Postfire follow-up: Using the LEAF assessment template

How to help landowners set goals and connect with resources

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Outreach matters most in the days and weeks after a wildfire. Learn how to help landowners set goals and find resources with the use of the LEAF assessment template.

Photo by Amanda Brenner

Outreach

Successful wildfire recovery depends on assessing wildfire impacts, determining landscape needs, prioritizing restoration activities and accessing resources. Oregon State University's Landowner Experience After Fire (LEAF) study found that landowners who engaged with one or more organizations involved in wildfire recovery were twice as likely to complete forest restoration work on their property as those who did not.

In response, OSU Extension designed a site assessment tool (https://oregonstate.box.com/s/hrdremiax0bnub8rnt3mki1tkjf53lpv) to help professionals and organizations interact with landowners, provide recommendations for restoration activities and connect them with resources. This postwildfire site assessment tool is a guide to effective communication in initial encounters with landowners.

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The goals of this site assessment are twofold:

1. Help landowners develop priorities and action-oriented goals for their forest.
2. Connect landowners with the financial, technical and physical resources they need to take action.

Immediately following a wildfire, some landowners may reach out to your office or organization for help in wildfire recovery. Most landowners, however, could be unaware of your organization or services. This is when outreach matters most.

Before developing an outreach campaign, carefully identify and define the specific resources you can offer to a landowner so you can establish clear expectations. If your organization provides financial assistance or crew work, be sure to include that in your outreach.

Mailing campaigns are one good way to inform landowners about your organization and your willingness to provide a site assessment. But mail may be less effective immediately after a wildfire, especially when the fire has impacted residences. Mailing campaigns can work in landscapes where wildfire occurred in the more distant past.

For areas that recently experienced fires, identify community gatherings. Consider reaching out to local fire districts and departments, as well as other local organizations, as places where landowners can sign up for a site assessment. Community events focused on the nonforestry impacts of wildfire can also serve as outreach venues.

Once landowners have indicated interest, it is important to have a screening conversation before scheduling. This template includes a screening guide (https://oregonstate.box.com/s/lgsbm6en3n3jai72rqh39bxz3j6fuu1f) that can help determine if a site visit is appropriate at this time.

Not all landowners will be ready for a visit at the same time. Before committing to a visit, have a conversation with the landowner to assess whether financial, physical, logistical, legal or emotional complications could impact the utility of the site visit. If a visit is not appropriate at initial contact, follow up later.

Consider maintaining relationships with affected landowners after the site visit. This may depend on the capacity of your organization. A newsletter can inform landowners of new resources as they become available and remind them of existing resources such as grant funding and fuel reduction programs. Opportunities for forest restoration that might not be appropriate for the landowner at the time of the site assessment may prove helpful later on.

Selecting a site assessor

The site assessment is a communication and planning tool that provides actionable recommendations, helps the landowner prioritize work and connects them to available resources. It is not a technical document, but it may inform technical documents such as a planting plan or a financial support application.

Site assessors don’t need a background in wildfire or professional forestry, but they should have general experience in natural resource management, specific to woodlands. Consider involving more than one site assessor or inviting a partner organization when the landowner's needs exceed the professional expertise of a single site assessor.

Start of the site assessment

Wildfire can be a life-altering and traumatic experience. If not conducted with care, a site visit can trigger emotional reactions. Landowners who live on a property can struggle with memories of evacuation and destruction. Even those who lost forestland but had no home on the property can experience deep trauma that takes years to recover from.

This guide was developed to provide structure and context for the LEAF Site Assessment form. View it as a way to move the conversation — and the restoration work — forward. We provide explanations for each section and offer questions to help landowners articulate the situation on their properties.

As the site assessor, start with introductions and informal conversation before jumping into the technical details of the site assessment. This may help landowners feel more at ease, allowing you time to gauge their attitudes and emotions regarding postwildfire forest restoration. When introducing yourself, describe your organization and your position. You may be able to connect with landowners through a shared passion for the land. We provide potential icebreaker questions below.

