

## Cold Springs/Pearl Hill fires sweep across landscape

### Blazes bring death and destruction

By DEE CAMP  
The Chronicle

OMAK — A year ago this week, the Cold Springs Fire raced across the Colville Indian Reservation, jumped the Columbia River to spark the Pearl Hill Fire and took with it the life of a toddler; homes and ranches; rangeland, crops and timber; infrastructure, and live-stock and wildlife.

The fires were part of a Labor Day weekend during which wildfires blackened more than 700,000 acres across the state and heavily damaged the towns of Malden and Pine City in Whitman County.

The Cold Springs Fire was reported to the Okanogan County Sheriff's Office at 9:29 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 6, and took off south across the Colville Indian Reservation from its ignition point southeast of Omak. By 3 a.m., it had crossed the Columbia River and continued racing southward through Douglas County to Highway 2.

Cause of the blaze remains under investigation.

North winds the morning of Sept. 7 also sparked to life a long-smoldering fire in a sawdust pile at the former Omak Wood Products mill, leading to destruction of three mill buildings and spreading southward to join the Cold Springs blaze. The conflagration also sent burning debris raining down north and east of the mill site on Jackson Street. No off-site structures were lost.

The Cold Springs Fire burned across 189,923 acres of land, while the Pearl Hill Fire charred 223,730 acres. The fires actually were one, but were separated administratively by county.

### More than Carlton

Combined, the fires burned across 413,653 acres of land — some 157,545 acres more



The Cold Springs Fire in its infancy the night of Sept. 6, 2020, as seen from Omak.

ADAM CHRISTIE | Special to The Chronicle



The Hyland family — Jake, Jamie and Uriel — is caught in the flames.

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than the Carlton Complex fire of 2014 but about 100,000 acres less than the combined 522,920 acres of the 2015 Okanogan Complex, North Star and Tunk Block fires.

Uriel Hyland, 22 months,

died when he and his parents were trapped by Cold Springs Fire flames on the southwestern portion of the Colville Indian Reservation. His parents, Jake and Jamie Hyland, Renton, suffered severe burns and other

injuries, and spent months recuperating at Harborview Medical Center in Seattle.

A week after the blaze began, Omak Fire Chief Kevin Bowling said the Cold Springs blaze was perhaps five acres when he and Fire District No. 8 Chief Ed Townsend arrived the night of Sept. 6, but fierce winds moved the flames quickly through grass and sagebrush.

During the fire's early hours, mostly all firefighters could do was try to stay ahead of the flames, do structure protection and notify residents, said Bowling.

"It was just not safe in some areas" to try making a stand against the flames, he said.

Firefighters also were hampered by looky-loos who clogged roads.

"It was hard for us to get around" at times, he said.

### Millions in losses

Property assessed at more

than \$5.3 million was destroyed in Okanogan County by the Cold Springs Fire, according to Okanogan County Assessor Larry Gilman. The total does not include tribal or individually held trust lands, which are not taxable.

Fire officials said a total of 78 homes and 60 other buildings were lost.

The county list included 27 homes, 14 cabins, nine garages/shops and 19 miscellaneous out-buildings. Total assessed values included more than \$1.58 million for homes, \$176,400 for cabins, \$116,400 for garages/shops and \$133,300 for other out-buildings.

Losses to building improvements total \$2.01 million, with losses to non-building improvements of \$3.3 million in assessed valuation.

In Douglas County, the Pearl Hill Fire destroyed taxable property assessed at nearly

\$3.74 million, according to the Douglas County Assessor's Office.

More than 100 Douglas County structures were destroyed or damaged, including multiple homes, cabins, machine sheds, barns, hay sheds, shops, garages and carpools and Quonset huts, a pool and utility building east of Bridgeport, a hotel north of Coulee City and a restaurant at Jameson Lake. Douglas County's list also included two utility buildings and several other structures lost but exempt from taxes.

The fires burned several homes in Bridgeport, the Bridgeport Bar and elsewhere in northern Douglas County, threatened Mansfield and threatened the Haley Creek area southeast of Omak, where several homes burned during the 2015 Tunk Block Fire.

Several homes and other buildings were lost on the Colville Indian Reservation, plus miles and miles of fencing.

Both the Cold Springs and Pearl Hill blazes burned mostly in brush, grass and crops, although some timber was set ablaze in the Cold Springs Fire area.

### Officials visit

Gov. Jay Inslee visited Bridgeport briefly on Saturday morning, Sept. 12, and later took flak on social media for the brevity of his visit and for bringing apples for the community. The apples, picked at the governor's mansion in Olympia, turned out to be worm-infested.

He said his visit was "to make sure we understand what communities are going through right now," he said. "While I'm amazed by their resilience, my heart hurts for the families who lost so much to these fires."

