



Director's Decision

Summary of Application

FILE NUMBER:	C25-0005
PROPOSAL:	The Columbia River Gorge Commission has received an application for the replacement of a single-family dwelling and three accessory buildings that were destroyed during the Burdoin Fire.
APPLICANTS:	Joseph Billette
LANDOWNERS:	Joseph Billette
SIZE and LOCATION:	The subject property is located at 186 Old Highway 8, and is described as Tax Lot Number 03-12-2853-0001/00 in the southeast corner of Section 28, Township 3 North, Range 12 East, Willamette Meridian, Klickitat County, Washington. The property is located on a parcel that is approximately 5 acres in size.
LAND USE DESIGNATION:	General Management Area (GMA) – Residential (10)

Decision

Based upon the findings of fact and conclusions of law in the staff report accompanying this decision and the conditions of approval in this decision document, the land use application by Joseph Billette, for the replacement of a single-family dwelling and three accessory buildings that were destroyed during the Burdoin Fire, is consistent with Commission Rules chapter 350, division 082, and thus consistent with the *Management Plan for the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area* and the standards of Section 6 and the purposes of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act, Pub. L. 99-663, 100 Stat. 4274 (1986), and is hereby **APPROVED**.

Conditions of Approval

The following conditions of approval are given to ensure that the subject request is consistent with Commission Rules chapter 350, division 082. Compliance with these conditions of approval is required. The Gorge Commission may take one or more enforcement actions at any time to ensure compliance with these conditions of approval.

1. In accordance with Commission Rule 350-082-0150(3), the applicant shall record the Executive Director's decision and conditions of approval and approved site plan and

elevation drawings in county deeds and records (at the Klickitat County Auditor's Office) to ensure notice of the conditions to successors in interest. The record shall be associated with all tax lots and parcels that constitute the subject property. The applicant need not record the separate staff report document containing the relevant findings and conclusions. Once recorded, the applicants shall submit a copy of the recorded documents to the Executive Director.

2. This decision does not exempt the proposal from other non-National Scenic Area rules and regulations. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure the use complies with all other applicable federal, state, and county laws and to obtain necessary approvals, including utility easement approvals.
3. A post-completion inspection is required. Please contact the Gorge Commission office when all construction is complete to schedule this inspection. The applicant may request interim inspections and Gorge Commission staff may at its discretion conduct interim inspections.
4. Any new land uses or structural development, alterations, or grading not included in the approved application or site plan will require a new application and review.
5. The developments shall be constructed as shown on the approved project description, site plan and elevation drawings. The proposed house shall be 1,716 sq ft (26' x 66') and 16 ft tall. The shop shall be 1,320 sq ft (30' x 44') and 20 ft tall. The garden shed shall be 96 sq ft (8' x 12') and 10 ft tall. The lean-to shall be 220 sq ft (18' x 12') and 12 ft tall.
6. All exterior building materials for the addition and accessory buildings, including roofs, doors, siding, trim, window casings and sashes, decks, and railings shall be dark earth-tone colors. Only approved dark earth-tone colors for exterior materials shall be used. The following colors submitted by the applicant are consistent with this condition and hereby approved:

Siding: Sherwin Williams *Porpoise (SW7047) & Urban Bronze (SW 7048)*

Trim: Sherwin Williams *Felted Wool (SW 9171)*

Roofing: Taylor Metal Products *Matte Mineral Bronze, Matte Onyx & Kodiak Brown*

Any changes to these colors shall be submitted to the Gorge Commission for consistency review with this condition of approval. The color of the development shall be maintained by painting and staining as necessary to maintain the approved color.

7. All exterior building materials including roofs, doors, siding, trim, window casing and sash, decks, and railings shall be nonreflective or have low reflectivity. Any exterior metal materials shall be painted with low-gloss black colored finish and maintained as necessary to ensure that the material is non-reflective.
8. All windows and glazing shall be composed of low-reflectivity glass. A reflectivity rating of 11% is required.

9. All exterior lighting shall be hooded or shielded at a 90-degree angle to the ground. Hoods/shields should be made of a non-reflective, opaque material, which does not allow light to pass through.
10. Existing mature vegetation screening the building site along the southern property boundary shall be retained and maintained for screening purposes and so the overall visual character and appearance of the landscape is retained.
11. The proper maintenance and survival of planted vegetation required. A watering plan should be developed to ensure the long-term survival of all planted vegetation.
12. Disturbed areas shall be reseeded with grasses from the *Recommend Seed Mixes for East Side Environments* handout. Disturbed areas shall be revegetated immediately upon completion of the project (or as soon as possible thereafter if the project is completed during the winter).
13. If cultural resources are discovered, all activities within 100 feet of the cultural resources shall immediately cease and the applicants shall notify the Gorge Commission within 24 hours of discovery and the State Physical Anthropologist, Dr. Guy Tasa at (360) 586-3534 or guy.tasa@dahp.wa.gov. The cultural resources shall remain as found and further disturbance is prohibited until permission is granted by the Executive Director of the Gorge Commission.
14. If human remains are discovered, all activities shall cease immediately upon their discovery. Local law enforcement, the Executive Director and Indian Tribal governments shall be contacted immediately. Further disturbance is prohibited until permission is granted by the Executive Director of the Gorge Commission.

DATED THIS 9 day of September 2025 at White Salmon, Washington.

Krystyna U. Wolniakowski

Krystyna U. Wolniakowski
Executive Director

Expiration of Approval

Commission Rule 350-082-0160 governs the expiration of this Director's Decision.

Expiration of this Director's Decision is automatic. The Executive Director does not notify applicants or landowners of decisions that are expired or may be close to expiring.

This decision of the Executive Director becomes void on the 9 day of September 2027 unless construction has commenced in accordance with Commission Rule 350-082-0160(4).

Commission Rule 350-082-0160(4) specifies that commencement of construction means actual construction of the foundation or frame of the approved structure.

Construction must be completed within two years of the date the applicant commenced construction. Commission Rule 350-082-0160(5) specifies that completion of the structure means completion of the exterior surface(s) of the structure and compliance with all conditions of approval in the National Scenic Area approval.

Once the applicant has commenced construction of one element in this decision, the applicant must complete all elements in this decision in accordance with Commission Rule 350-082-0160. The Gorge Commission does not use different commencement of construction dates for different elements in this decision.

The applicant may request one 12-month extension of the time period to commence construction and one 12-month extension to complete construction in accordance with Commission Rule 350-082-0160(6). The applicant must submit the request in writing prior to the expiration of the approval. If the applicant requests an extension of time to complete construction after commencing construction, the applicant shall specify the date construction commenced. The Executive Director may grant an extension upon determining that conditions, for which the applicant is not responsible, would prevent the applicant from commencing or completing the proposed development within the applicable time limitation. The Executive Director shall not grant an extension if the site characteristics or new information indicate that the proposed use may adversely affect the scenic, cultural, natural or recreation resources in the National Scenic Area.

Appeal Process

The appeal period ends on the 9 day of October 2025.

The decision of the Executive Director is final unless the applicant or any other person who submitted comment files a Notice of Appeal with the Commission within thirty (30) days of the date of this decision. Commission Rule chapter 350, division 70 governs appeal of this decision. This rule is available on the Gorge Commission's website and at the Gorge Commission office. You may contact the Gorge Commission office if you have questions about appealing this decision.

Notes

1. Any new land uses or structural development such as driveways, parking areas, garages, workshops, fences or other accessory structures; or additions or alterations not included in the approved application or site plan will require a new application and review. New cultivation also requires a new application and review.
2. This decision does not address local, state, or federal requirements that may be applicable to the proposed development. The landowner is responsible for obtaining all applicable county, state, or federal permits required for the development.

In accordance with Commission Rule 350-082-0150(6), the Gorge Commission staff mailed notice of this decision to the following governments, agencies, and organizations and persons who provided comment on the application:

Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation
Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon
Nez Perce Tribe
U.S. Forest Service National Scenic Area Office
Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
Klickitat County Planning Department
Klickitat County Building Department
Klickitat County Public Works Department
Klickitat County Health Department
Klickitat County Assessor
Washington Natural Heritage Program
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Steve McCoy, Friends of the Columbia Gorge

Attachments:

Staff Report for C25-0005
Approved site plans and elevation drawings
Eastern Gorge Recommended Seed Mix
International Dark-Sky Association Acceptable Fixtures

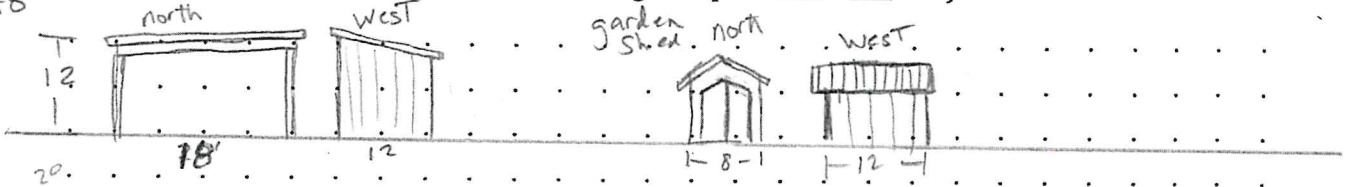
APPROVED

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Elevations and Site Plan Details