The first section covers basic information about the property, some of which can be completed before the site visit begins. Make note of all legal property owners, as this will impact next steps for the landowner with whom you are speaking. Include your name, organization and contact information so the landowner can follow up if they have more questions.

Report basic background information, such as whether the owners intend to sell and whether they reside on the property. Landscape recovery will look different if the landowner plans to sell the property, and selling may disqualify them from certain funding opportunities. In the site assessment template, record whether the landowner lives on the property. The landowner's capacity to work on the property and access to resources may be impacted by their presence.

Possible questions

- When did you first acquire the property?
- What got you interested in owning a forested property?
- What have you loved best about owning this property?
- Who have you reached out to since the fire?

History of wildfire on the property

This section may be completed before the site assessment, although confirm details with the landowner during the visit. Recognizing that fire may have occurred on the property more than once, this section should record wildfire on the property, starting from the most recent incident. Landowners may be aware of historic fires and those not in public knowledge or public record.

For known wildfire on the property, download and print burn severity maps.

For wildfires that also burned on federal lands, you will be able to find a burn severity map produced by the Burned Area Emergency Response Teams. (https://burnseverity.cr.usgs.gov/viewer/?product=BAER)

For wildfires that did not have a BAER Team and burned exclusively on state or private lands, you may reach out to your local Oregon Department of Forestry office for information, assistance and maps. ODF has some online resources as well, including a fire history map (https://data.oregon.gov/stories/s/92y3-mdk3). Oregon State University hosts some fire history information on the Oregon Explorer (https://hub.oregonexplorer.info/pages/wildfire) application.

By discussing burn severity and a history of wildfire, this section provides an opportunity to learn how the landowner understands the effects of wildfire. This understanding will impact how they view recovery and their desired goals for their forest. For each fire, note any funding assistance received and general actions taken to help in recovery.

Note whether the landowner purchased the property after the wildfire. They may be unaware of the responsibilities the prior landowners left them with, such as salvage harvesting or reforestation. Take that into account when discussing next steps.

Possible questions

- What wildfires have reached the property that you know of?
- Did you receive any funding assistance after those fires, and if so, from whom?
- What did you do the last time wildfire occurred on your property?

Immediate concerns

Forest restoration will almost always follow the resolution of any immediate or emergency concerns on the property, particularly if the fire has been recent. If the wildfire was a few years prior or the landowner has already undertaken a lot of work resolving immediate concerns, consider skipping or delaying this section and focus on building rapport and discerning landowner objectives.

For this section, you may need to discuss topics outside of forest restoration. Site assessors may not have all the answers. Take time to research local organizations and agencies that landowners can reach out to and provide their contact information in the recommendations box.

- **Home or outbuilding damage**: Any damaged or destroyed buildings and the landowner's plans for them.
- **Hazard trees present**: Note dead and dying trees that specifically threaten property, infrastructure or the home.
- **High erosion or landslide potential**: Describe areas with high erosion or landslide potential that specifically threaten infrastructure, the home, or riparian habitat and streams. Other areas of high erosion or landslide potential can be recorded in “Property characteristics by stand” section.
- **Watercourse debris**: Record where downed vegetation, sedimentation or landslide debris blocks flow and has the potential to flood or erode the land further.
- **Road infrastructure threats/failure:** Indicate where roads have become impassible or where damage significantly impacts land stability or water quality. This could include washed-out roads, areas of significant debris and plugged culverts. Also, note areas where roads are vulnerable to such adverse conditions, even if there is no negative impact yet.
- **Downed power lines**: Immediately note and address any downed power lines on or near the property. Advise the landowner to contact the power company immediately.
- **Wellhouse/spring damage or other drinking water concerns:** Describe any damage that hinders or prevents the landowner from accessing potable water, including sources on the property, as well as compromised city water.

