



U.S. Department of the Interior / U.S. Department of Agriculture  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT / U.S. FOREST SERVICE  
Oregon State Office / Region 6  
1220 SW 3rd Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97204  
blm.gov/oregon-washington • fs.usda.gov/r6



September 21, 2020

To our friends and neighbors in the Pacific Northwest,

The events of the past few days and months are difficult to put into words. We are in the midst of two historic wide-scale disasters: the COVID-19 pandemic and wildfires, the extent of which none of us has experienced in our lifetimes. As a community, our resilience will be challenged by this disaster and its aftermath for many weeks and months to come.

Families have lost loved ones, and many more are missing. Neighbors have been forced from their homes. Some have no home to return to. Special places within our public lands systems have been impacted by these fires as well; places where many of us found solace in nature, especially during the pandemic.

As the Bureau of Land Management, USDA Forest Service, and our other interagency partners continue to battle blazes on both public and private lands, our hearts are heavy over the devastation. These are our communities too. We have only begun to see the extent of these losses, and we will not know their full impact until the fires are out.

Our focus continues to be protecting the lives, health, and safety of our firefighters, first responders, and neighbors. Our fire and aviation management organizations are working together with tribal, state, county, and local fire and other public safety and emergency management officials to contain or suppress existing fires and get information to those most affected.

Due to seasonal drought conditions, fire danger remains extremely high throughout the Northwest, even with most welcome, but intermittent, rain. We ask everyone to do their part by preventing new fires and staying away from active fire areas. For your safety, please do not return to evacuated areas.

In the coming weeks and months, there will be many conversations about the management of our public lands informed by these terrible events. We look forward to working together on realistic, long-term solutions to rebuild healthy forests.

The courage and strength of communities in Oregon and Washington continues to inspire us. Thank you for your words of appreciation for our firefighters and frontline personnel. We are grateful for the local and State employees helping to clear roadways and repair towns impacted by downed trees and powerlines; and for community members offering their neighbor a place to stay during these evacuations. We appreciate your sacrifices. Watching the Pacific Northwest come together to support and care for one another demonstrates how remarkable this community is, and why we are proud to be part of it.

We have a long road ahead, but we will walk it together.

Sincerely,

**BARRY  
BUSHUE**

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Barry R. Bushue  
State Director, Oregon/Washington  
Bureau of Land Management

**GLENN  
CASAMASSA**

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Glenn P. Casamassa  
Regional Forester, Region 6  
USDA Forest Service