(Indicate scale: each grid equals 5 x 5 feet)

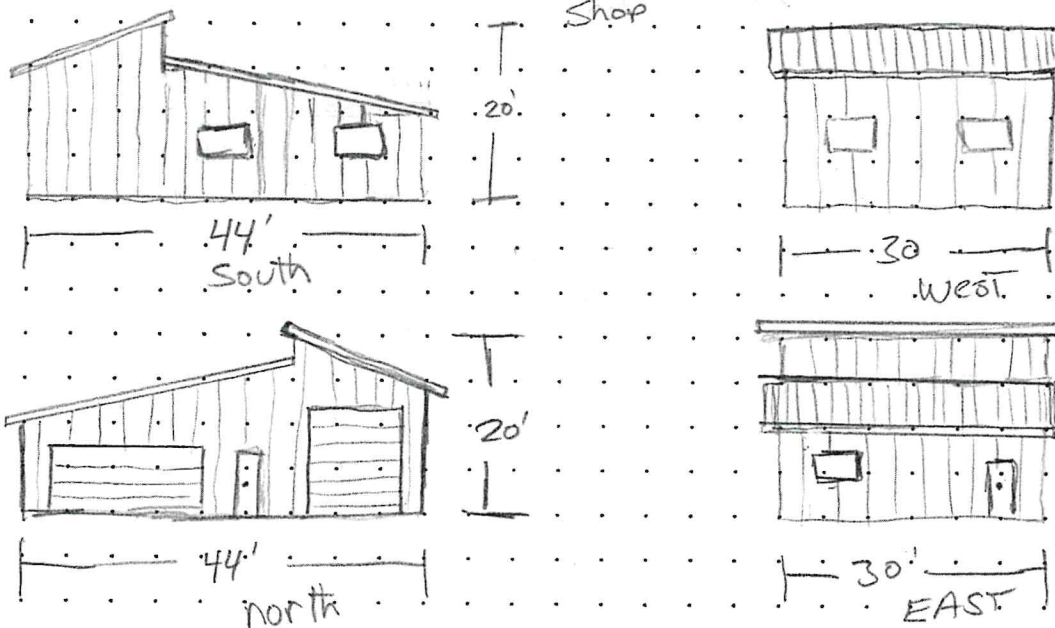
Leanto



House



Shop

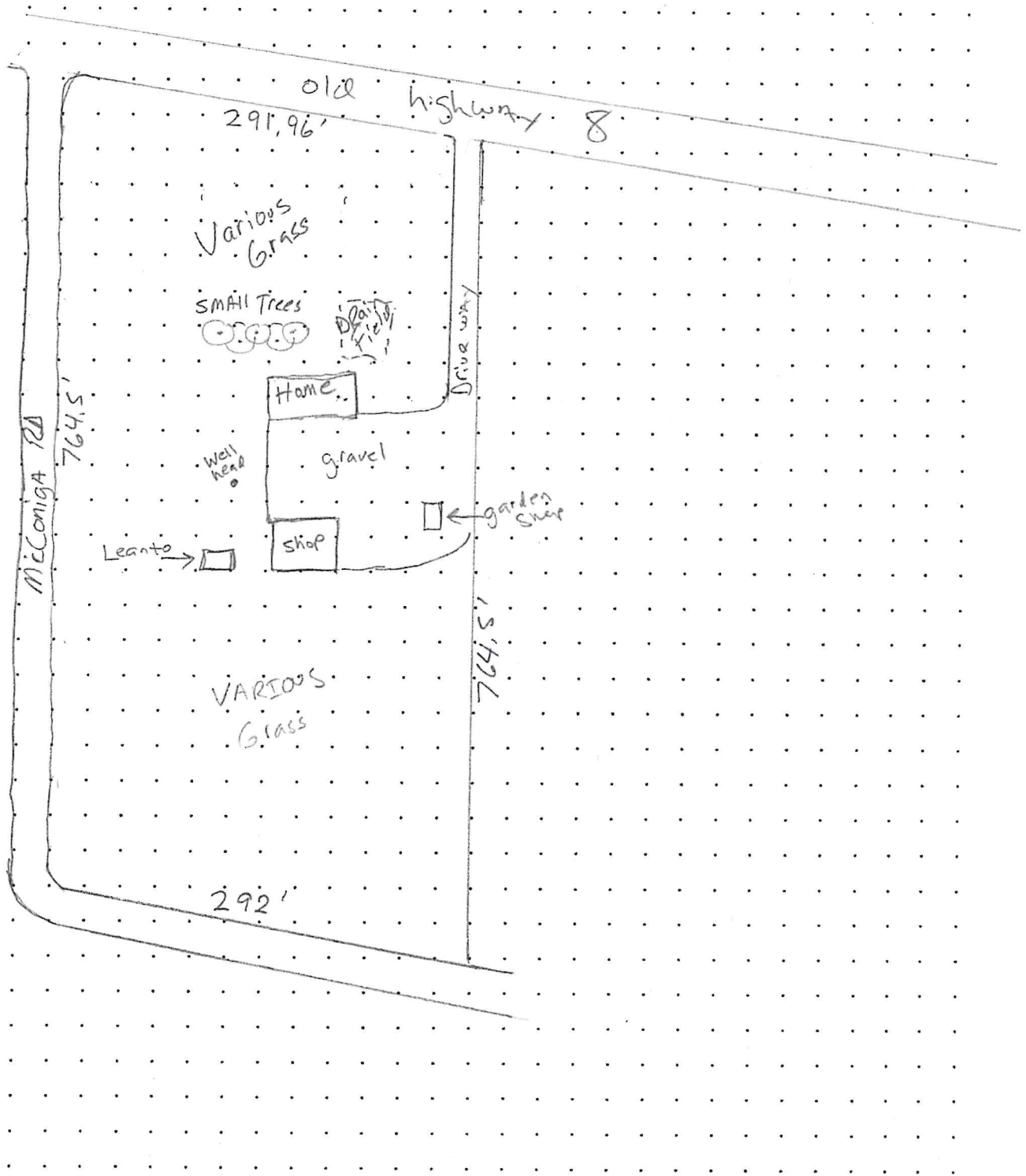


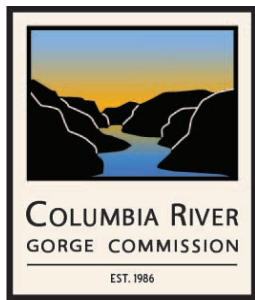


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Site Plan

(Indicate scale: each grid equals 25 x 25 feet)





Development Review Staff Report

Summary of Application

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LANDOWNERS:	Joseph Billette
SIZE and LOCATION:	The subject property is located at 186 Old Highway 8 and is described as Tax Lot Number 03-12-2853-0001/00 in the southeast corner of Section 28, Township 3 North, Range 12 East, Willamette Meridian, Klickitat County, Washington. The property is located on a parcel that is approximately 5 acres in size.
LAND USE DESIGNATION:	General Management Area (GMA) – Residential (10)

Notice of Application Mailed to:

In accordance with Commission Rule 350-082-0110, the Gorge Commission staff mailed notice of this application to property owners within 200 feet of the subject parcel and sent email notice of this application to the following governments, agencies, and organizations:

Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation
Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation Oregon (CTWSRO)
Nez Perce Tribe
U.S. Forest Service National Scenic Area Office (USFS CRGNSA)
Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP)
Klickitat County Planning Department
Klickitat County Building Department
Klickitat County Public Works Department
Klickitat County Health Department
Klickitat County Assessor
Skamania County
Washington Natural Heritage Program

Written Comments Received From:

Friends of the Columbia Gorge (Steve McCoy, Staff Attorney)
USFS CRGNSA (Chris Donnermeyer, Heritage Resource Program Manager)
USFS CRGNSA (Luciano Legnini, Archaeologist)
CTWSRO (David E. Witt, Review & Compliance Specialist Contractor)

Findings of Fact

A. Land Use

1. Joseph Billette is proposing to replace a single-family dwelling and three accessory buildings that were destroyed during the Burdoin Fire. The parcel is approximately five acres in size and is located at 186 Old Highway 8.
2. All structures on Mr. Billette's property were destroyed during the Burdoin Fire in July 2025. Development that was destroyed during the fire include one manufactured home and five accessory buildings.
3. Mr. Billette would like to replace the original manufactured home with a stick-built home. He would also like to replace a barn/shop building, garden shed and lean-to. The property also has a detached garage and pump house that were destroyed by the fire, but the applicant is not currently requesting to replace those two buildings.
4. Commission Rule 350-082-0200(4) allows for the replacement of existing structures that are damaged or destroyed by disaster. It states:

An existing structure damaged or destroyed by fire, flood, landslide or other similar disaster may be replaced if a complete land use application for a replacement structure is submitted to the reviewing agency within two years of the date the original structure was damaged or destroyed.