He expressed gratitude to emergency responders on the front lines.

See **FIRES**, page B5



Wind-driven flames menace the 12 Tribes Resort Casino outside Omak on Sept. 7, 2020.

AL CAMP | Special to The Chronicle



A firefighter, nearly obscured by smoke, pours water on flames off Omak River Road.

AL CAMP | Special to The Chronicle

## Guest comment: Not a time to be complacent

As we enter September and the weather begins to turn a corner, significant progress has been made on several of the largest fires threatening our landscape.

But dry conditions and extreme fire danger still pose a threat. Several large fires continue to burn throughout Okanogan County, the Colville reservation and the region. To date, we have had 43 large fires burn in Washington, consuming over 630,000 acres.

This year personnel and equipment are stretched thin. That's why I've increased our air capacity and committed new resources as fires continue to burn.

We have made good progress in fighting these blazes, but we cannot get complacent now. This time last year, large fires took us by surprise, burning 500,000 acres and destroying 238 residences.

Those fires also decimated the town of Malden, the communities of the

Colville tribes and, terribly, cost the life of a small child. Our firefighters are committed to preventing a repeat of this tragedy, but they need your help.

By preparing our properties, we all can help slow the spread of wildfire, allowing our firefighters to work more efficiently and safely. Each of us has a responsibility to prepare our own properties so we can all be safer, together.

Earlier this year, many county residents participated in the Wildfire Ready Neighbors Program. This program was designed to make hardening your home against wildfire easy and seamless with direct access to resources and experts.

This exclusive pilot program exceeded 100 percent of its goal in Okanogan County. I'm grateful so many residents took this important first step to protect their homes and neighbors.

I ask you to remain vigilant and responsible with fire until the danger has passed this season. Conditions remain volatily dry and any wayward spark could start the next major wildfire.

Some things you can do to help our exhausted fire crews include: Avoid starting outdoor fires, reduce dry vegetation fuels around your home, and make sure your car isn't dragging chains that could spark a wildfire.

Hope is on the horizon as the seasons begin to change. The way you have rallied around our firefighters has been truly heartwarming — and now we need to help them in this final stretch.

Together, we can all do our part to protect our homes, neighbors, and firefighters.

HILARY FRANZ IS WASHINGTON'S ELECTED COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS.



Commissioner of Public Lands Hilary Franz (left) talks about the Cold Springs Fire with Okanogan rancher and Fire District No. 8 Chief Ed Townsend.

AL CAMP | Special to The Chronicle



# NEWS OF RECORD

## Jail Bookings

### From Okanogan County Jail records

**Aug. 27**  
Shashini Grace Sackatook, 27, Douglas County second-degree taking a motor vehicle without permission and violation of a protection order-domestic violence.

**Aug. 28**  
Ivan Tamayo-Sanchez, 29, Douglas County second-degree assault-domestic violence.

**Aug. 30**  
Cameron Christensen, 45, Douglas County driving under the influence and ignition interlock violation.

**Aug. 31**  
Loyd Dale Campbell, no age listed, Douglas County fourth-degree assault-domestic violence.  
— All suspects are innocent until proven guilty

## Sheriff

### From Okanogan County Sheriff's Office reports.

**Aug. 27**  
Harassment on Blackler Road, Oroville.  
Malicious mischief on Hendrick Road, Omak. Two storage units entered.  
Animal abuse on B&O Road, Okanogan.  
Trespassing on Palmer Avenue, Loomis.  
Dispute on Miller Road, Omak.  
Suspicious activity on Duck Lake Road, Omak.  
Trespassing on West Chewuch Road, Winthrop.  
Dispute on Cartwright Drive, Tonasket.  
Road rage on Old Riverside Highway, Omak.  
Suspicious activity on Twisp Airport Road, Twisp.  
Agency assist on Main Street, Oroville.  
Illegal burning on North C Avenue, Conconully.  
Threats on Highway 97, Tonasket.  
Agency assist on Sunset Ridge Road, Oroville.  
Agency assist in Oroville.

**Aug. 28**  
Suspicious activity on North Second Avenue, Okanogan.  
Threats on Stage Coach Trail Road, Oroville.  
Fraud on Crystal Brooks Lane, Brewster.  
Burglary on Miller Road, Omak.  
Unattended death on Twin Pines Park Road, Tonasket.  
Unattended death on Okanogan Street, Malott.  
Disorderly conduct on Lewisia Road, Winthrop.  
Suspicious activity on East Fourth Street, Tonasket.  
Dispute on Bain Lane, Omak.  
Suspicious activity on Mary Ann Creek Road, Oroville.  
Theft on Old Riverside Highway, Omak.

