

WILDFIRE AND BROWNFIELDS

- Greg Stabach, Natural Resources
- Rogue Valley Council of Governments
- Central Point, Oregon



PRESENTATION OVERVIEW



REGIONAL
BROWNFIELD
PROGRAM



ALMEDA FIRE



BROWNFIELDS AND
FIRE IMPACTS



LESSONS LEARNED



JACKSON COUNTY - BACKGROUND

- Close to 200,000 residents
- Bear Creek most urbanized watershed in Southern Oregon
- Agricultural and Tourism
- Former timber area
- Rogue River
- Outdoor activities - Fishing, rafting, hiking



LOCAL CONCERNS FROM A CHANGING CLIMATE



Fires



Flooding



Disease/Insect
Damage



Heat



Snowpack/Water
Supply

OBSERVED IMPACTS OF A CHANGING CLIMATE –MY PERSPECTIVE OVER THE LAST 24 YEARS



TEMPERATURES
INCREASING ON
AVERAGE (MORE
DAYS OVER 100
DEGREES
FAHRENHEIT)



MORE FREQUENT
FIRES (LOTS OF FIRES
ANNUALLY)



MORE FREQUENT
LARGER FIRES
(LARGE ACREAGE)



LONGER FIRE
SEASON



MORE DAYS WITH AQI
INDEX OF OVER 100



PROLONGED
DROUGHTS LEADING
TO WATER
SHORTAGES

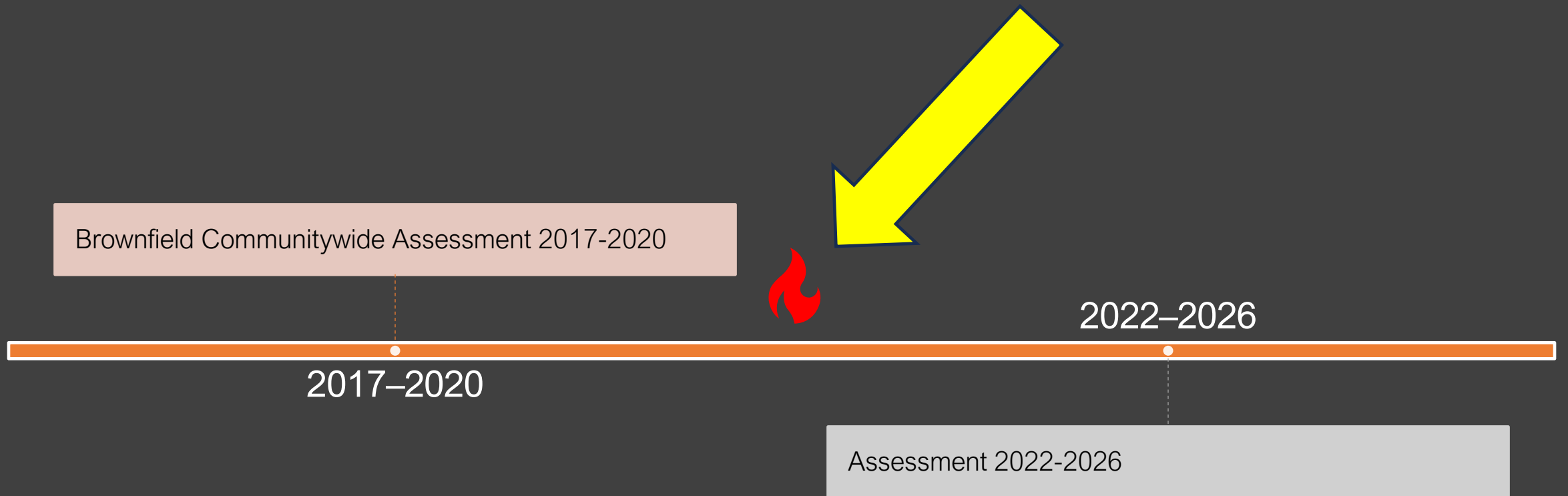


ERRATIC FLOWS IN
STREAMS (EROSION
AND FLOODING)