Commission Rule 350-082-0070(73) defines *existing use or structure* as:

Existing use or structure: Any use or structure that was legally established and that has continued to operate lawfully and has not been discontinued. "Legally established" means:

(a) The landowner or developer obtained applicable land use and building permits and complied with land use regulations and other laws that were in effect at the time the use or structure was established, or that were in effect at the time the landowner or developer corrected an improperly established use or structure;

(b) The use or structure was initially operated or constructed according to those applicable permits, land use regulations and other laws, or has been

operated or constructed according to permits obtained to correct an improperly established use or structure; and
(c) Any changes to the original use or structure must comply with all applicable permit requirements, land use regulations and other laws that were in effect at the time the change was established.

The original buildings were all destroyed by the Burdoin Fire in July 2025. The applicant contacted the Commission shortly after to inquire about a replacement. The applicant applied for the replacement buildings in August 2025; within two years of the date the original buildings were destroyed. The application was complete when the applicants submitted it.

Staff reviewed Gorge Commission and Klickitat County records for the property and were able to verify the dates when some of the buildings were constructed. According to Klickitat County records, the original manufactured home and lean-to were constructed in 1978 (BP 78-275). An addition to the manufactured home was approved to in 1993 (Director's Decision 93-0135 & Klickitat County BP 93146). Commission Staff were unable to determine the year that the barn and garden shed were constructed. Klickitat County Assessor's data indicates that the barn and garden shed were built around 1950 before Klickitat County started issuing building permits on September 8, 1970. The Gorge Commission's historical imagery archive confirms that the manufactured home, lean-to, barn and garden shed were on the property in at least 1988. All the buildings being replaced were legally established *existing structures*.

5. Commission Rule 350-082-0200(4)(a) states:

The replacement structure shall have the same use as the original structure. An existing manufactured home may be replaced with a framed residence.

The applicant proposes a framed residence to replace the manufactured home the was destroyed in the fire. The other three buildings being replaced are accessory buildings; the three buildings were used as accessory buildings before they were destroyed.

6. Commission Rule 350-082-0200(4)(b) states:

The replacement structure shall be in the same location as the original structure...

All the replacement buildings will be built within the existing footprint and in the same location as the previous buildings that they are replacing.

7. Commission Rule 350-082-0200(4)(c) states:

The replacement structure shall be the same size and height as the original structure provided:
(A) The footprint of the replacement structure may be up to ten percent larger than the footprint of the original structure. The footprint of a structure includes any covered decks and porches, attached garages, and breezeways that share a wall with the structure.

Staff reviewed existing permits records from Klickitat County and previous Director's Decision to review size and height of destroyed buildings. The original manufactured home was 1,560 sq ft (26' x 60') and the proposed house is 1,716 sq ft (26'x 66'). The original barn was 1,200 sq ft (30' x 40') and the proposed barn is 1,320 sq ft (30' x 44'). The original garden shed was 100 sq ft (10' x 10') and the proposed replacement garden shed is 96 sq ft (8' x 12'). The original lean-to was 512 sq ft (16' x 32') and the proposed lean-to is 216 sq ft (18' x 12'). The footprints of the replacement buildings are no more than 10% larger than the footprints of the original buildings.

(B) The walls of the replacement structure shall be the same height as the walls of the original structure unless a minor increase is required to comply with standards in the current jurisdictional building code. Height is generally defined as the greatest vertical distance between the lowest finished grade adjoining any exterior wall and the highest point of the roof.

The original mobile home was 14 tall and the new stick-built home will be 16 ft tall. The additional increase in height is to allow for updated insulation and snow load requirements from Klickitat County. The original barn was 24 ft tall, and the proposed replacement and the proposed barn will 20 ft tall, four feet lower in height than that original barn. The original lean-to was 14 ft tall, and the proposed replacement lean-to is 12 ft tall. The original garden shed was 10 ft tall, and the replacement garden shed will be 10 ft tall.

8. Commission Rule 350-082-0200(4)(f) states:

The original structure shall be considered discontinued if a complete land use application for a replacement structure is not submitted within the two-year time frame.

The original buildings were all destroyed by the Burdoin Fire in July 2025. The applicant contacted the Commission shortly after to inquire about a replacement. The applicant applied for the replacement buildings in August 2025; within two years of the date the original buildings were destroyed. The application was complete when the applicants submitted it.

Land Use Conclusion:

The proposed development is allowed review uses, subject to Commission Rules 350-082-0600 through 350-082-0720 that protect scenic, cultural, natural, and recreation resources.

B. SCENIC RESOURCES

1. Commission Rule 350-082-0200(4)(d) states:

The replacement structure shall only be subject to the following scenic resources standards...

2. Commission Rule 350-082-0200(4)(d)(A) states:

In the GMA, the replacement structure shall comply with the guidelines regarding color and reflectivity in 350-082-0600...

Commission Rule 350-082-0600(2)(h) states:

Unless expressly exempted by other provisions in 350-082-0600, colors of structures on sites visible from key viewing areas shall be dark earth-tones found at the specific site or in the surrounding landscape. The specific colors approved by the reviewing agency shall be included as a condition of approval.

The proposed development has been designed to achieve visual subordination using the following dark earth-tone colors:

Siding: Sherwin Williams Porpoise (SW7047) & Urban Bronze (SW 7048)

Trim: Sherwin Williams Felted Wool (SW 9171)

Roofing: Taylor Metal Matte Mineral Bronze, Matte Onyx & Kodiak Brown

These colors are dark earth-tones that are found at the specific site on the shaded leaves and bark of trees and vegetation. A **condition of approval** is included in the Director's Decision requiring all elements of the proposal to be these colors, consistent with Commission Rule 350-082-0600(2)(h).

Commission Rules 350-082-0600(2)(i) states:

The exterior of buildings on lands visible from key viewing areas shall be composed of non-reflective materials or materials with low reflectivity. Continuous surfaces of glass shall be limited to ensure visual subordination. The Scenic Resources Implementation Handbook includes a list of recommended exterior materials and screening methods.

The proposed exterior material for the buildings is fiber cement siding which has low reflectivity and is fire resistant. The house, garden shed, and lean-to will use fiber cement lap board siding, and the barn will use fiber cement board and batten siding. The roof will be metal, which can be reflective. However, the colors selected for the roof are a dark earth-tone color with a matte finish which will help to diminish the reflectivity of the metal. Screening trees between the KVAs and the building site will help to reduce the impact of the reflectivity of the roof.

The proposal also has several modest windows fenestrations on the barn and house. The Scenic Resources Implementation Handbook suggests that the use of glass with 11 percent reflectivity may be allowable when development is located beyond the foreground of KVAs and when partially screened by topography and vegetation. A **condition of approval** is included requiring the glass to have a reflectivity rating of 11 percent, consistent with this rule.

A **condition of approval** is also included requiring all exterior surfaces of the proposed development, including doors, siding, trim, window casing and sash, decks, and railings to be composed of non-reflective materials to ensure consistency with this rule.

3. Commission Rule 350-082-0600(2)(j) states:

Any exterior lighting shall be sited, limited in intensity, shielded, or hooded in a manner that prevents lights from being highly visible from key viewing areas and from noticeably contrasting with the surrounding landscape setting, except for road lighting necessary for safety purposes.

A **condition of approval** is included in the decision ensuring lights are directed downward, hooded, and shielded such that they are not highly visible from KVAs, consistent with this rule. Staff are also providing the applicant with examples of acceptable light fixtures from the International Dark-Sky Association as an attachment to this decision.

4. Commission Rulle 350-082-0200(4)(d)(B) states:

(B) Decks, verandas, balconies and other open portions of the original structure shall not be rebuilt as enclosed (walls and roof) portions of the replacement structure.

The original home had a 96 sq ft front porch and the proposed home has a 208 sq ft (8' x 26') porch. The proposed outdoor porch is larger in square footage than the original porch; no open portions of the original manufactured home are being rebuilt as enclosed. No open portions of the replacement buildings are being rebuilt as enclosed portions of the original structures. The barn (44 ft x 30 ft), and garden shed (8 ft x 12 ft) are all fully enclosed and replacing buildings that were fully enclosed. The lean-to (18' x 12') has one open wall and is replacing a lean-to with one open wall.

5. Commission Rulle 350-082-0200(4)(d)(C) states:

(C) In the GMA, the replacement structure shall comply with the GMA guidelines regarding landscaping (350-082-0600). These guidelines shall be applied to achieve the applicable scenic standard (visually subordinate) to the maximum extent practicable.

Commission Rule 350-082-0070(202) defines *visually subordinate* as follows:

... A description of the relative visibility of a development, structure, or use where that development, structure, or use does not noticeably contrast with the defining landscape setting characteristics, as viewed from a specified vantage point (generally a key viewing area, for the Management Plan) and the setting appears only slightly altered (distinctive characteristics of that setting remain dominant). As opposed to development, structures, or uses that are fully screened, structures that are visually subordinate may be partially visible but would be difficult to discern to the common viewer. Visually subordinate development, structures, or uses as well as forest practices in the SMAs shall repeat form, line, color, or texture common to the natural landscape, while changes in their qualities of scale, proportion, intensity, direction, pattern, etc., shall not dominate the natural landscape setting.