- **Livestock management and/or fencing:** People who own multi-use properties may have suffered field and pasture damage after a wildfire. Note concerns such as management of dead or evacuated livestock, and reconstruction of enclosures to keep them out of sensitive areas on the property.
- **Cross-boundary communication**: Describe any unexpected or disputed postfire activities conducted by neighbors or right-of-way easement holders on or adjacent to the property.
- **Unclear property lines:** Postfire damage may include fencing, corner markers, iron rods, brass caps or bearing trees that delineated property boundaries. If these are damaged or destroyed, the landowner may need to resurvey and reestablish markers, particularly when considering restoration work near the property boundary.

Possible questions

- Do you have any immediate or emergency concerns for the property?
- Are you aware of neighbors doing work on their properties?
- Are you aware of the actions of a right-of-way easement holder, such as cutting green trees on their property?
- May we do a quick walkaround of your home and outbuildings to check for hazard trees or stump holes?
- Where do you get your water from? Has it been tested since the wildfire?
- What damage did you receive from the fire around your home, outbuildings, fencing or any other infrastructure?

Landowner objectives

This section is an opportunity to understand a landowner's broad goals for their woodland, both in terms of postfire restoration and general long-term goals. This will typically fall under categories such as income, aesthetics, ecological health, fire risk reduction and family succession.

During this conversation, identify whether the landowner has developed a forest management plan. If there are structures on the property, determine if a defensible space or home ignition zone assessment has been conducted. While the purpose of this site assessment is not home fire resilience, landowners should understand that the decisions they make about their landscape, particularly in areas around the home, will impact home survivability and their ability to insure their home.

If they have not developed a forest management plan or had a defensible space or home ignition zone assessment but are interested, note any assessment resources available to them, such as an Oregon Department of Forestry contractor list, or a local Firewise coordinator, fire district or fire department for a defensible space or home ignition zone assessment. Oregon State Fire Marshals may also be able to provide an assessment.

Possible questions

- Could you tell me a little bit about why you wanted to become a forest or woodland owner in the first place?
- Where would you like to see your woodland in five years? 10 years?
- Has wildfire changed your goals for the property, and if so, how?
- What concerns you about accomplishing these goals?

Forest property characteristics

This section focuses on the entire forest on the property in question. The property may consist of multiple adjacent parcels. Consider conducting separate site assessments for landowners with multiple properties in different parts of the county or state.

Some of this portion of the site assessment can be prepared beforehand. Quickly view the property using Google Maps or GIS to determine its neighbors. If adjacent properties are public, consider providing the landowners with contact information. If adjacent properties are private, the landowners you visit may have their contact information, or you may look up phone numbers and mailing addresses in real property records.

Consider looking the property up at the open source Landmapper site (https://oregon.landmapper.ecotrust.org/landmapper/). Download and print some of this information. Landowners may have their own maps or shapefiles. Be sure to ask.

- **Adjacent property ownerships:** Relationships with adjacent landowners can impact the effectiveness of postwildfire treatments. This section should list the names and contact information of neighbors to improve communication on forest restoration activities. Also consider discussing landowners' relationships with their neighbors, particularly if there are opportunities or needs to work across boundaries.
- **Watershed HUC:** Record watershed by hydrologic unit code. This may be determined before the site visit.
- **Watercourses and waterbodies:** Note any bodies of water or streams, seasonal or perennial.
- **Nonwoodland land uses:** Some woodland landowners have nonforest-related uses for their lands. In some cases, those uses supersede the landowner's needs or desires for forest restoration. Be sure to note the other uses of the property, such as farming or residential, that need to be factored in when prioritizing tasks.
- **Extent of road systems:** Describe how much of the woodland is accessible by vehicle or machines, such as chippers or masticators. Note the carrying capacity and ease of ingress/egress of the roads and bridges for log trucks or firefighting. Note any road repairs or maintenance needed to move forward with forest restoration work.
- **Rights of way and easements:** Note any areas of the property the landowner does not have full control of, or that others have access to. If available, include the contact information of those who have access. Note whether the house number is clearly identified from the main road.
- **Treatments or timber harvests prior to wildfire:** Note any treatments or timber harvests conducted in the 10 years prior to wildfire. Identify if wildfire activity has impacted restocking in areas harvested for timber.
- **Treatments or timber harvests since the wildfire:** Note any treatments or timber harvests that have been conducted since the wildfire. This includes any salvage harvests and required replanting operations.