**Aug. 29**  
Child abuse on Appleway, Okanogan.  
Suspicious activity on Copple Road, Omak.  
Suspicious activity on South Van Duyn Avenue, Okanogan.  
Harassment on Golden Road, Oroville.  
Suspicious activity on Highway 97, Tonasket.  
Harassment on Eastlake Road, Oroville.  
Missing animal on Old Highway 97, Malott.  
Agency assist on Hall Creek Road, Inchelium.  
Burglary on Rodeo Trail, Okanogan. Storage units entered.  
Dispute on Green Road, Omak.  
Vehicle accident on Highway 9 7, Brewster.  
Fireworks complaint on Texas Creek Road, Carlton.  
Theft on South Second Avenue, Okanogan. Whiskey taken.  
Vehicle accident on Omak-Riverside Eastside Road, Riverside.

**Aug. 30**  
Agency assist on Highway 97; location not listed.  
Vehicle prowling on Allen Lane, Omak.  
Dispute on Aeneas Valley Road, Tonasket.  
Vehicle accident on Conconully Road, Conconully.  
Dispute on Sunnyside Drive, Twisp.  
Harassment on King Street, Okanogan.  
Threats on South First Avenue, Okanogan.  
Theft on Howard's End Road, Tonasket.  
Suspicious activity on Ione Street, Okanogan.  
Malicious mischief on Cameron Lake loop Road, Okanogan.  
Weapons offense on Rhodos Road, Okanogan.  
Dispute on Patrol Street, Okanogan.

Suspicious activity on Robinson Canyon Road, Omak.  
Theft on North Maud Avenue, Conconully. Gas siphoned.  
Vehicle theft on Tarbert Loop Road, Okanogan.  
Fraud on Highway 20; location not listed. Phone and computer hacked.  
Animal problem on Third Street, Loomis. Guinea hens attacking the caller's dog.  
Suspicious activity on Ellisforde Bridge Road, Tonasket.  
Assault on South Whitcomb Avenue, Tonasket.  
Disorderly conduct on East Fourth Street, Tonasket.  
Dispute on North Second Avenue, Okanogan.  
Loitering on North Whitcomb Avenue, Tonasket.  
Traffic hazard on Kermel Road, Omak. Tree across the road.  
Suspicious activity on North Second Avenue, Okanogan.

**Aug. 31**  
Suspicious activity on Engh Road, Omak.  
Harassment on South Whitcomb Avenue, Tonasket.  
Fraud on Cameron Lake Loop Road, Okanogan.  
Agency assist on Highway 97, Tonasket.  
Threats on South Whitcomb Avenue, Tonasket.  
Dispute on Chokecherry Road, Winthrop.  
Loitering on South Whitcomb Avenue, Tonasket.  
Theft on South Antwine Avenue, Tonasket. Table taken.  
Trespassing on South Second Avenue, Okanogan.  
Agency assist on South Second Avenue, Okanogan.  
Vehicle accident on North Western Avenue, Tonasket.  
Trespassing on Eastlake Road, Oroville.  
Loitering on Aeneas Valley Road, Tonasket.  
Fraud on Omak River Road, Omak. Internet scam; the caller lost personal information and \$3,500 from a bank account.  
Vehicle accident on Pioneer Road, Brewster.  
Disorderly conduct on North Second Avenue, Okanogan.  
Suspicious activity on East Second Street, Tonasket.  
Suspicious activity on South Third Avenue, Okanogan.  
Harassment on Swanson Mill Road, Tonasket.  
Suspicious activity on West Warren Avenue, Pateros.  
Two reports of suspicious activity on Eastlake Road, Oroville.

**Sept. 1**  
Dispute on South Railroad Avenue, Tonasket.  
Suspicious activity on John Street, Okanogan.

## Coroner

### From Okanogan County Coroner's Office reports

**Aug. 27**  
Agency assist on Hospital Way, Brewster.  
Unattended death on West Hanson Avenue, Brewster.

**Aug. 28**  
Unattended death on Twin Pines Park Road, Tonasket.  
Unattended death on Okanogan Street, Malott.

## Omak Police

### From Omak Police Department reports

**Aug. 27**  
Suspicious activity on South Fir Street.  
Suspicious activity on South Main Street.  
Theft on Omache Drive. Backpack taken.  
Assault on South Ash Street.  
Disorderly conduct on Jasmine Street.  
Disorderly conduct on Engh Road.

**Aug. 28**  
Vehicle prowling on Okoma Drive.  
Theft on South Columbia Street.  
Agency assist on Bain Lane.

**Aug. 29**  
Suspicious activity on Jonathan Lane. Dog missing from a yard.

Suspicious activity on South Birch Street.  
Theft on South Ash Street. Bicycle taken.  
Medical call on Omak Avenue.  
Suspicious activity on Copple Road.  
Lost property on East Central Avenue. Phone missing.  
Suspicious activity on South Birch Street.