Staff determined the subject parcel is topographically visible from one KVA: Historic Columbia River Highway and Rowena Plateau. The proposed development is visible from the Rowena Plateau and Nature Conservancy Viewpoint at the following distance zones:

Key Viewing Area (KVA)	Distance Zone		
	Foreground	Middle ground	Background
	0 -1/4 mile	1/4 – 4 miles	Over 4 miles
Historic Columbia River Highway		X	
Rowena Plateau		X	

Commission Rulle 350-082-0200(4)(d)(C) requires the development to comply with the GMA guidelines regarding landscaping to achieve the standard *visually subordinate* to the maximum extent practicable. The KVAs from which this development is topographically visible is more than three miles away. As discussed above, Commission Rulle 350-082-0200(4)(d)(A) require all proposals to be constructed of low-reflective materials and dark earth-tone colors. Additionally, as discussed in further, Commission Rule 350-082-0600(2)(c) requires the extent and type of conditions applied to a development to achieve the scenic standard of visually subordinate be proportionate to the building’s degree of visibility from KVAs. The proposed development follows the standards for the replacement of existing structures damaged or destroyed by disaster, consistent with this rule. Factors contributing to the visibility of the development include the size, shape, dark earth-tone colors, low reflective building materials, distance from KVAs and existing topography, vegetation, and screening. With conditions of approval regarding the colors and reflectivity of the building materials and the retention of existing vegetation on the parcel, the Director’s Decision has requirements and conditions of approval to ensure the development is *visually subordinate*.

6. Commission Rule 350-082-0600(1)(c) states:

Landowners shall be responsible for the proper maintenance and survival of any planted vegetation required by 350-082-0600.

The applicants have proposed new landscaping as part of the development including some oak and pine trees to the north of the development. Consistent with this rule, a condition is included requiring disturbed areas be revegetated at once upon completion of the project. Staff are providing the handout, *List of Recommend Seed Mixes for East Side Environments*, as an attachment to the Director’s Decision. An additional **condition of approval** is included requiring an irrigation plan and the proper maintenance and survival planted vegetation. The proposal is consistent with Commission Rule Commission Rule 350-082-0600(1)(c).

7. Commission Rule 350-082-0600(2)(b) requires that a determination of potential visual effects and compliance with the visual subordination standard in subsection (a) above

include consideration of the cumulative effects of proposed development. Commission Rule 350-082-0070(50) defines cumulative effects as:

The combined effects of two or more activities. The effects may be related to the number of individual activities, or to the number of repeated activities on the same piece of ground. Cumulative effects can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.

The proposal is for the replacement of buildings and development that were destroyed during the Burdoin Fire. There will be no cumulative effects from the reconstruction of the buildings.

8. Commission Rule 350-082-0600(2)(b) states:

A determination of the potential visual impact of a new development shall include written findings addressing the following factors:

(A) The amount of area of the building site exposed to key viewing areas;

(B) The degree of existing vegetation providing screening;

(C) The distance from the building site to the key viewing areas from which it is visible;

(D) The number of key viewing areas from which it is visible;

(E) The linear distance along the key viewing areas from which the building site is visible (for linear key viewing areas, such as roads); and

(F) Other factors the reviewing agency determines relevant in consideration of the potential visual impact.

The building site is located at an elevation of 560 feet. All the building sites are located approximately a quarter of a mile from the Old Highway 8 bluff to the south. The land between the building sites and bluff also slopes upwards towards the bluff, rising gently approximately 20 feet. The gentle slope helps screen the projects from similar elevation KVAs. The area to the south of the building sites on the subject parcel is mostly agricultural land without any tree cover except along the property boundary lines where there is some limited vegetation. There are two parcels adjacent to the south of the parcel that have large strands of oak trees and conifers. These trees significantly screen the subject property and the buildings site locations from view of KVAs to the south. It appears that most of the oak trees survived the fire in part because they are a fire adapted species.

The site is only visible from one higher elevation KVA, Tom McCall Viewpoint (approximately 1,700 ft elevation) in the middle ground approximately three miles away from the subject property. From the top of Tom McCall trail, (1,700 ft. elevation), the parcel is lower in elevation than the KVA and topography visible. At that viewing distance the development will appear insignificant in the landscape and not be visible to the unaided eye.

From the Rowena Plateau/Tom McCall trailhead parking lot (700 ft elevation), the parcel (560 ft elevation) is not visible because of intervening topography and vegetation. Existing vegetation both on and off the subject parcel provides effective screening because the site is located over three miles away. However, the hills do not

provide complete screening from higher elevations of Rowena Plateau while hiking the Tom McCall trail.

From the Historic Columbia River Highway, the development is potentially visible for 2.25 miles directly to the east of Rowena Plateau. The highway varies in elevation from 600 to 700 ft as it travels from Rowena Plateau towards Mosier. From this KVA existing vegetation existing vegetation both on and off the subject parcel provides effective screening because the site is located over three miles away. There is also screening vegetation in Oregon along the bluff between the Columbia River and the highway that helps to screen the development from view.

Given the distance from KVAs, existing topography and screening, and proposed building colors and materials, the buildings will have minimal visibility from KVAs. As explained above, conditions are applied to the development's color and reflectivity to ensure the development is visually subordinate to its setting as seen from KVAs. With the retention of the existing trees on property, the buildings will be visually subordinate.

9. Commission Rule 350-082-0600(2)(c) states:

The extent and type of conditions applied to a proposed development to achieve visual subordination to its landscape setting shall be proportionate to its potential visual impacts as visible from key viewing areas. Conditions may include, and shall be applied using the following order of priority, with (A) being the first condition to require and (F) being the last condition to require if the prior conditions do not achieve visual subordination:

(A) Screening by existing topography.

(B) Siting (location of development on the subject property, building orientation, and other elements).

(C) Retention of existing vegetation on the applicant's property.

(D) Design and building materials (color, reflectivity, size, shape, height, architectural and design details and other elements).

(E) New landscaping on the applicant's property.

(F) New berms or other recontouring on the applicant's property, where consistent with other applicable provisions.

Commission Rule 350-082-0200(4)(d)(C) requires the development to comply with the GMA guidelines regarding landscaping to achieve the standard *visually subordinate* to the maximum extent practicable. The applicant has proposed to plant some small trees to the northwest of the home site. While these proposed trees will not offer any screening from KVAs to the south, they will help the proposal achieve the applicable standard by helping to soften the harsh lines of the buildings against the backdrop of the greater landscape. Other factors contributing to the visual subordination of the development include dark colors and building materials with low reflectivity, distance from KVAs and existing screening from topography and existing vegetation. The site is only visible from two KVAs. The site is visible from Rowena Plateau and the Historic Columbia River Highway in the middle ground, both approximately three miles away. Given the distance from KVAs, existing topography and screening, and proposed building colors

and materials, the buildings will have minimal visibility from KVAs and are designed to be visually subordinate. The applicant has chosen dark earth-tone colors and low reflectivity building materials which are included as conditions of approval. Consistent with the landscape settings design guidelines, a **condition of approval** requires existing vegetation on the parcel to be retained except for safety. With these conditions included in the Director's Decision, the proposal will be visually subordinate, as viewed by KVAs and consistent with the design guidelines for the Rural Residential in Pastoral Landscape Setting. Staff find these conditions to be proportionate to the development's potential visual impact as seen from KVAs.

10. Commission Rule 350-082-0600(2)(d) states:

New development shall be sited using existing topography and/or existing vegetation as needed to achieve visual subordination from Key Viewing Areas. The following guidelines shall apply to new landscaping used to screen development from key viewing areas:

(A) New landscaping (including new earth berms) shall be required only when application of all other available guidelines in 350-082-0600 is not sufficient to make the development visually subordinate from key viewing areas. Alternate sites shall be considered prior to using new landscaping to achieve visual subordination. Development shall be sited to avoid the need for new landscaping wherever possible.

(B) If new landscaping is required to make a proposed development visually subordinate from key viewing areas, existing on-site vegetative screening and other visibility factors shall be analyzed to determine the extent of new landscaping, and the size of new trees needed to achieve the standard. Any vegetation planted pursuant to this guideline shall be sized to provide sufficient screening to make the development visually subordinate within five years or less from the commencement of construction. If after five years the vegetation has not achieved a size sufficient to screen the development, the Executive Director may require additional screening to make the development visually subordinate.

(C) Unless as specified otherwise by provisions in 350-082-0600, landscaping shall be installed as soon as practicable, and prior to project completion.

(D) Applicants and successors in interest for the subject parcel are responsible for the proper maintenance and survival of planted vegetation, and replacement of such vegetation that does not survive.

(E) The Scenic Resources Implementation Handbook includes recommended species for each landscape setting consistent with 350-082-0600(3) and minimum recommended sizes of new trees planted (based on average growth rates expected for recommended species).

No new landscaping is required to screen the development. The area to the south of the building sites on the subject parcel is mostly agricultural land without any tree cover except along the property boundary lines where there is some limited vegetation. There are two parcels adjacent to the south of the parcel that have large stands of oak trees and conifers. These trees significantly screen the subject property and the buildings site

locations from view of KVAs to the south. It appears that most of the oak trees survived the fire in part because they are a fire adapted species. The applicant has also proposed some small trees to the northwest of the home site. While these proposed trees will not offer any screening from KVAs to the south, they will help the proposal achieve the applicable standard by helping to soften the harsh lines of the buildings against the backdrop of the greater landscape. A **condition of approval** is included requiring an irrigation plan and the proper maintenance and survival planted vegetation. The proposal is consistent with Commission Rule Commission Rule 350-082-0600(2)(d).