INVASIVE SPECIES,
INSECTS, AND
DISEASE

SOUTHERN OREGON BROWNFIELD PROGRAM



ALMEDA FIRE OVERVIEW



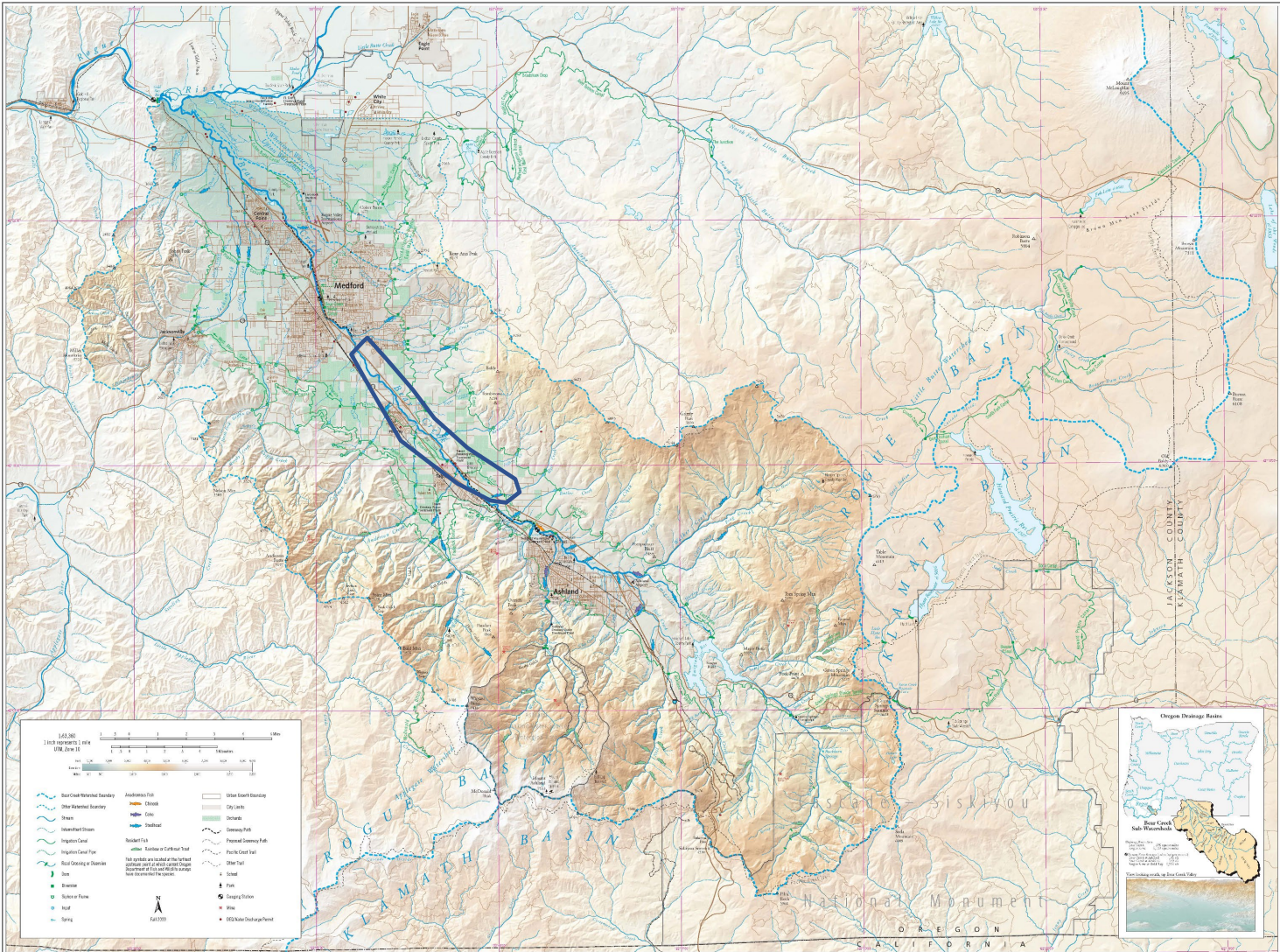
SEPTEMBER 8TH, 2020

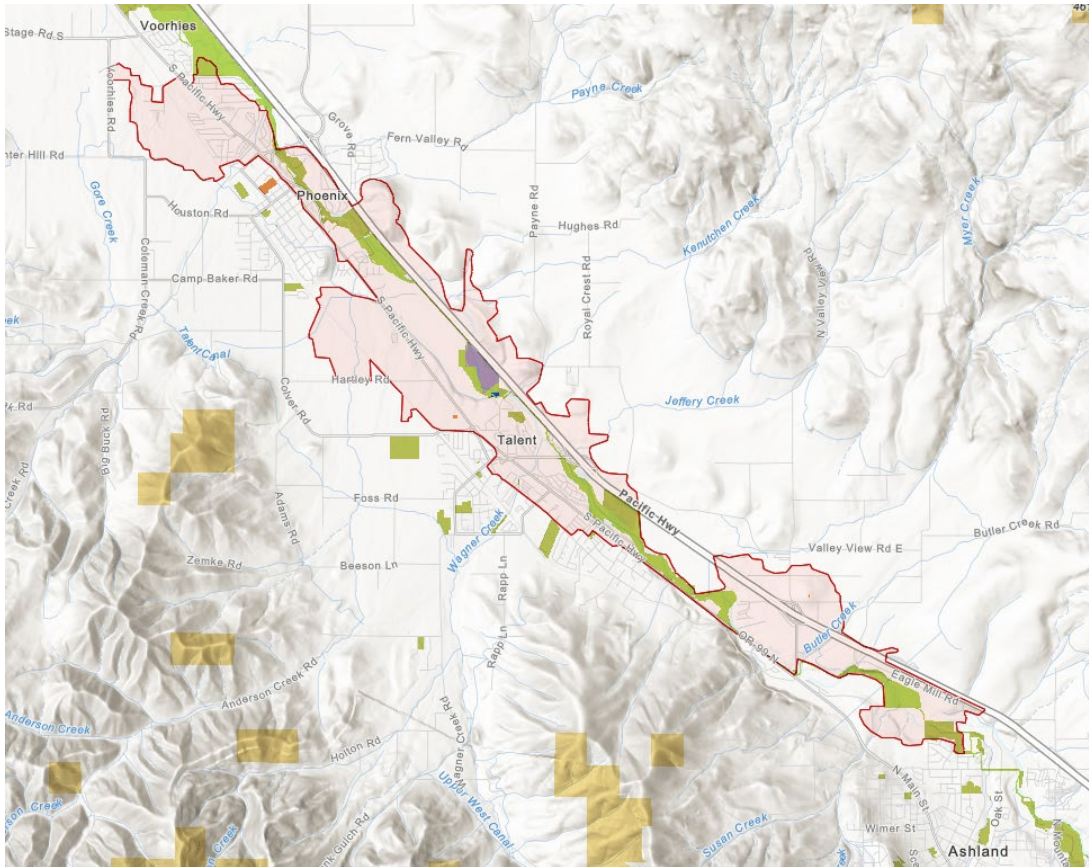


- Fire began near Ashland, Oregon
- Strong winds drove the fire quickly to the northwest
- The path of the fire followed OR-99 through Talent and Phoenix
- Wildfire burned for approximately 36 hours
- Mandatory evacuations in Ashland, Phoenix, Talent, and Medford
- Total length of fire approximately 7 miles
- Widespread devastation – homes, businesses, commercial, two downtown areas