Possible questions or conversation points

- How is your communication with your neighbors? Are you aware of any postfire actions they are taking?
- Aside from the forest, do you use this property for anything else, such as farming, ranching or rentals?
- Discuss neighbors' responsibility for doing work on their property and how to get absentee neighbors involved.
- Do you have any right of way easements on the property?
- Did you do any fuel reduction or forest health work before the wildfire?
- Have you harvested trees on the property before? If so, where and what kind of harvest did you do?

Property characteristics by forest type or stand

This section focuses on distinct stands within the larger property. For a small property, you may only need to fill in one. Consider printing additional copies of this page for a larger property.

Prior to the visit, do an aerial assessment of the property to estimate the number and types of forests on as well as approximate acreage. Base stand delineation on like characteristics within the stand, such as tree species

composition, tree age, slope, aspect and elevation. For the purposes of this site assessment, similarities in burn impacts may also help define a stand. The goal of stand delineation here is to be able to make forest restoration recommendations that apply consistently throughout the stand. Discuss appropriate delineation with the landowner during the site visit.

Considerations for each forest stand

- **Elevation range:** Elevation of the stand, not the property.
- **Erosion potential:** Assess whether the potential is low, medium or high. This will include areas of high erosion potential that are not listed as an immediate concern. A stand is considered to have high erosion potential when it has some combination of the following factors:
  - Soils range more towards silt and fine sand rather than clays, and have greater organic content.
  - The stand slope is greater than 30% and has minimal vegetation.
  - Areas where roads are adjacent to or cross waterways.

Significant erosion can make replanting a higher priority and complicate planting.

Credit: Washington State Department of Natural Resources

- **Site index:** If known.
- **Presence of riparian zone or wetlands:** Any body of water requiring specific postwildfire restoration treatments or that could complicate landowner restoration activities.
- **Postfire fuel loading:** This will help provide context for the difficulty of site prep in the stand should the landowner wish to replant and a way to communicate future fire hazard with the landowner. It is an average estimate of fuels and potential fuels. Include the potential for dying and dead burned trees when they eventually fall. Assess the viability and cost of contracting out biomass removal as part of the funding proposal to minimize future risk. Rank fuel loading as either low, medium or high.

Degrees of postfire fuel loading

Aspects affected	Postfire fuel loading		
	Low	**Medium**	**High**
Fine surface fuels	Few, noncontinuous 1-, 10- and 100-hour fuels (under 3 inches diameter)	Areas of buildup of fine fuels but not continuous throughout the landscape	Continuous buildup of fine fuels
Ladder fuels	Few ladder fuels. The distance between surface fuels and canopy is generally greater than 10 feet.	Some continuity of fuels between surface and canopy but generally composed of living vegetation	Significant ladder fuels connecting surface to canopy
Dead fuels component	Dead trees likely to fall in the future and dead brush have been mostly removed from the stand	May have standing dead trees but little dead brush component	Significant standing and down dead brush and trees

Example of low fuel load in landscapes of Eastern Oregon.

Credit: Stephen Fitzgerald, © Oregon State University

An example of a medium fuel load in Eastern Oregon.

Credit: Stephen Fitzgerald, © Oregon State University

An example of high fuel load in Eastern Oregon.

Credit: Stephen Fitzgerald, © Oregon State University

An example of low fuel load in a Western Oregon stand.

Credit: Stephen Fitzgerald, © Oregon State University

An example of a moderate fuel load in Western Oregon.

Credit: Stephen Fitzgerald, © Oregon State University

An example of a high fuel load in a Western Oregon forest.

Credit: Aaron Groth, © Oregon State University

- **Brush-regeneration potential:** High potential for brush regeneration should consider the presence of common brush and sprouting trees, factoring in open spaces with little overstory. Consider this when determining the maintenance needs for seedling planting and site preparation. Rank as low, medium or high.