11. The Commission Rule 350-082-0600(2)(e) states:

Existing tree cover screening proposed development from key viewing areas shall be retained as specified in 350-082-0600(3).

The subject parcel is in the Rural Residential in Pastoral landscape setting. Findings for the Landscape Settings Design Guidelines are addressed below.

12. The Landscape Settings map in the Management Plan classifies the landscape setting for the subject parcel as Rural Residential in Pastoral. Commission Rule 350-082-0600(3)(f)(A) contains guidelines for new development in this landscape setting. It states:

New development in this setting shall meet the design guidelines described for both the Rural Residential setting and the more rural setting with which it is combined (either Pastoral, Coniferous Woodland or Oak-Pine Woodland), unless the applicant demonstrates that compliance with the guidelines for the more rural setting is impracticable. Expansion of existing development shall comply with this guideline to the maximum extent practicable.

Commission Rule 350-082-0600(3)(a) lists guidelines for new development in the Pastoral Landscape Setting. It states:

(A) Accessory structures, outbuildings, and access ways shall be clustered together as much as possible, particularly towards the edges of existing meadows, pastures, and farm fields.

(B) In portions of this setting visible from key viewing areas, the following guidelines shall be employed to achieve visual subordination for new development and expansion of existing development:

(i) Except as is necessary for site development or safety purposes, the existing tree cover screening the development from key viewing areas shall be retained.

(ii) Vegetative landscaping shall, where feasible, retain the open character of existing pastures and fields.

(iii) At least half of any trees planted for screening purposes shall be species native to the setting. Examples of native species are identified in the Scenic Implementation Handbook as appropriate for the area.

(vi) At least one-quarter of any trees planted for screening shall be coniferous for winter screening. Variances may be granted to this guideline when development is directly adjacent to or adjoining a landscape setting where coniferous trees are not common or appropriate (see Scenic Implementation

Handbook for guidance), and tree species ultimately selected for winter screening are natives characteristic to that setting.

Commission Rule 350-082-0600(3)(e) lists guidelines for new development in the Rural Residential Landscape Setting. Commission Rules 350-082-0600(3)(e) states:

(A) Existing tree cover shall be retained as much as possible, except as is necessary for site development, safety purposes, or as part of forest management practices.

(B) In portions of this setting visible from key viewing areas, and not exempt from visual subordination guidelines (see 350-082-0600(3)(k)), the following guidelines shall be employed to achieve visual subordination for new development and expansion of existing development:

(i) Except as is necessary for site development or safety purposes, the existing tree cover screening the development from key viewing areas shall be retained.

(ii) At least half of any trees planted for screening purposes shall be species native to the setting (see Scenic Implementation Handbook for guidance).

(iii) At least half of any trees planted for screening purposes shall be coniferous to provide winter screening.

No trees are proposed to be removed, and no additional vegetation is required for screening purposes. The applicant has proposed to some small trees to the northwest of the home site. While these proposed trees will not offer any screening from KVAs to the south, they will help the proposal achieve the applicable standard by helping to soften the hard lines of the buildings against the backdrop of the greater landscape. The proposed landscaping is in the vicinity of the proposed buildings, which helps to *retain the open character of the existing agricultural fields on the property*. With a **condition of approval** requiring the retention of existing tree cover, the proposed development is consistent with Commission Rule 350-082-0600(3)(f)(A) for new development within the Rural Residential in Pastoral landscape setting.

Scenic Resources Conclusion:

The proposed development is consistent with Commission Rule 350-082-200(4) that allows the replacement of existing structures destroyed by disaster.

C. CULTURAL RESOURCES

1. Except as specified in Commission Rule 350-082-0620(2)(a)(C), development in the NSA requires a reconnaissance survey.
2. Luciano Legnini, U.S. Forest Service Archeologist, reviewed the land use application and determined in a Cultural Resources Survey Determination letter, dated August 12, 2025, that pursuant to Commission Rule 350-082-0620(2)(a)(B) a Cultural Resource Reconnaissance Survey is not required because the proposed use would involve the modification, expansion, replacement, or reconstruction of existing buildings and structures.

3. Commission Rule 350-082-0620(2)(a)(D) describes when a historic survey is required. In his August 12, 2025, Cultural Resources Survey Determination letter, Mr. Legnini determined that a historical survey is not required.
4. Commission Rule 350-082-0620(2)(g)(B)(i) states the cultural resource protection process may conclude when the following conditions exist:

The proposed use does not require a reconnaissance or historic survey, no cultural resources are known to exist in the project area, and no substantiated concerns were voiced by interested persons within 30 calendar days of the date that a notice was mailed.

The project notice was mailed on August 7, 2025, and the comment period ended on August 28, 2025. As explained above, the proposed use did not require a reconnaissance or historical survey. David Witt, with Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation Oregon, submitted a comment on August 28, 2025, requesting a survey of the area because there are archaeological resources in the immediate vicinity of this parcel. Commission staff discussed the comment with Mr. Legnini & Chris Donnermeyer, National Scenic Area Heritage Program Manager, and determined that the proposal was for replacement of existing buildings and structures, and that a survey is not required by Commission Rule 350-082-0620(2)(a)(B). Pursuant to Commission Rule 350-082-0620(2)(g)(B)(i), the cultural resource protection process may conclude.

5. Commission Rule 350-082-0620(6) protects cultural resources discovered during construction. It requires that if cultural resources are discovered after construction begins, all construction activities within one hundred feet of the discovered cultural resource shall cease; further disturbance is prohibited, and the Gorge Commission shall be notified within 24 hours of the discovery. A **condition of approval** is included in the director's decision consistent with this rule.
6. Commission Rule 350-082-0620(7) contains provisions addressing discovery of human remains during construction. A **condition of approval** is included in the director's decision consistent with this rule.

Cultural Resources Conclusion:

The proposed development is consistent with Commission Rule 350-082-200(4) that allows the replacement of existing structures destroyed by disaster. With conditions protecting unknown cultural resources and human remains discovered during construction, the proposal is consistent with the guidelines in Commission Rule 350-082-0620 that protects cultural resources in the National Scenic Area.

D. NATURAL RESOURCES

1. Commission Rule 350-082-0640 provides guidelines for protecting water resources in the General Management Area. The proposed development must only meet the criteria identified in Commission Rule 350-082-0200(4) which allows the replacement of an existing structure destroyed by disaster. There are no water resources guidelines provided for development reviewed under Commission Rule 350-082-200(4).

The Commission staff reviewed its natural resource inventories for nearby water resources which do not show any wetlands or streams in the project vicinity. The closest stream and wetland are over 900 ft away from the subject parcel.

2. Commission Rule 350-082-0650 provides guidelines for protecting Priority Habitats and sensitive wildlife sites in the General Management Area. However, the proposed development must only meet the criteria identified in Commission Rule 350-082-0200(4) which allows the replacement of an existing structure destroyed by disaster. There are no sensitive wildlife guidelines provided for development reviewed under Commission Rule 350-082-200(4).

The Gorge Commission's sensitive wildlife inventory shows the applicants development site is within 1,000-feet of deer and elk winter range, Lewis's woodpecker habitat, and Pacific Pond turtle habitat. Commission Rule 350-082-0690 Table 1 – Priority Habitats defines sensitive wildlife areas to include these areas. According to the Commission's inventories, the project site is approximately 800-feet away from the nearest boundary area. On August 7, 2025, Gorge Commission staff sent WDFW a copy of the applicant's land use application and site plan. No comments were received.

3. Commission Rule 350-082-0660 provides guidelines for protecting rare plants in General Management Area. However, the proposed development must only meet the criteria identified in Commission Rule 350-082-0200(4) which allows the replacement of an existing structure destroyed by disaster. There are no sensitive plant guidelines provided for development reviewed under Commission Rule 350-082-200(4).

Commission staff reviewed its natural resource inventories which do not show any sensitive plants in the project vicinity. The closest sensitive plants are over one mile away from the subject parcel.

Natural Resources Conclusion:

The proposed development is consistent with Commission Rule 350-082-200(4) that allows the replacement of existing structures destroyed by disaster. Therefore, the proposed development is consistent with the rules in Commission Rule 350-082, Sections 0640 through 0690, that protect natural resources in the National Scenic Area.

E. RECREATION RESOURCES

1. Commission Rule 350-082-0650 provides guidelines for protecting recreation sites in the General Management Area. The proposed development must only meet the criteria identified in Commission Rule 350-082-0200(4) which allows the replacement of an existing structure destroyed by disaster. There are no recreation guidelines provided for development reviewed under Commission Rule 350-082-200(4). There are no recreation sites adjacent or nearby the subject parcel.