**Aug. 30**  
Agency assist on Highway 97.  
Agency assist on Allen Lane.  
Malicious mischief on South Columbia Street.  
Trespassing on Omache Drive.  
Theft on Omache Drive.

**Aug. 31**  
Vehicle prowling on South Ash Street.  
Suspicious activity on North Oak Street, Omak.  
Threats on South Main Street, Omak.  
Recovered vehicle on Okoma Drive, Omak.  
Burglary on West Ridge Drive, Omak.  
Fraud on Index Street, Omak.  
Trespassing on Garfield Street, Omak.

## Douglas Sheriff

### From Douglas County Sheriff's Office reports

**Aug. 25**  
Animal problem on Monroe Avenue, Bridgeport.  
Agency assist on Highway 173, Bridgeport.

**Aug. 29**  
Suspicious activity on 11th Street, Bridgeport.  
Animal problem on Monroe Avenue, Bridgeport.

**Aug. 30**  
Animal problem on Douglas Avenue, Bridgeport.  
Suspicious activity on Tacoma Avenue, Bridgeport.

## Brewster Police

### From Brewster Police Department reports

**Aug. 27**  
Agency assist on West Hanson Avenue.  
Vehicle accident on North Bridge Street.  
Agency assist on Hospital Way.

**Aug. 28**  
Vehicle accident on West Main Avenue.

**Aug. 30**  
Utility problem on South Third Street. Power lines down in a yard.  
Threats on West Jay Avenue.

**Aug. 31**  
Vehicle accident on Pioneer Road.

## Oroville Police

### From Oroville Police Department reports

**Aug. 27**  
Lost property on Kernan Road.  
Gun missing.  
Theft on Main Street.  
Assault on Main Street.

**Aug. 29**  
Vicious animal on Sawtell Road.  
Pit bull attacked a dog and a woman.

**Aug. 30**  
Vehicle hit a deer on Highway 97, Riverside.  
Suspicious activity on Ironwood Street.  
Animal abuse on Juniper Street.  
Animal problem on Ironwood Street.

**Aug. 31**  
Suspicious activity on 17th Avenue.

## Twisp Police

### From Twisp Police Department reports

**Aug. 27**  
Suspicious activity on Twisp Airport Road.

**Aug. 28**  
Theft on South Methow Valley Highway.

**Aug. 29**  
Suspicious activity on Main Street, Winthrop.  
Illegal burning on West Second Avenue.  
Medical call on South Lincoln Street.

**Aug. 30**  
Agency assist on Sunnyside Drive.

## Winthrop Marshal

### From Winthrop Marshal's Office reports

**Aug. 26**  
Sick animal on Highway 20.

**Aug. 27**  
Trespassing on West Chewuch Road.

**Aug. 29**  
Suspicious activity on Main Street.

**Aug. 31**  
Trespassing on North Village Road.

—The Chronicle



AL CAMP | Special to The Chronicle  
A visitor with Commissioner of Public Lands Hilary Franz surveys damage to the former Omak Wood Products Mill. Rodney Cawston, Colville Business Council chairman at the time, said he hopes the mill and the Malott HUD housing site, where several homes were lost, will qualify for FEMA funding. With all the destruction — public, private and the loss of life — “I don't think people realized how much was burned,” he said.

## FIRES

from page B1

“These fires have been catastrophic, and (the responders) have been there every day fighting to protect their communities,” he said. “It has been nothing short of heroic.”  
Commissioner of Public Lands Hilary Franz visited the fire area Sept. 14.  
She said it was “pretty palpable the amount of destruction” in the fire area and that the air quality was “blinding.”  
The previous week, with fires burning all over the state, was “unbelievably destructive,” she said, noting that in a 72-hour

period more than 600,000 acres burned across the state.  
Firefighters — both local and with the incident teams — put in long hours.  
Omak Chief Bowling said he and most of the crews from Omak, Okanogan, Malott, Fire District No. 7 (Riverside) and Fire District No. 8 (southwest reservation) put in about 48 hours straight at the fire's infancy. Their spouses and retired firefighter Les Sutton kept them supplied with sandwiches and water.  
They also faced communications blindness when the fire burned the Fire District No. 3 radio repeater on Pitcher Mountain southeast of Okanogan the

afternoon of Sept. 7.  
Okanogan County's radio building and tower were untouched, but an adjacent facility housing equipment for a cellular provider and an Internet provider were destroyed, as was a building housing the Fire District No. 3 repeater, ambulance-to-hospital radio and Okanogan County Department of Public Works' radio system.  
“Car-to-car worked, but dispatch was unable to dispatch us for a couple days and the phones were down, too,” Bowling said.  
For a time on Sept. 7, all land lines, cell service, Internet and electricity were down in Okanogan County.



