



Hood River County

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Oregon Department of Forestry – 2025 Wildfire Hazard Maps

Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) released the final wildfire hazard maps on January 7, 2025. Creation of these maps is required under Senate Bill 762, passed in 2021, and contains various laws concerning wildfire hazard mitigation and response.

These wildfire hazard maps show property designations for low, moderate, or high-risk categories, and those located within the Wildfire Urban Interface (WUI). Properties identified as both high-risk and within the WUI will be subject to defensible space requirements around existing and new homes and additional fire-hardening requirements for new homes. Owners of these properties were recently mailed a packet of information and an appeal form from the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF). The deadline for filing an appeal is May 10, 2025.

The original wildfire hazard maps were released in June 2022 and met with immediate public criticism. In response, the Oregon Legislature passed Senate Bill 80 in 2023, which provided additional guidance on developing the maps. This included a requirement for ODF and other involved State agencies to meet with county commissioners and their staff during eight in-person meetings throughout the State in late 2023.

During these meetings, Hood River County commissioners and staff raised two primary concerns: (1) the maps did not consider land with orchards and other perennial crops that require regular irrigation throughout the fire season, and (2) the maps contained several anomalies where areas were designated as higher risk without apparent differences from neighboring lands categorized as moderate or low risk.

In May 2024, revised draft maps were provided to County staff for evaluation. Most orchards were redesignated from high to moderate risk. However, approximately 350 anomalies were still identified by County staff for reconsideration. The final maps have accepted most of them. Most orchard land is now rated moderate instead of high risk, and fewer islands of high risk exist, especially those surrounded by orchards and other irrigated perennial crops.

To view the final wildfire map or obtain more information, including the process to file an appeal, visit the ODF's webpage at <https://www.oregon.gov/odf/fire/pages/wildfire-hazard.aspx>.