Recreation Resources Conclusion:

The proposed development is consistent with Commission Rule 350-082-200(4) that allows the replacement of existing structures destroyed by disaster. The proposed

development is consistent with Commission Rule 350-082, Sections 0700 through 0720, that protect recreation resources in the National Scenic Area.

F. TREATY RIGHTS PROTECTION

1. Commission Rule 350-082-0130 provides protection of tribal treaty rights from new development in the National Scenic Area. Consistent with Commission Rule 350-082-0130(1)(a), notice of the proposed development was provided to the tribal governments on August 7, 2025.
2. Commission Rule 350-082-0130(1)(c) requires the Commission to offer to meet with or consult with the tribal governments prior to making a decision on the proposed development, and to make this offer more than once. The Commission provided the initial notice on August 7, 2025. No treaty tribe commented on the proposal or requested a meeting or consultation.
3. Commission Rule 350-082-0130(d) provides thirty calendar days for tribal governments to request consultation regarding tribal treaty rights. No comments were received.
4. Commission Rule 350-082-0130(i) states:

The treaty rights protection process may conclude if the Executive Director determines that the proposed uses would not affect or modify treaty or other rights of any Indian tribe. Uses that would affect or modify such rights shall be prohibited.

The subject parcel does not provide access to the Columbia River or its fish bearing tributaries. No known treaty rights are affected by this proposal and no treaty rights concerns were raised by the tribal governments. Because the proposed use does not affect or modify treaty or other rights of any Indian tribe, the treaty rights protection process may conclude pursuant to Commission Rule 350-082-0130.

Treaty Rights Conclusion:

The proposed development is consistent with the guidelines in Commission Rule 350-082-0130, which provides protection for treaty rights and any other rights of any Indian tribe.

BG
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**Recommended Seed Mixes, Mulch, and Fertilizer
for Temporary and Permanent Revegetation in East Side Environments**
Based on recommendations from Andrea Ruchty, district botanist, GPNF, Mt. Adams Dist.,
and Robin Dobson, CRGNSA botanist

<i>Native Seed Mixture #1: Recommendations for Composition and Application Rates</i>		
Species	Hand Seeding including Handheld Spreaders	Hydromulcher
blue wildrye (<i>Elymus glaucus</i>)	20 lbs/acre	15 lbs/acre
California brome (<i>Bromus carinatus</i>)	20 lbs/acre	15 lbs/acre
slender hairgrass (<i>Deschampsia elongata</i>)	10 lbs/acre	5 lbs/acre
broadleaf lupine (<i>Lupinus latifolia</i>)		
Idaho fescue (<i>Festuca idahoensis</i>)		
Total	50 lbs/acre	35 lbs/acre

<i>Native Seed Mixture #2: Recommendations for Composition</i>	
Species	% by wt.
California Brome (<i>Bromus carinatus</i>)	20
Sheep fescue (<i>Festuca ovina</i>)	40
Blue wildrye (<i>Elymus glaucus</i>)	10
Canada bluegrass (<i>Poa compressa</i>)	10
Blue bunch wheatgrass (<i>Agropyron spicatum</i>)	20
Sickle-keeled lupine (<i>Lupinus albicaulis</i>)	5 oz./100# seed
America vetch (<i>Vicia Americana</i>)	5 oz./100# seed

<i>Non-Native Seed Mixture: Recommendations for Composition and Application Rates</i>	
Species	Application Rate
Annual ryegrass (<i>Lolium multiflorum</i>)	10 lbs/acre (fine seed)
Perennial ryegrass (<i>L. perenne</i>)	10 lbs/acre (fine seed)
Soft white winter wheat (<i>Triticum aestivum</i>)	40 lbs/acre
Sickle-keeled lupine (<i>Lupinus albicaulis</i>)	10 lbs/acre
TOTAL	70 lbs/acre

Herbaceous plants can be added after seeding:

Chrysothamnus nauseosus (rabbitbrush)	1 -2 oz./ac.
Achillea millefolium (Yarrow)	1 -2 oz./ac.
Eriogonum strictum	1 -2 oz./ac.
Lupinus bicolor or latifolius var. thompsonianus	1 -2 oz./ac.
Eriophyllum lanatum (Oregon sunshine)	1 -2 oz./ac.
Bitter brush (Purshia tridentate)	10 small plants/ac.
Arrowleaf Balsam root	

Notes:

Application Method: Hand or machine, ideally in the fall. Machines such as hydromulchers, usually have agitators which keep the seed well mixed and applied evenly. In hand-seeding operations it is more difficult to achieve an even distribution of seed. For this reason more lbs /acre have been prescribed to compensate for inadvertent patchiness. Hand seeding should utilize two passes of the area: 1 pass for small, fine seed such as slender hairgrass, and a second pass for the larger seeded species such as blue wildrye and California brome. Rice hulls may need to be added to the DEEL to get dispersion distance. Contact with the soil is very important, best results are achieved when the seed is lightly raked or pressed into the soil.

Seed Storability: Generally grass and forb species will hold reasonable germination (>80%) for 6-7 years in uncontrolled conditions. Thin-coated species such as *Bromus* will hold only 2-3 years or so.

Seed Source: Try to use appropriate local seed source for natives. Some flexibility for elevation is ok in a pinch. One native seed source is Bolson Seed Company, La Grande, OR (541)965-8285. Milestone Nursery (Lyle), Inside Passage Seed Co., Oregon Wholesale Seed Company (<http://www.oregonwholesaleseed.com/>), Rainier Seeds, Hughes Feed and Grain (the Dalles) and Dallesport Seed are other possible sources of seed, as well.

Fertilizer: Where there is a good "A" horizon probably don't need fertilizer. For sites with little organic matter use 200 lbs 16-20-0 /ac.

Mulch: Use certified weed free straw mulch whenever possible. Only 1-2" (2 tons/ac.) is needed and should be evenly applied. **Too deep can be more detrimental than none at all.** Ideally, it should be chopped and applied by machine. To further reduce the chance of introducing non-natives in to project areas, straw derived from native species is preferred. If not available, then straw from short-lived or non-persistent mulch sources such as annual rye or cereal grain seed production fields would be the next choice.

Using weed-free straw mulch is an important component in our strategy to control the spread of invasive species on the Forest. Weed-free straw is still a developing resource and its availability may be variable. Finding it will likely take some looking around. Oregon and Washington currently have weed-free certification programs. See the following websites for current lists of weed-free straw suppliers:

- ✓ http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/WWHAM/WWHAM_suppliers.htm
- ✓ http://oregon.gov/ODA/CID/weed_free_forage.shtml

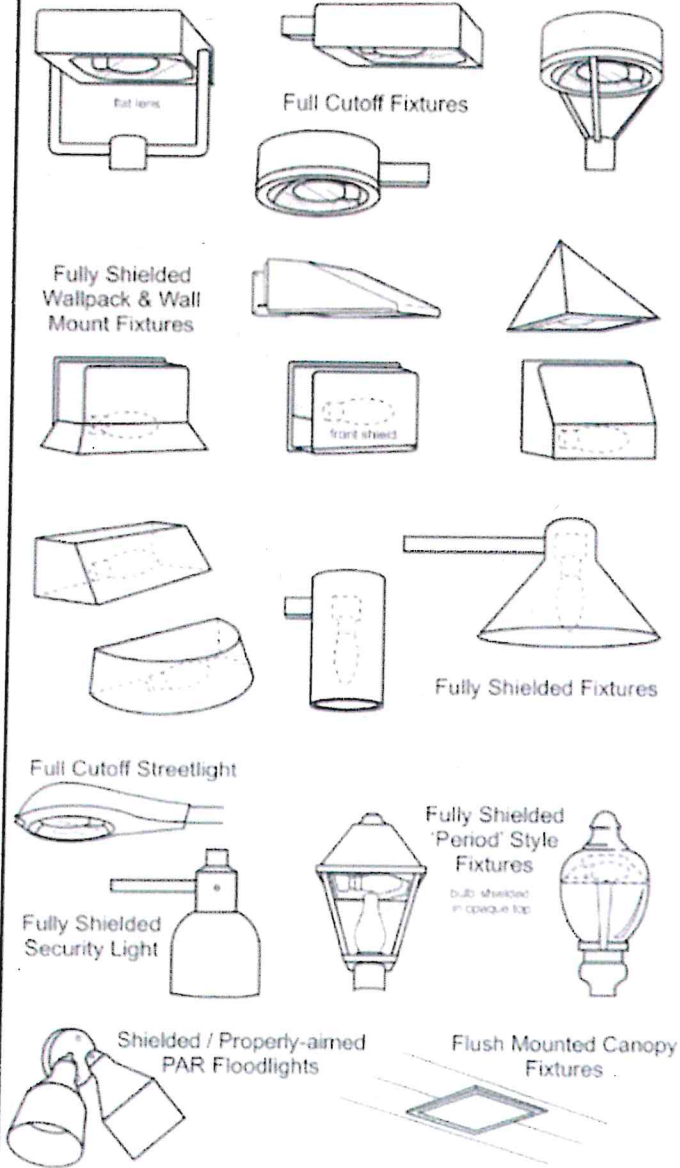
The following are some more potential contacts for weed-free straw:

- Elwyn Crutcher, Stanwood, WA, 360-939-2334 (he will deliver for a charge, is generally sold out by spring).
- Wallowa County Hay Growers Association:
<http://www.certifiedwallowacountyhay.com/>
- John Williams, OSU Extension in Wallowa County, 541-426-3143.
- Randy Black, Oregon Dept of Agriculture, 503-986-4620.
- Allen Schnetzky, Weed Supervisor, Wallowa County 541-426-3332.

