



**DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES**

**OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
OF PUBLIC LANDS**

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To: Wildland Fire Advisory Committee
CC: Loren Torgerson, Wildland Fire Policy Advisor
From: George Geissler, Deputy Supervisor, Wildland Fire Management and State Forester
Date: November 15, 2021
Subject: Wildland Fire Advisory Committee Tasking for SSHB 1168 Implementation – Fire District Assistance Program (FDAP) Review
Attached: 1. FDAP Draft Description
2. Operations Grants Draft Description and Criteria
3. VFA Grant Phase II Draft Description
4. VFA Grant Draft Criteria for Awards

Title: Fire District Assistance Program (FDAP) Plan Review

Requested By: George Geissler, Deputy Supervisor, Wildland Fire Management and State Forester

Task Leader: Allen Lebovitz, Wildland Fire Advisory Committee Chair

- 1. Intent:** The intent of this task is to engage the Wildland Fire Advisory Committee (WFAC) to provide recommendations to the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) concerning the proposed plan for implementing the FDAP directed by SSHB 1168 (Bill), to be established in the 2021 – 2023 biennium.
- 2. Background:** During the 2021 Washington State legislative session, [Second Substitute House Bill 1168](#) was passed creating the Wildfire Response, Forest Restoration, and Community Resilience Account (Account). The intent of the Bill is to “fully fund the Wildland Fire Protection 10-Year Strategic Plan”, as well as the 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan. The Legislature appropriated \$125,000,000 for the Account during the 2021 – 2023 biennium. Further, the Legislature stated that it intends to provide \$125,000,000 per biennium for the Account for the next four biennia. The Bill also specifies that at least 15% (\$18,000,000 in the 21-23 biennium) of the biennially appropriated funds to the Account are to be appropriated for community wildland fire resiliency activities, including increasing fire district capacity. Further, the Legislature directed that the DNR “may solicit recommendations on how to use funds in the account from the Wildland Fire Advisory Committee and Forest Health Advisory Committee (Committees).” It also specified that the Committees should use environmental justice or equity focused tools to “prioritize historically marginalized, underrepresented, rural, and low-income communities” as well as “highly impacted communities” as defined by [RCW 19.405.020](#), when making recommendations for investments from the Account. Based upon this direction from the Legislature, the DNR has developed a proposed plan for establishing an expanded FDAP to meet the intent of the Bill, to be launched at the end of 2021.

3. **Purpose:** The purpose of this task is to employ the expertise, knowledge and connections of the WFAC to review the proposed FDAP plan and organizational structure and provide recommendations to DNR and the Commissioner of Public Lands regarding its development. Further, the Committee is uniquely positioned to assist with identifying opportunities to engage partners, stakeholders and the public in the implementation of the Program and recommendations concerning opportunities to do so are requested.
4. **Task description:**
 - A. Review and validate a list of communities identified as at the greatest risk and least resilient to wildfire, have also historically been underserved by resiliency and prevention programs, and have the least capacity to recover from wildfires. Using environmental justice and equity focused tools, ensure these communities are consistent with the definition of “highly impacted communities” as defined in [RCW 19.405.020](#), definition 23. See also definition 40, “vulnerable populations”.
 - B. Assess and provide recommendations on whether the proposed FDAP plan effectively identifies and addresses current and anticipated fire district needs.
 - C. Assess whether the FDAP plan identifies and addresses the current and anticipated fire district needs across the state in a manner that provides benefits equitably across all communities, and in particular, addresses the needs of the state’s most vulnerable populations and residents.
 - D. Assess and provide recommendations on whether the proposed organizational structure is effectively and efficiently designed to build and support the operations of the FDAP.
 - E. Identify key partners and stakeholders that should be engaged when implementing the FDAP.
 - F. Provide other feedback and recommendations that you believe are important to consider in the development of the FDAP.
5. **Assigned to:** For consideration by the full WFAC. The WFAC may assign a subcommittee to address specific elements of the tasks, but should include the entire WFAC in making key decisions and approval of final products.
6. **Coordinate with:**
 - a. George Geissler, Deputy Supervisor, Wildland Fire Management and State Forester.
 - b. Karen Zirkle, Assistant Division Manager, Wildland Fire Management Logistics
 - c. Loren Torgerson, Wildland Fire Policy Advisor.
 - d. Key partners and stakeholders.
7. **Due date:** December 20, 2021
8. **Products to be generated:** A report providing analysis and recommendations on the identified topics.
9. **Final disposition:** The report is to be delivered to George Geissler for Department use in planning and implementation of the FDAP.