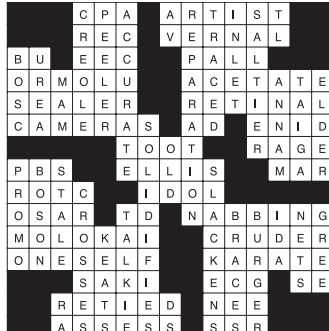
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BROCK HIRES | The Chronicle  
Twisted metal and rubble are all that remain of a home in the Malott HUD housing development.

# Cold Springs hits reservation hard

By DEE CAMP  
The Chronicle

NESPELEM — The Cold Springs Fire hit the Colville Indian Reservation hard, with around 80 homes being lost, along with fencing, livestock, wildlife, forest and rangelands and other assets.

Rodney Cawston, Colville Business Council chairman during the fire and until July 2021, said 2020 brought five fires on both sides of the reservation.

"They were huge fires. There were so many fires at the same time. It was a perfect storm," he said near the end of 2020 after the Federal Emergency Management Agency announced the tribe is among the agencies eligible for assistance.

"That was really good news for us," he said. "We appreciate all the federal government can do."

Along with structures, grazing lands were lost and accommodating ranchers in need of feed was a challenge.

He said he hoped the Okanogan Wood Products mill, which was mostly destroyed, and the heavily damaged Malott HUD housing complex would qualify for FEMA help. The mill had

been closed for several years before the fire.

Current Chairman Andrew Joseph Jr. declined to comment on the fire or recovery.

Cawston said the mill site would take millions of dollars to bring back to a buildable state, since there are environmental problems there that predate tribal ownership.

"But there is no price on the things families lost," he said. "They had only a matter of minutes" to get out.

The fire began near Omak at night and, pushed by north winds, raced southward to the Columbia River in a matter of hours.

"And the child - that broke everybody's heart," he said of Uriel Hyland, 22 months, who was killed when he and his parents were caught in the fire at the southwest corner of the reservation near the Columbia River.

Cawston said the tribe appreciates the donations and volunteers who helped in the fire's aftermath.

"Communities are in huge need now," he said, adding that the tribe has lived through one disaster after another with fires, COVID-19, climate change and more.



TOWNSEND RANCH  
Flames from the Cold Springs Fire threaten the Townsend Ranch on the Colville Indian Reservation just outside Okanogan.



BROCK HIRES | The Chronicle  
The foundation and decorative rockery are all that remain of a home on Cameron Lake Road east of Okanogan.



BROCK HIRES | The Chronicle  
The Pearl Hill portion of the fire claims a home in Bridgeport.



AL CAMP | Special to The Chronicle  
A plane emerges from the smoke to drop water on the residential area off Omak River Road.

# Conservation districts offer help for fire losses

OKANOGAN — Folks who lost fencing, stock watering systems and other infrastructure to the 2020 Cold Springs and Pearl Hill fires can still seek assistance from conservation districts in Okanogan and Douglas counties.

The state Legislature appropriated \$1.5 million statewide for fiscal year 2022 (the current year) and another \$1.5 million for fiscal year 2023 for conservation districts to tap for cost-share projects, said Craig Nelson, executive director of the Okanogan Conservation District.

He said his office doesn't have specific numbers for lost livestock, miles of damaged fence or other impacts, but is working with affected landowners on cost-share projects to help replace fencing, stock watering systems, certain