Examples of Acceptable / Unacceptable Lighting Fixtures

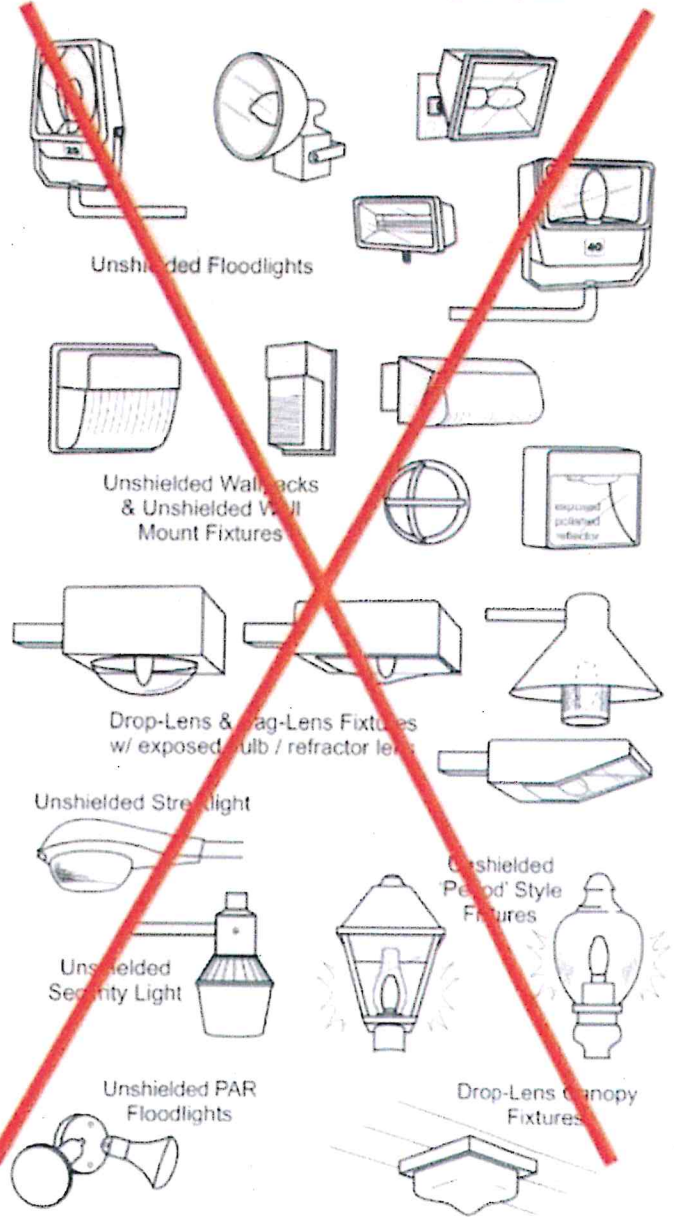
Acceptable

Fixtures that shield the light source to minimize glare and light trespass and to facilitate better vision at night



Unacceptable / Discouraged

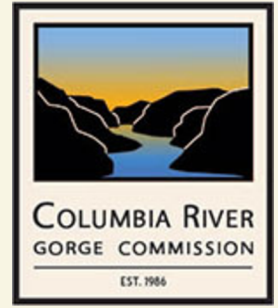
Fixtures that produce glare and light trespass



BC 10/02

Defensible Space for Your Home

Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area



Fire is a natural part of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area environment. Historically, fires often started from lightning or were intentionally used as a land management tool by Indigenous people. As a result of fire suppression over the past century and changing climate conditions, fires today are often more intense and can have negative impacts on habitats, property, and human health. The National Scenic Area is considered a wildland-urban interface, meaning people live close to forests and wildlands. To protect your home, it is critical to incorporate defensible space practices on your property. Gorge Commission staff and your county's planning department look forward to working with you.

Can I meet National Scenic Area standards and protect my home from wildfire?

Yes, as a resident of this place, both reducing the risk of wildfire to your home and preserving the natural landscape should be considered in your home design process. Talk with your local planner about specific requirements (contacts below). Depending on where your home is located, defensible space practices may be required for your development and are always encouraged. Having a defensible space assessment done for your property is a great place to start.

What is a defensible space assessment?

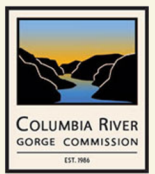
A defensible space assessment identifies ways you can reduce wildfire risk to your home and property. The evaluation focuses on the materials and structural elements of your home as well as how to manage the vegetation and other sources of fuel on your property. If you are interested in a defensible space assessment, contact your local planner to learn more about resources. You can find contacts for planning departments and local organizations below.

What is defensible space?

Defensible space is a buffer between a building and nearby wildland or open space. Develop and maintain this space so that if vegetation or other materials catch fire, they won't threaten the home from embers, heat, or flames. (FEMA)

How do I sign up for a defensible space assessment?

For residents in Oregon counties, go to OregonDefensibleSpace.org
Klickitat and Skamania county residents: WildfireReady.dnr.wa.gov or email fire@ucdwa.org
Clark County residents register for a Home Ignition Zone Assessment at clarkcd.org/forestry



When do I implement defensible space for my home?

Right from the start. The most important way to protect your home from ignitions is by using fire-resistant materials in your home design. Most homes lost to wildfire ignite from wind-driven embers landing on or around the home. The area within 5 feet of your home is critical to protect your home from ember ignitions. Start with the materials of the house itself and then move to landscaping the area around your home. (See example illustration on the next page.)

Can I remove trees and shrubs to create defensible space?

Yes, selective removal of trees or shrubs may be allowed in many cases. Before removing any vegetation, talk with your local planner about specific requirements for your site. Other situations, such as thinning or removing vegetation, may require a permit or additional review. Previously issued land use decisions may require maintenance of screening vegetation. Other land uses such as Special Management Areas, Open Space lands, and development sites near Oregon white oak trees may require specific standards related to vegetation retention.

How can I landscape around my home with scenic standards and defensible space in mind?

In the National Scenic Area, preserving the natural landscape is a priority. The area beyond the first 5 feet of your home should include adequate spacing between vegetation to prevent fire spread. Use fire-adapted and native species whenever possible. Make sure trees and shrubs are trimmed and healthy. Regularly remove dead vegetation and debris on the ground. Keep vegetation out of the 0-5 foot zone to protect your home from ember ignition. Consult with your local planning department to review conditions of approval related to retention of trees and shrubs associated with your permit.

National Scenic Area County Planning Departments:

Columbia River Gorge Commission & Klickitat County NSA Planning: (509) 493-3323

Clark County Community Development: (360) 397-2375 | Hood River County Planning Department: (541) 387-6840

Multnomah County Land Use Planning Department: (503) 988-3043

Skamania County Community Development: (509) 427-3900 | Wasco County Planning & Development: (541) 506-2560

Always dial 911 for emergencies.

Defensible Space Best Practices

0-5 foot zone:

- The most important thing you can do to protect your home is to use fire-resistant materials on your home. Some recommendations include:
 - Use asphalt shingles or metal roofing materials that are non-reflective.
 - Install ½ inch metal mesh screens on vents and chimney openings to keep embers out.
 - Use screens or a noncombustible barrier around the edge of a deck to keep embers out from under the structure.
- Regularly clean out gutters.
- After the house itself, the 0-5 foot zone around your home is the immediate priority and the most vulnerable to ignition. Some recommendations include:
 - Use rock, pavers, or gravel in this zone.
 - Construct decks and patio areas with fire-resistant materials.
 - Remove all combustible objects and debris from under decks and porches.

5-50+ foot zone:

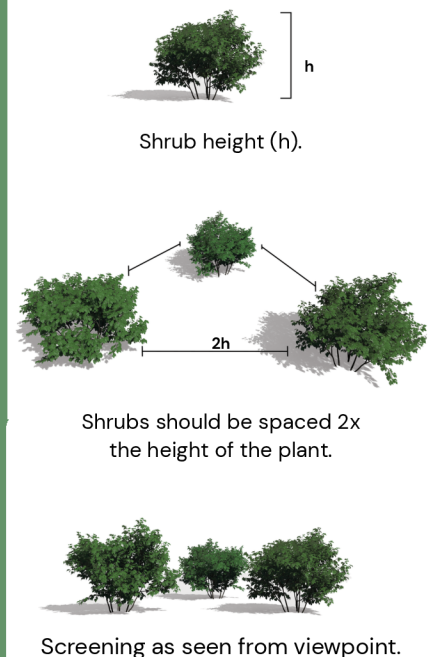
- Keep this zone clean. Remove flammables such as wood chips, dead vegetation on the ground, leaves, and pine needles.
- Integrate breaks between clusters of vegetation and the house. Learn more about vegetation and screening in the green sidebar.
- Remove ladder fuels (vegetation and limbs close to the ground) to prevent fire from spreading into the tree canopy.
- Store firewood at least 30 feet from your home.