Bear Creek Watershed

Whetstone & Upton Creek Watersheds, Rogue River Basin, Oregon





Jackson County Fire Damage Assessment Dashboard

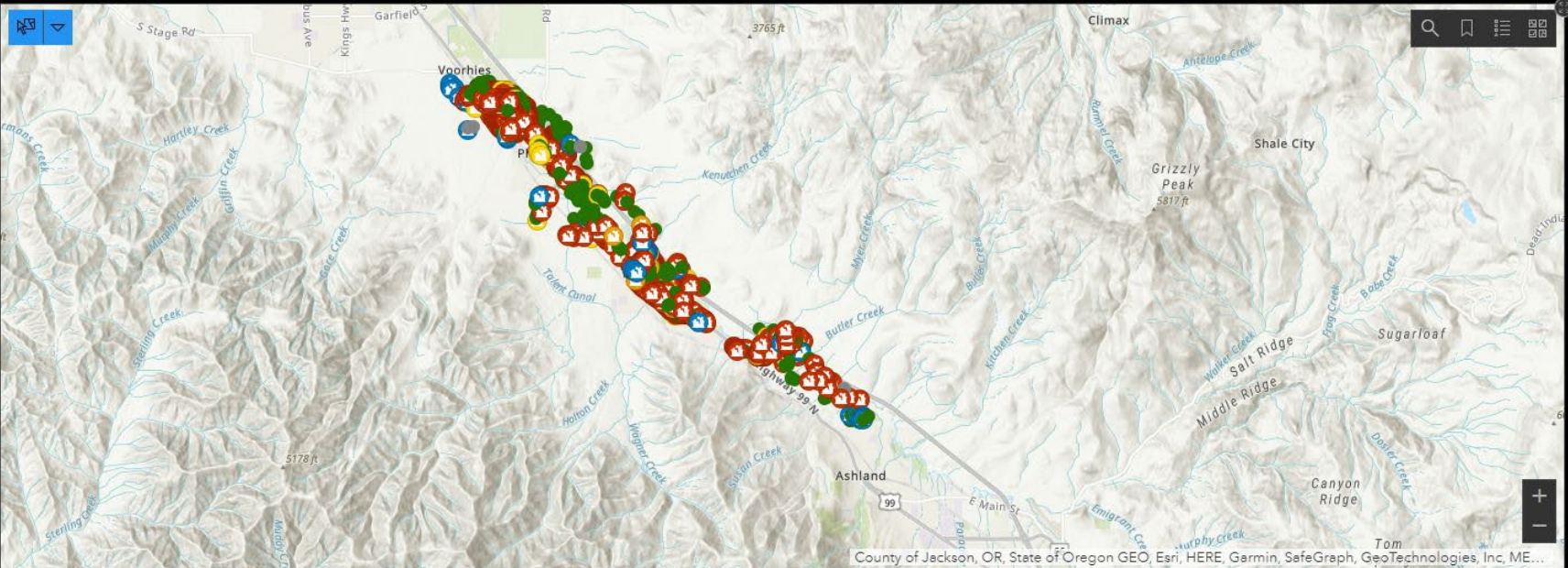
Instructions

- To search for a property, use the Magnifying glass in the upper right corner of the map.
- To see damage details for a property, click on its dot on the map or select the street address from the list on the left.
- To navigate the map with a mouse: click and drag to move map, use scroll wheel to zoom in/out.
- To navigate the map with keyboard, use arrow keys to move map, plus or minus sign keys to zoom.

- What the damage levels mean:
 - **Destroyed:** the home is a total loss
 - **Major:** a home with structural damage or other significant damage that requires extensive repairs.
 - **Minor:** a home with repairable non-structural damage.
 - **Affected:** a home is considered affected if the damage to the home is mostly cosmetic.
 - **Unaffected:** the home does not seem to have had any damage caused by the event
 - **Inaccessible:** the property could not be assessed by the Assessment team due to lack of access at the time of their visit.

- To see region-wide damage statistics, click the "Total Counts by Type and Level" tab at the bottom of the map.

- If you find what you think is an error in the data, or a system bug, or if you disagree with the damage assessment for your property, please complete [this form](#) to let us know.



Interactive Map View Total Counts by Type and Level EPA HHW cleanup map

Total Properties Surveyed	Total Impacted Properties	Total Impacted Residential Properties	Total Impacted Commercial Properties	Total Impacted Public Properties	Total Inaccessible Properties
3,480	2,753	2,549	198	6	5
Within Current View	Within Current View	Within Current View	Within Current View	Within Current View	Within Current View



604/608 N. Main Street, Phoenix



1209-1309 S. Pacific Highway, Talent



3628 S. Pacific Highway, Medford



Bear Lake Estates Mobile Home Park, Phoenix

HOUSING

- 2,537 homes
- 18 mobile home parks
- 4,200 displaced residents
- Most of the mobile homes destroyed were serving as unsubsidized affordable housing for *low-income* residents. More than 3,500 mobile home residents were displaced and included the Rogue Valley's most vulnerable: low income, *the elderly, and Latinx families including many seasonal agricultural and forestry workers.*





COMMERCIAL/ BUSINESSES

- 171 Business
- Portions of downtown Phoenix and Talent
- Still recovering and rebuilding 4 years later



IMPACT #1 - CHANGED OUR THINKING AND PRIORITIES FOR APPLICATION

- *Priority* – Areas impacted by the fire
 - Where were new brownfields created?
 - How were existing brownfield properties impacted?
 - How could the Brownfields program help with the rebuilding efforts?
 - What is different process wise? *Housing still the greatest need.*
- *Secondary* – other areas of Jackson County
 - Residents concerned but not directly impacted by fire.