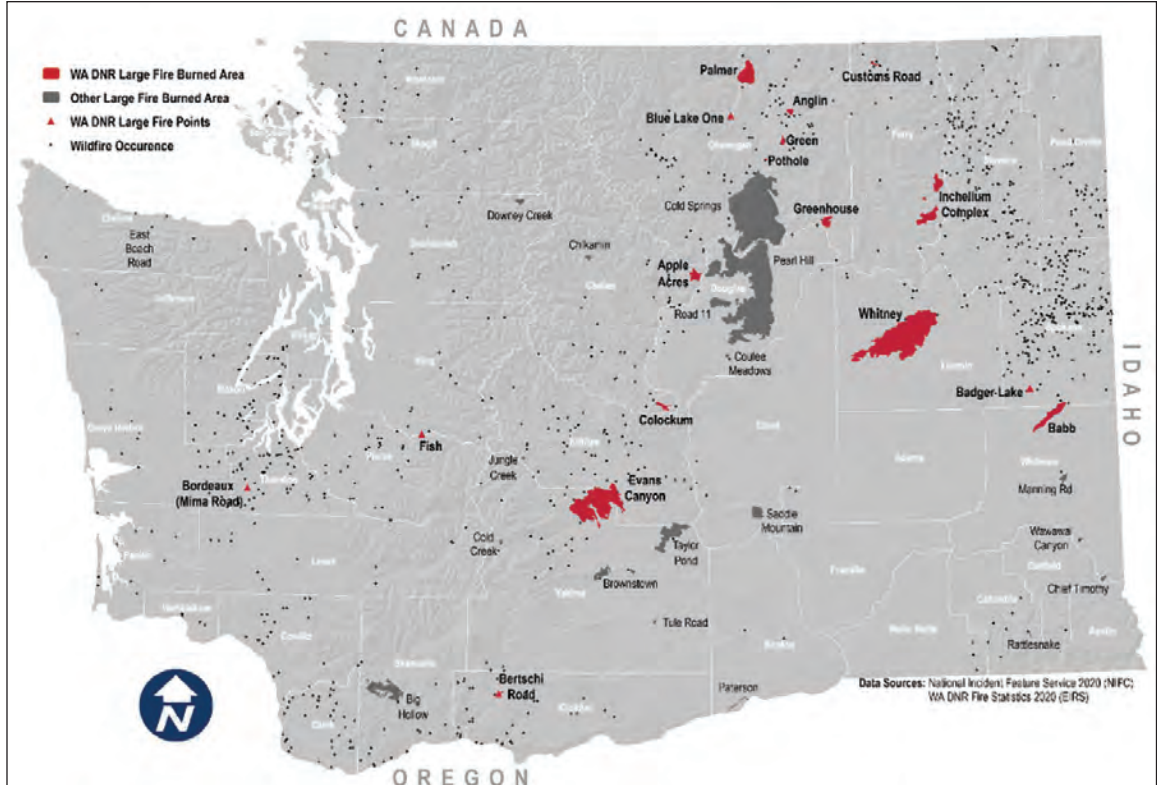
irrigation components and other eligible systems.

"We have been conducting outreach to the affected communities from last year's fires as well as this year's fires - they are eligible, too - and have already approved cost-share contracts for about half a dozen residents with several more being worked on."

More information is available at [www.okanogand.org](http://www.okanogand.org).

Foster Creek Conservation District, which serves northern Douglas County, is seeking sources of funding assistance for reseeding burned priority areas and other post-fire recovery.

Landowners who need help with recovery and documenting losses may contact the district or fill out an intake form through the district's website, [www.fostercreekcd.org](http://www.fostercreekcd.org).



DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
WILDFIRE SEASON 2020 REPORT

Map shows major fires in Washington in 2020. The Cold Springs and Pearl Hill fires are denoted in dark gray at the center.



**Come join us at the Tonasket Youth Center and get to know Marylou Kriner, running for Mayor of Tonasket. Thursday, Sept. 16, 2021, 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.**

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# Infrastructure takes a hit during fires

By DEE CAMP  
The Chronicle

OKANOGAN — Damage to transportation, utilities and Okanogan County communications infrastructure from the Cold Springs Fire has been largely repaired, but some costs haven't been recovered yet.

The state also suffered infrastructure damage, as did the Colville Confederated Tribes/Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Damage to county infrastructure from the fire, which began Sept. 6, 2020, included a short section of burned guardrail on Cameron Lake Road at Cook Lake, almost 150 burned road signs, burned vegetation and trees that need to be removed before they become a public hazard, and surface damage to unpaved roads from firefighting traffic, said Josh Thomson, public works director and county engineer.

The guardrail was repaired by a contractor at a cost of just under \$20,000, and the signs were replaced by county crews for another \$20,000, Thomson said.

"Road surface repairs during and just after the fire amounted to \$45,000," he said. "Vegetation and tree removal has been delayed until after private and tribal timber salvage harvests, and is estimated at \$50,000 in effort by county crews."

No funds have come in yet to offset the hits to the county budget, but Thomson said his office is working on three different sources.

Insurance may cover the radio equipment. If not, it may be eligible for funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, he said.

Cameron Lake Road is a federally classified road, so repair costs are eligible for emergency funds through the Federal Highway Administration. If so, that would disqualify it from FEMA consideration.

"We are working on the paperwork for all three sources and hope to have all eligible costs reimbursed before the end of this year," Thomson said.

"We also lost public works radio equipment on Pitcher Mountain with an estimated \$90,000 cost to replace," Thomson said.

The Okanogan County Sheriff's Office and dispatch didn't suffer damage from the fire, but other local agencies had losses when the Pitcher Mountain communications building, owned by Day

Wireless Communications, was destroyed, said Mike Worden, chief deputy of special operations/communications.

Fire District No. 3 and Mid-Valley Hospital both lost equipment. Both agencies have replaced their equipment.