What is a Key Viewing Area (KVA)?

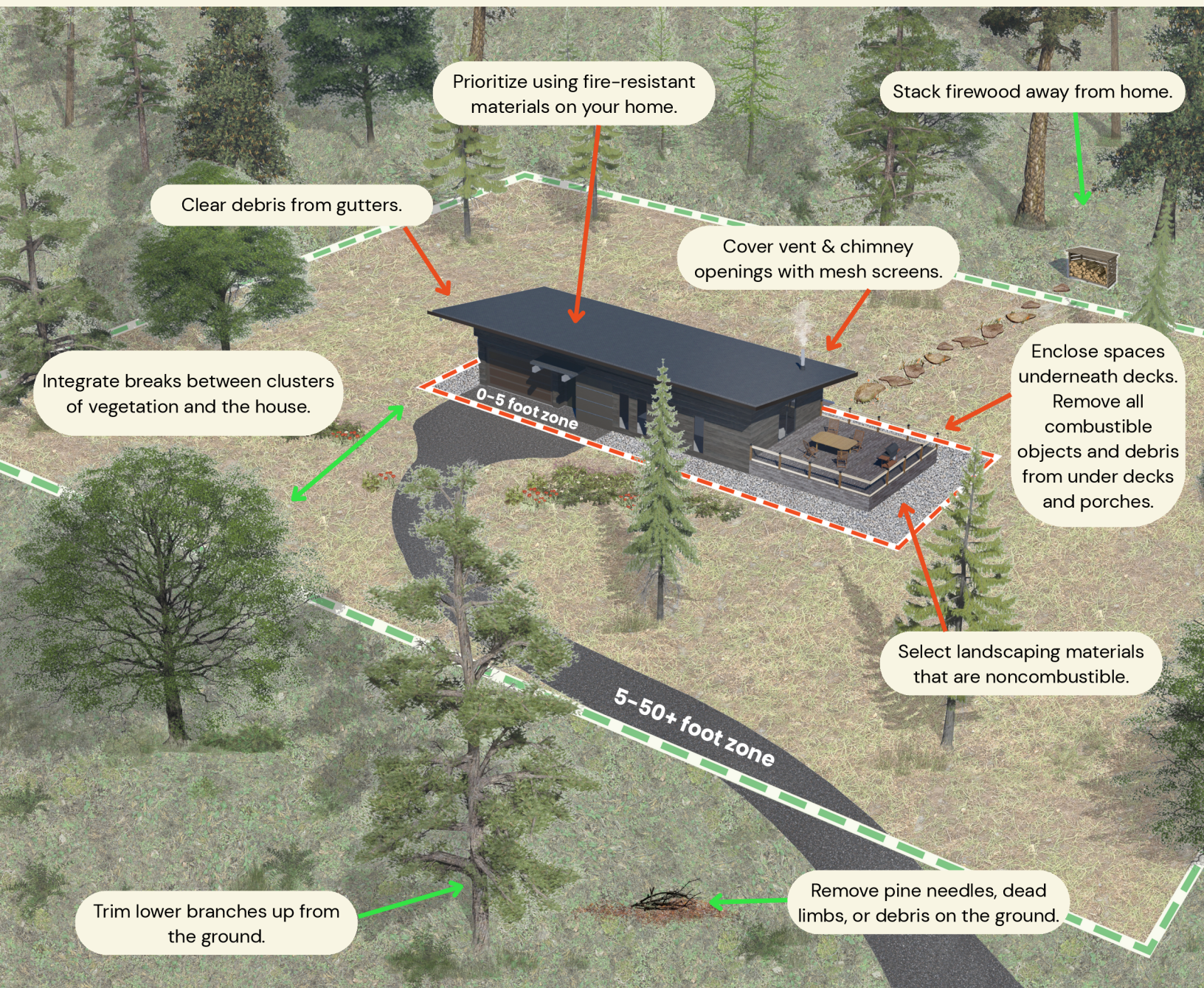
Key Viewing Areas are important identified roads, parks, or other vantage points from which the public views National Scenic Area landscapes.

Vegetation Spacing & Screening

Screening your home from specific viewpoints called Key Viewing Areas is an important part of the land use review process. Using strategic spacing between trees and shrubs can achieve both scenic standards for your permit and be effective in creating breaks between vegetation for defensible space best practices. See the diagram below as an example.



Example of Best Practices for Defensible Space in the National Scenic Area



See more information on next page.

WILDFIRE DEBRIS

Post-Fire Household Debris Removal Processes

Household Debris Removal

Insurance

Beginning the debris removal process may seem daunting. However, when it comes to insurance, your cleanup should be covered under your property insurance policy. You should contact your insurance company immediately before starting any cleanup to find out if they have any requirements for reimbursement, such as photos of the damage and receipts for temporary housing. As with all claims, it is vital to maintain records and receipts of any activity on your property.

In the case of a presidential disaster declaration, cleanup will most likely be led by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at no cost to the homeowner.

Homeowners are encouraged to default to EPA recommendations and processes. If a declaration is not made, [local Clean Air Agencies](#) and the Washington State Department of Ecology will assist with cleanup.

Documentation

Many landfills mandate specific documentation for waste disposal to ensure proper handling and regulatory compliance. This may include lab results to identify hazardous materials in your debris. Without the required documentation, disposal may be denied.

Quick Tips

- ▶ Check with local officials before placing debris for collection to determine where and when pickups will be conducted.
- ▶ **Be wary of scams.**
- ▶ Seek information about locally led debris cleanup efforts.
- ▶ Sort debris into three categories: metals, naturals, and ash & trash.

Check out: [Debris Removal and Cleanup Safety Checklist](#)

Resources

- [Hazardous waste disposal sites and services by county](#) (WA Department of Ecology)
- [Safe Cleanup of Wildfire Ash](#) (New Mexico Department of Health)
- [EPA debris cleanup guidelines](#) (Environmental Protection Agency)
- [EPA Disaster Debris Recovery Tool](#) (Environmental Protection Agency)
- [Disposing of hazardous household waste](#) (WA Department of Ecology)



WILDFIRE DEBRIS

Post-Fire Household Debris Removal Processes

Quick Guide to the Debris Removal Process

Step 1

Contact your insurance provider. Then, contact your county or city code enforcement agency to determine their cleanup requirements for new construction permits.

Step 2

Determine if the ash and debris contain asbestos. It is strongly recommended you hire a licensed abatement contractor to perform any abatement activities.

Step 3

Sort through debris types and separate into metals, naturals, and ash & trash.

Step 4

Determine if you can bury anything on site. Typically, brick, rock, and concrete can be buried if you have space.

Step 5

Contact your local waste disposal site to learn what requirements they have for waste acceptance.

Step 6

Coordinate debris pick-up or locate a location to dispose of any debris that cannot be buried.



Photo: Bill Bradley

Asbestos

Contrary to common belief, asbestos is still found in many modern day materials. When asbestos is suspected to be present, the site needs to be tested. Asbestos testing should be covered by your insurance policy. In some situations, local municipalities will actually require testing after a disaster.

Read more: [Asbestos and Natural Disaster Guide](#)

Asbestos Resources:

- [Common Asbestos Containing Products](#)
- For guidance on asbestos testing and cleanup, [contact your local Clean Air Agency](#).
- [List of CDC approved respirators for handling asbestos](#).
- [Spokane Clean Air Agency](#) provides advice on hiring asbestos service providers and has a comprehensive list of providers in Washington.

WILDFIRE DEBRIS

Debris removal safety checklist

REMEMBER! Contact your insurance company to report the loss before you do any cleanup or removal on your property.

- Only return to your property when officials have deemed it safe. Fire damaged structures can be unstable and dangerous to enter.
- Use caution when disturbing building materials to prevent physical injury or other health effects. Be especially careful while walking on or standing in fire debris.
- Wear protective gear such as gloves, protective glasses, and masks when handling debris. Safety boots and hard hats are especially important, burned areas have many loose nails and unburned structures can be unstable.
- Complete any required or recommended testing.
- In the case that asbestos was found at the property, handle debris according to [best practices for treatment and removal](#).
- Be on the alert for leaking containers and reactive household chemicals. Hazardous materials and pressurized containers can be especially dangerous to handle after a fire. It is recommended to use a specialist to identify and remove these materials.
- Open burning of materials by individuals should be avoided, and may be illegal in your area.
- Remove standing water and wet materials as quickly as possible and dry out the building to avoid mold, bacteria, and insects.
- Never dispose of hazardous household products in the trash, sink, drain, or toilet.
- Cover debris loads during transport and use water to reduce dust and ash while moving and loading fire debris.
- Do not attempt to cleanup or dispose of lithium batteries (found in electric vehicles) as they can remain volatile for extended periods of time.
- Clean recyclable materials and metal with water prior to transport to reduce the spread of asbestos or other contaminants in the ash.
- Do not discharge water containing ash into the stormwater system or surface waters, as it can cause water quality issues.
- Scrape soil under the area where ash/debris was deposited to ensure all hazardous debris is removed from the site.