Degrees of brush-regeneration potential

Aspects affected	Brush-regeneration potential		
	Low	Medium	High
Overstory	Dense canopy. Little sunlight hits the ground.	Significant gaps in canopy	Open canopy or mostly dead snags
Surrounding vegetation	Ground cover dominated by herbaceous plants or bare ground	Isolated clumps of brush in surrounding stands	Unburned and adjacent stands characterized by significant brush

Aspects affected	Brush-regeneration potential		
	Low	**Medium**	**High**
Previous species composition	Little brush component	Evidence of light or heterogenous brush presence	Previous brush field
Tree species prior to wildfire	Mostly coniferous or deciduous species that are unlikely to resprout	Mix of conifers with some resprouting tree species such as Pacific madrone and oak.	Significant resprouting trees such as Pacific madrone, oak. For the eastern and southern portions of the state, evidence of dense germination of species such as lodgepole pine or ponderosa pine.

An Eastern Oregon property with low brush-regeneration potential.

Credit: Kara Baylog, © Oregon State University

An example of medium brush-regeneration potential in Eastern Oregon.

Credit: Kara Baylog, © Oregon State University

An area with a high level of brush-regeneration potential in Eastern Oregon.

Credit: Kara Baylog, © Oregon State University

An example of low brush-regeneration potential in Southern Oregon.

Credit: Kara Baylog, © Oregon State University

Medium brush-regeneration potential in Southern Oregon.

Credit: Kara Baylog, © Oregon State University

An area of high brush-regeneration potential in Southern Oregon.

Credit: Eric Knapp, U.S. Forest Service

Low brush-regeneration potential in Western Oregon.

Credit: Glenn Ahrens, © Oregon State University

Medium brush-regeneration potential, Western Oregon.

Credit: Glenn Ahrens, © Oregon State University

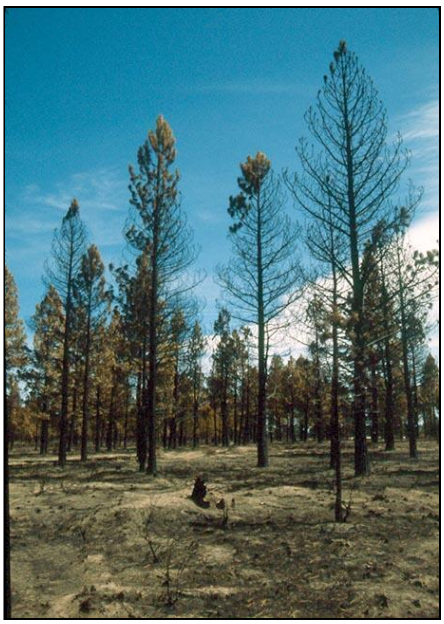
High brush-regeneration potential in Western Oregon.

Credit: Aaron Groth, © Oregon State University

- **Aspect:** The primary direction the slope is facing.
- **Soil types:** Soil types within the stand.
- **Tree or shrub species prior to wildfire:** The primary source of both the overstory cover and density before the fire burned. May be more than one tree species and may include brush species if appropriate.

- **Average tree mortality percentage:** An estimate of tree mortality across the stand. Include trees likely to die within a year of the fire based on a low live-crown ratio greater than 30% and evidence of insect infestation such as turpentine beetles.
- **Average flame height:** An estimate of flame height across the stand based on scorch.

- **Burn severity:** An estimate of the average burn severity across the stand. This can be obtained by visual inspection using the following guidelines. This may be difficult to visually assess, particularly if a year or more has passed since the wildfire. In these cases, a burn severity map can be helpful, although less precise. As time passes, the usefulness of burn severity to the assessment of reforestation needs will lessen.



Salvage logging can help recover restoration costs following significant tree mortality, but trees must be merchantable.