Initially, to get communications back up with law enforcement and dispatch, the hospital paid \$4,878 to RACOM to set up a temporary station at Pitcher Mountain in partnership with the sheriff's office, said Megan Barton, executive assistant at Mid-Valley Hospital. The equipment — for communication with LifeLine Ambulance and other first responders — was in place Sept. 9, 2020, and operated until a new tower was completed in April 2021.

"The full replacement of the tower took several months due to impacts from the pandemic and supplies available to the manufacturer being on back order," she said. "The tower build was completed the first week of April for a total cost of \$23,269.96."

Mid-Valley officials are working with FEMA for reimbursement of the \$28,147.96 total, and are awaiting an update from the federal agency, she said.

During the fire, the hospital had only unstable and intermittent Verizon cell service; land lines, radio, Internet and other cell service was down, as was the Cerner electronic medical record keeping system. Electricity went down the afternoon of Sept. 7, 2020, so the hospital switched to generator power.

Administrator Alan Fisher set up the hospital's incident command system. Admissions offices monitored the functioning cellphones — with the hospital's main phone number routed through them — and messages were sent on to the intended recipients. Hand-held radios were deployed within the hospital for internal communications, Barton said at the time.

Mid-Valley Clinic closed Sept. 8, and the hospital stopped elective procedures for that day. Both reopened the next day. Land telephone service was restored later in the week.

Public utility districts serving Okanogan and Douglas counties experienced losses, as did Bonneville Power Administration and Nespelem Valley Electric Cooperative. Information on co-op damage was not available.

Okanogan County PUD lost 27 miles of distribution line and 189



An Okanogan County Public Utility District crew works on replacing damaged electrical lines off Cameron Lake Road.



Douglas County Public Utility District Damaged electrical equipment sits on the Douglas County side of the Columbia River.

poles, plus 18 miles of transmission line and 175 poles, along with about 20,000 feet of fiber optic line.

"While most of that has now been repaired, the biggest project — the Okanogan-Brewster transmission line — is yet to be done," said PUD spokeswoman Sheila Corson.

Because of delays caused by this year's wildfire activity on the Colville Indian Reservation, transmission line repairs had to be delayed from the original anticipated starting date in July. Construction now is set to start Sept. 20.

Total cost of the project, including the 40 percent of the

line that was destroyed plus an upgrade of the whole line from wood to steel poles, is about \$13 million.

"We are working with FEMA and have determined our estimated claim for damage is \$7,722,025, with an estimated reimbursement of \$6,756,772," Corson said. "None of that has been received yet, but we anticipate reimbursements coming in from December 2021 through March 2023."

In the past, it has taken as long as five years from the incident to get the final FEMA reimbursement, she said, alluding to payment times experienced for the 2014 Carlton Complex and 2015

Okanogan Complex/North Star/Tunk Block fires.

She noted the PUD crews worked about 10 days of 18-hour shifts to get electricity and broadband restored right after the fire. Then a crew was sent to help Nespelem Valley Electric Cooperative, "whose system took a hard beating as well."

Since the fire, the PUD has dealt with thieves taking scrap metal from the downed transmission line.

"Because of the loss of our transmission line, we have had a harder time restoring outage more quickly," she said. "The loss of the line also contributed to the need for power conservation this past July, when two BPA transmission lines were down in a lightning storm."

Lighting took out one; the other was down for maintenance.

"Our staff worked massive hours during the Cold Springs wildfire, but we are always doing what we can to respond to customer needs as quickly as they arise — that's what public power does," she said. All departments are involved.

Douglas County PUD lost more than 700 poles and 20-plus miles of line, said spokeswoman Meaghan Vibbert.

All service has been restored,

but a year later the PUD is still cleaning up some damaged, but functioning infrastructure, she said.

Losses totaled \$5 million. "We are getting our paperwork finalized for the FEMA dollars and expect to see those funds start rolling in by the end of the year," she said.