OUR VISION

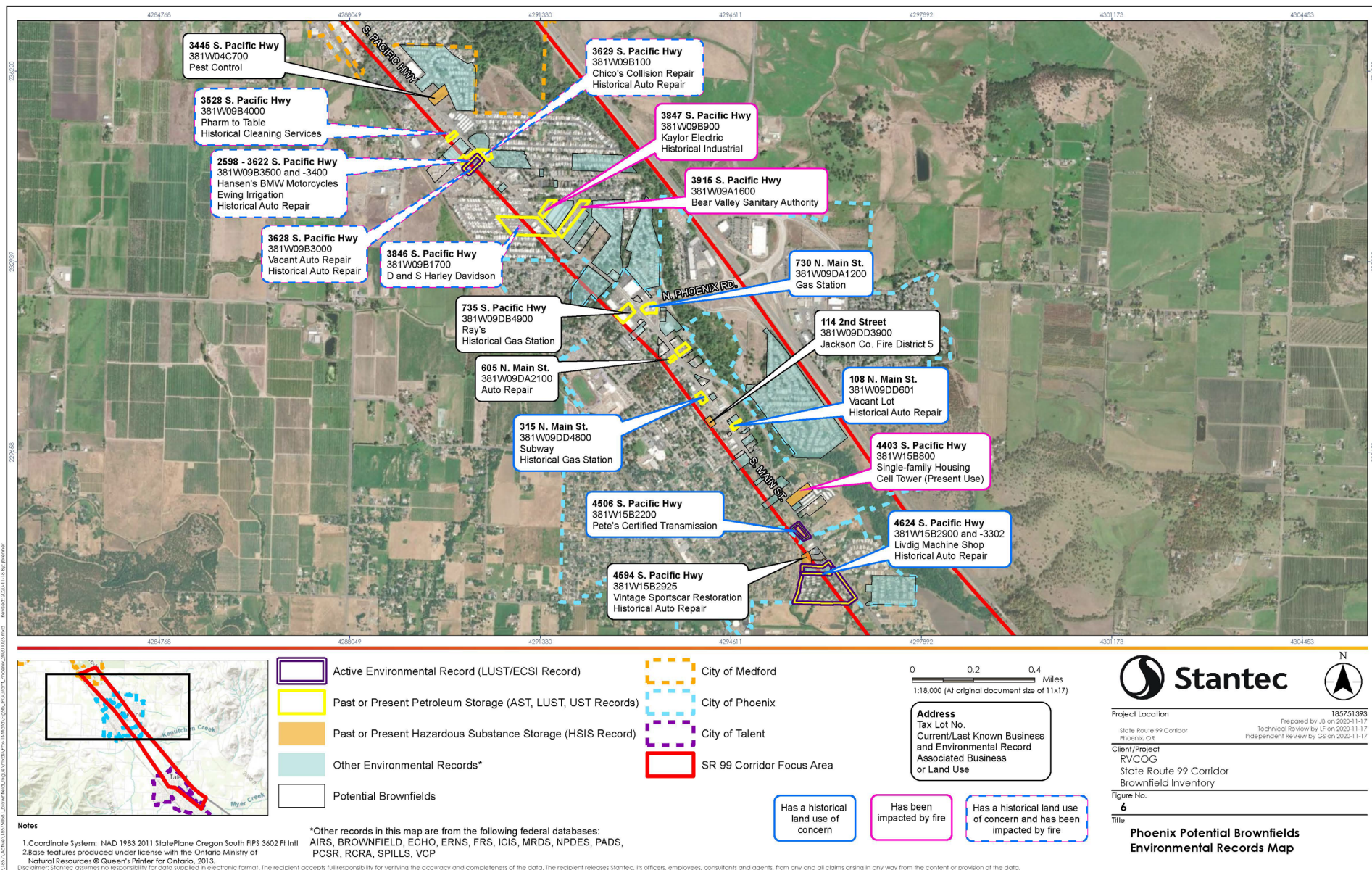
- Support recovery efforts (e.g. fire victims)
- Increase housing supply, particularly affordable housing
- Spur economic development and Real Estate Transactions
- Rebuild community
- Jobs