Credit: Stephen Fitzgerald, © Oregon State University

Degrees of fire severity

Aspects affected	Degree of fire severity		
	Low	Medium	High
Litter/duff (decomposing needles)	Light char, slight consumption in spots	Moderate ground char; duff is deeply charred or consumed	Completely consumed
Leaves/twigs/branches	Light char	Mostly consumed	Completely consumed
Woody debris (logs)	Charred or lightly consumed	Deeply charred with some consumption	Logs consumed or deeply charred
Mineral soil	Not changed	Not visibly altered; white ash present	Significantly changed with altered soil properties; soil infiltration may be reduced.
Share of trees killed	Less than 20%	20%–70%	More than 70%
Erosion potential	None/little	Some	Extensive

Adapted from Reducing fire risk on your forest property, (https://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/pub/pnw-618-reducing-fire-risk-your-forest-property) PNW 618

Example of a low-severity burn in Southern Oregon.

Credit: Stephen Fitzgerald, © Oregon State University

An example of medium fire severity in Southern Oregon.

Credit: Stephen Fitzgerald, © Oregon State University

A high-severity fire has completely consumed this example site in Southern Oregon.

Credit: Stephen Fitzgerald, © Oregon State University

Low fire severity in Western Oregon.

Credit: Stephen Fitzgerald, © Oregon State University

An example of medium fire severity in Western Oregon.

Credit: Lauren Grand, © Oregon State University

An example of high burn intensity in Western Oregon.

Credit: Lauren Grand, © Oregon State University

- **Reforestation potential:** Estimate the likelihood of seedling survival given average climate and good seedling selection: Rank it either low, medium or high. Consider prior stand descriptions for soil types, tree/shrub species before wildfire, tree mortality, fire's flame length, burn severity and evidence of natural regeneration. Also, review the fire progression map if one is available. Seedlings may experience high mortality in landscapes with poor soils that experienced high mortality from the wildfire, little natural regeneration, high burn severity or long flame residence times. Use this section to discuss with the landowner which areas to prioritize. Emphasize that this is a preliminary assessment, and any planting plan will require a deeper investigation into the burn's impacts on the soil. Note that even in the best conditions, landowners may see as little as 25% of seedlings surviving to the next year, particularly in drought or excessive heat conditions — especially if seedlings are not localized to the landscape.
  - Emphasize that replanting sooner rather than a couple of years later can have its own set of costs and benefits. Planting sooner may reduce site preparation costs and seedling competition. On the other hand, immediate planting might not give the landowner enough time to find quality seedlings from localized sources or to plant at ideal times of the year, resulting in high mortality and the need for costly additional plantings.
  - Be prepared to discuss local resources and capacity for replanting with the landowner before recommending planting as a short-term or near-term action. Identify sources of locally adapted seedlings such as the Seedlot Selection Tool. (https://seedlotselectiontool.org/sst/) Also discuss potential seedling supply issues with the landowner. Large fires often bring competition from seedlings especially when industrial timberlands have also experienced significant tree mortality. Landowners may need to place seedling orders that fall that will not be available for the spring planting season for another 18 months.

- **Potential for salvage/biomass harvest:** Estimate the potential for selling merchantable timber among the standing dead and dying trees that would equal or exceed the cost of logging. This is not likely to apply if the wildfire occurred more than two years prior. Any salvage logging operation will require further assessment of merchantability given mill distances, market prices and volume of timber, and will need to be followed up with postharvest replanting, but this is an opportunity to determine if the possibility to salvage harvest exists.
- **Species of concern (sensitive/invasive):** Assess the presence of sensitive or threatened species of both flora and fauna and record them here. Problematic invasive vegetation can also be recorded here.
- **Photo:** If possible, visit each stand and take a representative photo of the work that needs to be done. For example, note high fuel loads, significant mortality or erosion concerns. Photos can be printed out as part of a physical report or shared digitally with the landowner.

Does salvage logging make sense economically? Factor in the cost of logging and mill distances.

Credit: Stephen Fitzgerald, © Oregon State University

Species such as scotch broom may move in quickly after a fire, reducing planting success and increasing fire hazard.