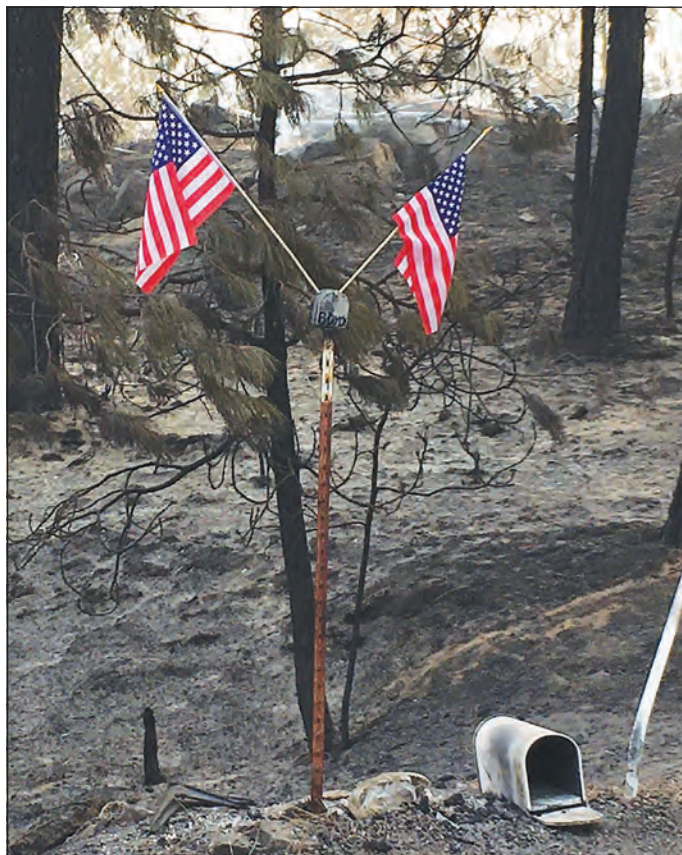
Meanwhile, for state highways, maintenance and state work force costs were roughly \$145,000, which were reimbursed by the Federal Highway Administration, said John Maloney, state Department of Transportation maintenance analyst for the north central region.

Emergency contracts totaling roughly \$1.672 million were awarded to take care of damaged guardrail, and hydroseeding was performed to take care of potential erosion problems, he said.

No road surfaces were damaged by the fire, but roughly 20 miles of guardrail was damaged and 63 acres of right of way, roadside and hillside areas were hydroseeded to protect against erosion, Maloney said.

Federal highway funds paid for the work.

Colville tribal officials declined to comment on damage the tribe suffered.



MAURICE GOODALL | Okanogan County Emergency Management Flags fly over a charred and battered mailbox.

Fire Name	Cost Share?	FMAG	Total Estimated Cost	Est. Amount Billable or Reimbursable Through Cost Shares	DNR Salaries & Benefits	DNR Equipment	Air Resources	Misc. Expenses	National Guard	DOC	Contractors	Cooperators	Federal Resources
ANGLIN	NO	YES	1,745,200		354,728	37,125	267,757	75,969		25,641	422,209	170,904	390,867
APPLE ACRES	YES	YES	427,777	-677,310	204,083	7,545	10,597	60,712			822,150		
BABB	YES	YES	75,000		65,530	7,344		2,125					
BADGER LAKE	YES	NO	717,542	225,440	184,543	25,030	10,438	56,707		7,420	144,651	21,662	41,650
BERTSCH ROAD	NO	NO	4,009,929		1,006,182	88,506	321,081	964,190		42,675	590,911	178,824	817,560
BLUE LAKE ONE	YES	NO	143,000		74,103	6,624	26,914	1,367			24,743	9,249	
COLOKUM	YES	NO	1,280,484	345,838	207,556	7,919	327,063	97,388			156,670	138,049	
COLD SPRINGS	YES	YES	1,757,401	915,920	251,189	7,287	13,256	2,193			30,270	9,680	527,606
CUSTOMS ROAD	YES	NO	451,395	-105,575	275,485	19,052	128,887	729			116,618	16,200	13,239
EUKUD TRACKS	NO	NO	69,171		65,588	3,517		66					
EVANS CANYON	YES	YES	3,138,873	-5,281,929	1,265,191	60,936	379,111	532,671	113,574	17,575	1,943,498	292,667	3,815,579
FISH	NO	NO	1,400,000		407,524	30,068	271,709	440,260		25,439	135,000	45,000	45,000
GREEN	NO	NO	510,276		60,331	4,019	96,271	954			42,971	34,351	271,379
GREENHOUSE	YES	NO	140,449	-401,058	182,089	9,764	332,858	2,933					13,864
INCHELIUM COMPLEX	YES	NO	1,703,151	1,245,628	374,641	7,378	49,624	229					25,651
MIMA ROAD (BORDEAUX)	YES	YES	288,477	-69,238	85,416	10,537	141,154			3,911	116,698		
PALMER	YES	YES	464,125	-1,373,050	1,104,915	89,032	583,745	21,878		2,784	20,740	14,081	
POTHOLE	YES	NO	32,378	-51,908	22,388	1,528	59,359	1,011					
WHITNEY	YES	NO	2,626,364	569,589	667,901	28,331	270,580	281,278	111,195		492,723	204,768	

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES WILDFIRE SEASON 2020 REPORT

Estimated cost by incident, large and/or significant incidents, during 2020. All are Type 2 or Type 3. Cold Springs and Big Hollow are included because they were federal incidents in

which DNR was in cost share with the federal agency involved.

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