

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
OF OREGON**

UM 2340

In the Matter of

PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF
OREGON,

Investigation Into Guidelines for Wildfire
Mitigation Plans.

ORDER

DISPOSITION: STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION ADOPTED

At its public meeting on August 6, 2024, the Public Utility Commission of Oregon adopted Staff's recommendation in this matter. The Staff Report with the recommendation is attached as Appendix A.

BY THE COMMISSION:

Alison Lackey
Chief Administrative Law Judge



A party may request rehearing or reconsideration of this order under ORS 756.561. A request for rehearing or reconsideration must be filed with the Commission within 60 days of the date of service of this order. The request must comply with the requirements in OAR 860-001-0720. A copy of the request must also be served on each party to the proceedings as provided in OAR 860-001-0180(2). A party may appeal this order by filing a petition for review with the Circuit Court for Marion County in compliance with ORS 183.484.

ITEM NO. CA7

PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF OREGON
REDACTED STAFF REPORT
PUBLIC MEETING DATE: August 6, 2024

REGULAR _____ CONSENT X EFFECTIVE DATE _____ N/A

DATE: July 29, 2024

TO: Public Utility Commission

FROM: April Brewer

THROUGH: Bryan Conway and Heide Caswell **SIGNED**

SUBJECT: OREGON PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION STAFF:
Request to open an investigation into guidelines for wildfire mitigation plans.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Public Utility Commission of Oregon (Commission) should open an investigation into wildfire planning requirements to facilitate a meaningful, transparent, and robust planning process.

DISCUSSION:

Issue

Whether the Commission should open an investigation into appropriate guidelines for Wildfire Mitigation Plans (WMP).

Applicable Law

Under ORS 756.515(1), whenever the Commission believes that an investigation of any matter relating to any public utility or telecommunications utility or other person should be made, the Commission may, on its own motion, investigate any such matter.

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Analysis

Background

At the July 9, 2024, public meeting the Commission adopted Staff's recommendations for approval of the 2024 wildfire mitigation plans (WMP).¹ As part of Staff's recommendations in Docket Nos. UM 2207, 2208, and 2209, Staff made Joint Recommendations for next steps to advance WMPs. These recommendations included a multi-phase Commission-led process to develop WMP guidelines. Staff proposed establishing an investigation in a new docket to permit public participation and create a clear procedural venue in which to direct future WMP maturation. Staff now requests the initiation of the proposed investigation to facilitate the development of WMP guidelines.

Proposed Investigation Structure and Timeline

Staff proposes an investigation structure that is phased, adaptive, and involves considerable engagement with Stakeholders, the utilities, and public safety partners. The proposed structure is summarized in table and figure, below, provided to the Commission at the July 9, 2024, public meeting.

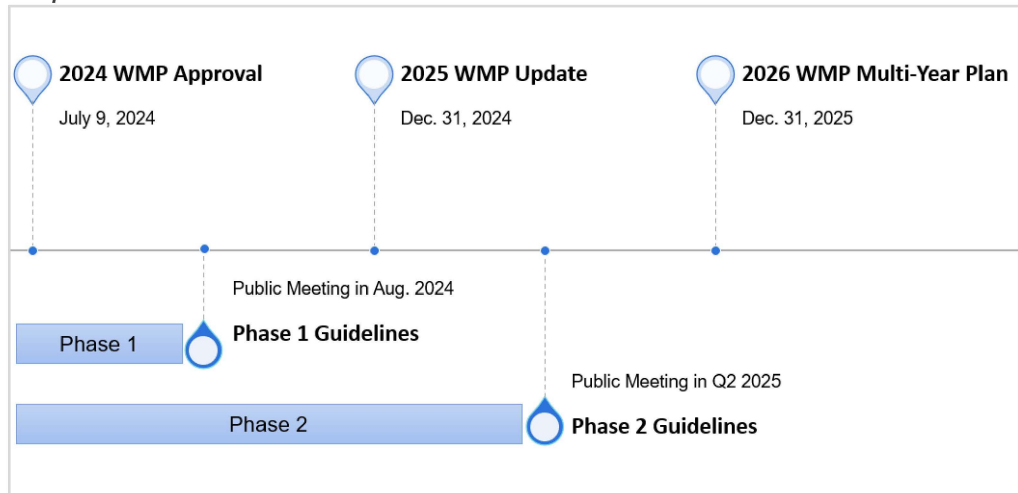
Table 1: Summary of Joint Recommendations

Phase	Effort Areas	Recommendation	Outcome	Leading
1	Process and Planning Cycle	Updated Process	Guidance for procedural steps WMP evaluation.	Staff
		Updated Planning Cycle	Guidance on how to transition to multi-year planning.	Staff
	Standardization of Elements	Data Templates	Templates which identify the appropriate information and level of granularity for data required in the WMP.	Staff
2	Standardization of Elements	Shared Terminology	Glossary of shared terminology that can be used across WMPs.	Utilities
		Shared Format	A format guide which adopts uniform chapter and section headings, as well as other agreed upon organizational features.	Utilities
	Working Group	Risk Quantification & Risk-Spend Efficiency	Guidance on risk quantification and a uniform risk-spend valuation methodology.	Staff

¹ Order No. 24-230, *In the Matter of PacificPower 2024 Wildfire Mitigation Plan*, Docket No. UM 2207, July 10, 2024; Order No. 24-232, *In the Matter of Portland General Electric 2024 Wildfire Mitigation Plan*, Docket No. UM 2208, July 10, 2024; Order No. 24-231, *In the Matter of Idaho Power 2024 Wildfire Mitigation Plan*, Docket No. UM 2209, July 10, 2024.

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Figure 1: Implementation Timeline



Staff has already published its Phase 1 proposal in the existing WMP reporting dockets, UM 2207, 2208, and 2209, with a request for public comments.² Phase 1 is on track for a Commission decision at the August 27, 2024, public meeting.

Following a Commission decision to open the investigation, Staff will develop, share, and begin executing a Phase 2 plan. As the investigation progresses, phases, goals, milestones, and objectives will be shaped by shared learnings and input from Stakeholders, the utilities, and public safety partners. Staff will continue to work to engage a broad Stakeholder group throughout the investigation.

Conclusion

Consistent with its Joint Recommendations, Staff finds that it is necessary to establish guidelines to ensure a meaningful, transparent, and robust wildfire planning process. Staff proposes to launch a phased investigation to facilitate establishment of guidelines which result in risk-based wildfire protection plans which protect public safety, reduce risk to utility customers and promote electrical system resilience to wildfire damage while appropriately balancing mitigation costs with the resulting reduction of wildfire risk.

PROPOSED COMMISSION MOTION:

Open an investigation into guidelines for Wildfire Mitigation Plans.

Investigation into WMP Guidelines.

² See Docket Nos. UM 2207, UM 2208, and UM 2209, Staff's WMP Phase 1 Proposal, July 26, 2024.