Credit: Kara Baylog, © Oregon State University

Possible questions or conversation points

- Discuss fuel hazard and future fire potential.
- Discuss the potential for a stand to yield an economic return if the landowner harvested. This could depend on the length of time since the fire, tree species and stand maturity.
- Do you have any species or habitats you especially want to protect?
- How do you view treatment on this stand in relation to the other stands on your property?
- Discuss which trees are likely to survive and thrive when planted and which ones might not be suitable, even if they had grown there previously.
- Discuss the process for filing a Notification of Operations and, if necessary, a Permit of Use Fire or Power-Driven Machinery through ODF.
- Discuss the reforestation process and any available funding to assist landowners.

Action plan

This section should help the landowner articulate concrete objectives for their property and suggest actions they need to take to accomplish them based on the prior sections of the assessment. Prioritizing can be challenging for those new to management planning or who may feel overwhelmed. Build on the conversations leading to this section to help them identify priorities.

Other landowners will have a good idea about what they want to do to restore their forest, but may lack direction or resources on tangible steps. This section is where the site assessor can help clarify information and connect the landowner to potential resources.

Also consider asking about landowner capacity and any equipment or resources owned by the landowner. Not all recovery efforts require outside assistance, and many landowners are eager to do the work themselves. Keep these

factors in mind.

The action plan is split into three categories: short-term actions, near-term actions and long-term actions. Tasks that are urgent or easier to accomplish are short-term actions. Tasks the landowner would like completed in the next three to five years are near-term actions, and long-term actions help the landowner think about the more distant future (five to 10 years out) and what they would like to see accomplished on their land. While the site assessor should discuss any future actions they deem appropriate with the landowner, the final report to the landowner should only include the recommendations the landowner has not explicitly rejected.

For each action, the site assessor should discuss with the landowner:

- **Action:** This is the broad goal. For the short term, this may include actions such as repairing fences, removing hazard trees, conducting salvage logging or improving defensible space. Near-term actions may be to replant the burned stand and perform site maintenance. Long-term actions may include tending a reforested stand for future harvest.
- **Location of work:** Record the stand or stands where work will take place. Other locations might include areas such as “along forest roadsides” or “riparian zone.”
- **Required steps:** Note the discrete steps needed to reach the goals of the planned action. For example, removing hazard trees may require hiring an arborist and working with power companies. Reforestation will include ordering seedlings, site prep, planting and maintenance. A future timber harvest will require significant planning, thinning and possibly developing a forest plan.
- **Who can do the work?** Some steps are easily completed by the landowner. Others require outside help. Here, the landowners and site assessor can match capacity to action. Check the box if the landowner plans to do the work by themselves.
- **Is it possible with existing resources?** Many of the steps of forest restoration take time, effort and money that some landowners do not have. Check this box if the landowner can complete the action in their current capacity. If the box is unchecked, this means they will need outside funding assistance or help from various organizations.
- **What people, organizations, businesses or funding sources can help accomplish this?** This portion of the plan connects landowners to the organizations that may be able to provide financial or technical assistance. Direct landowners to any information on local forestry contractors for work they cannot complete themselves. Some organizations cannot make direct recommendations for contractors, but they can help landowners determine if a contractor is a good fit for the job.Complete this information in the “Resources” section on the final page of the site assessment template. Often, these resources will include local soil and water conservation districts, Oregon Department of Forestry districts, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, the Farm Service Agency and contractor lists or databases.
- **Photo:** Take a photo of the area where the work is to be done and upload it to your organization’s database to share with the landowner in a final report.

Possible questions

- What do you want to do next with your land?
- Which stands are a higher priority for you to address?
- Are you interested in active restoration across your land, or are you open to letting some portions of the property naturally regenerate?
- Are you interested in native seeding to reduce erosion potential?

- Are you aware of potential funding to assist you with postfire recovery?
- Are you interested in applying for this funding?
- Would you like a list of potential contractors to assist you with postfire harvest and site preparation?
- Are you aware that some funding sources require a 25% in-kind contribution from the landowner?
- Are you aware that some funds are considered taxable income to the landowner?
- Are you aware that some funding requires the landowner to agree to cultural surveys on their land prior to any treatment?
- Can you meet your forest restoration goals without funding assistance?

