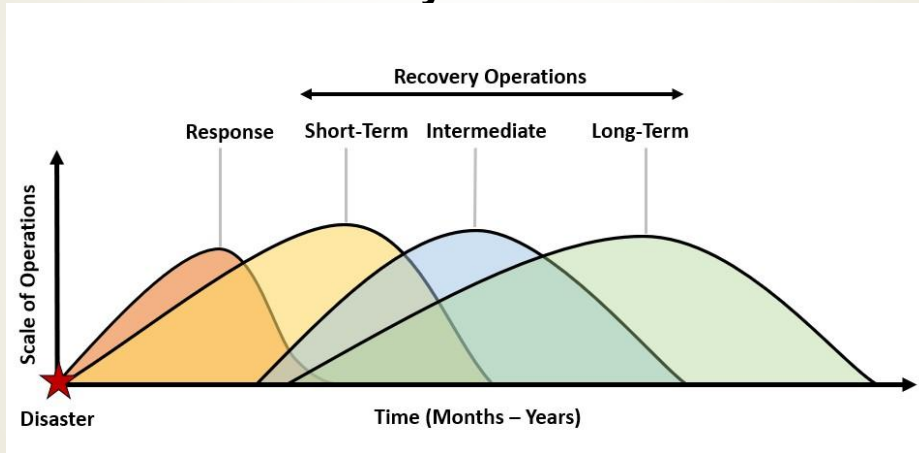
PREPAREDNESS

- CREATE LOCAL LTRG
- OUTREACH
- EDUCATE
- COLLABORATE
- BUILD COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS
- UPDATE DISASTER MITIGATION PLAN
- WORK WITH LOCAL DNR AND CONSERVATION BEFORE AND AFTER DISASTERS

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Recovery Continuum



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Understand the Journey Stages of Disaster (Timelines)



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Craig Fugate stated:
 “All disasters start locally and end locally.”
 Your community is in charge of the LTRG!



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EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIVISION

“A disaster-ready and resilient Washington State”



Photo of Community Organized Tree Removal Efforts

Photo of Community Organized Tree & Vegetative Debris Removal

What is a Long-Term Recovery Group?

“The Long-Term Recovery Group is a cooperative body that is made up of representatives from faith-based, non-profit, government, business and other organizations working within a community to assist individuals and families recover from disaster.”

-NVOAD, Long-Term Recovery Guide

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Key Components of an LTRG



1. Disaster Case Management
2. Volunteer Coordination
3. Reconstruction/Rebuild Coordination
4. Unmet Needs Roundtable
5. Donors & Fundraising Mgmt
6. Advocacy
7. Hosting and Coordination with Major VOAD Partners

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endeavoring to make these fires known for the remarkable recovery more than the devastating losses

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thank you

Contacts:

Terri Cooper, Mayor
(509) 601-8217

tcooper@medical-lake.org

Sonny Weathers, City Administrator
(509) 565-5050

sweathers@medical-lake.org