Conversation points

- Discuss the legal responsibilities of a salvage harvest, including a timber harvest plan and reforestation requirements.
- Discuss when to burn slash and who is responsible for it.
- Talk about the pros and cons of natural regeneration versus active reforestation.
- Discuss requirements for landowners whose properties are officially classified as forestland.
- Weigh the costs and benefits of maintaining some woody debris in streams.
- Discuss the ecological and soil health benefits of leaving some snags or coarse woody debris on-site.

Resources

Fill this section out before meeting the landowner. It can be used continuously with site assessments conducted in the area with little or no updating.

The site assessor or their organization should inquire with local partners about available funding resources in the area. Some funding programs like the Environmental Quality Incentives Program or the Emergency Forest Restoration Program are available throughout Oregon. Still, each district may implement the programs differently, so it is important to get local information.

Give this page to landowners when meeting with them. Inform them that the resources list may not be exhaustive, and any information the site assessor provides is for informational purposes only. Specific questions on a funding source should be sent to the funder directly.

For each funding source, determine:

- **The name** of the funding program and the organization that offers it.
- **Activities covered by funding:** a list of forest restoration and postwildfire restoration actions that the funding source will cover.
- **Application requirements:** Determine if the funding application requires a match, additional surveys, an increased tax burden, income caps, or any other specifics that the landowner needs to consider. Also note if the funding is in the form of grants, loans or cost share.
- **When to apply?** List the timeframe for applications and if they are rolling and open long term, or have specific deadlines.
- **Contact information**: Who to contact for an application or more information. A variety of helpful organizations in Oregon offer information, technical assistance, postwildfire assessments outside the scope of forest health and restoration and additional funding sources. These include soil and water conservation districts, watershed

councils, local nonprofits, forestry professional contractor lists and information on local sawmill capacity. This is also the place for a site assessor to note any publications or digital resources that would be useful given their goals and your recommendations. For example, a landowner wishing to do a salvage harvest should be referred to the Forest Activity Electronic Reporting and Notification System. (https://ferns.odf.oregon.gov/E-Notification/) OSU Extension also has an extensive catalog of forestry and wildfire-related publications (https://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog). A site assessor can search for relevant publications and include them as part of the finalized site assessment report following the site assessment.

- **Helpful organizations and information:** the name of the organization or information.
- **Resource description and capacity:** what the organization or information can offer to a landowner.
- **Where to find more information:** contact information for the organization or where to find the information.

Notes

This section is for any information that comes from the site visit and conversations that does not fit in any other part of the form.

Finally, provide the landowner with the site assessment report after completing the visit and filling out the form. With prior approval, you may agree to retain a copy for your records. Ensure all photos have been uploaded and are accessible to the landowner. Let them know if you are open to receiving additional questions in the future.

Supplemental files

LEAF initial screening form (https://extension.oregonstate.edu/sites/extd8/files/documents/donnelja/leaf-screening.pdf)
LEAF assessment form (https://extension.oregonstate.edu/sites/extd8/files/documents/donnelja/leaf-assessment-form.pdf)

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Related publications

Credit: Yuri Arcurs, stock.adobe.com (Cropped from original)

Fire Bright: A Curriculum for High School Educators

(https://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/pub/em-9416-fire-bright-learn-work-lead)

This curriculum package teaches students to help protect their communities from wildfire. They also learn about careers in natural resources.

Kara Baylog, Jennifer Payne, Herb Johnson, Yasmeen Hossain, Christopher Adlam, Ben Ho | Mar 2024 | OSU EXTENSION CATALOG Peer reviewed (Orange level) (https://extension.oregonstate.edu/peer-review-guidelines)

Credit: United States Forest Service (Cropped from original)

After the fire: fire, water, erosion and mitigation treatments

(https://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/em-9546-after-fire-fire-water-erosion-mitigation-treatments)

Checklists to assess your woodland after a fire, including mitigation measures to increase water infiltration, assessing fire injury and salvage potential.

Stephen Fitzgerald, Alicia Christiansen | Jul 2025 | OSU EXTENSION CATALOG Peer reviewed (Gray level) (https://extension.oregonstate.edu/peer-review-guidelines)