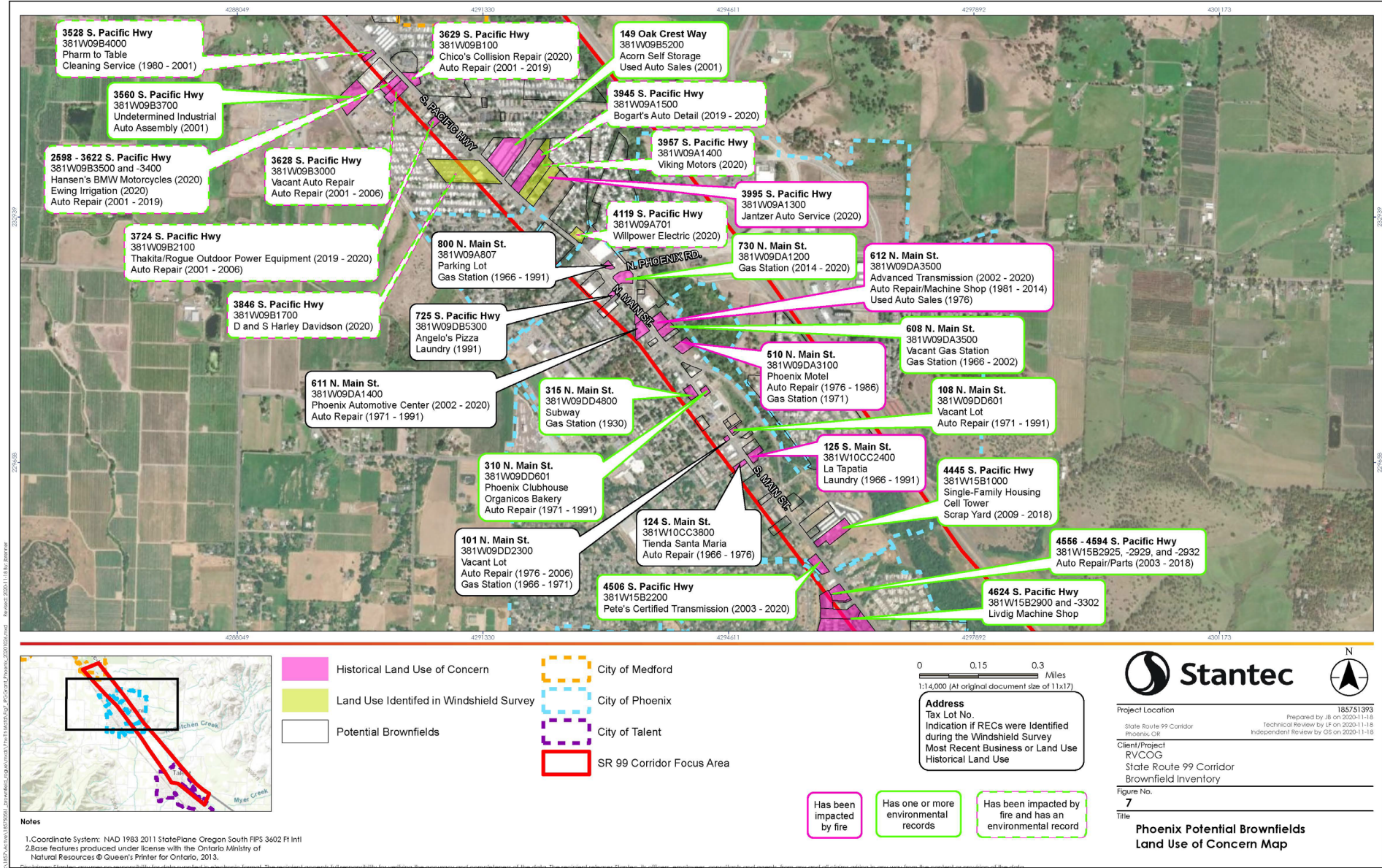




IMPACT #2: NEW BROWNFIELDS AND BROWNFIELDS IMPACTED

- Revise and update brownfield inventories







EXAMPLE SITE #1

- Former Gas Station
- Open Database Listing
- Vacant at Time of Fire



EXAMPLE SITE #2

- Former Gas Station and Auto Service
- Open Database Listing
- Spills Possible During Fire
- For Sale

IMPACT #3 – FIRE AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY PLANNING

- DEFENSIBLE SPACE
- NEW BUILDING MATERIALS AND METHODS
- FIRE BREAKS
- WATER
- EVACUATION ROUTES
- TEMPORARY HOUSING
- PUTTING PEOPLE BACK TO WORK
- LAND SWAPS

OUTCOMES
Number of Jobs Created
Amount of Public Funding and Private Investment Leveraged
Number of Acres of Property Made Ready for Redevelopment
Square Feet of New Buildings Constructed
Number of Buildings Seeking or Obtaining LEED Certification
Square Feet of Building Made Ready for Adaptive Reuse
Acres of Property Made Ready for Parks or Greenspace
Amount of Additional Property Tax Revenue Generated
Number of Stormwater Quality Improvements Made
Number of Real Estate Transactions Facilitated



WHERE WE ARE NOW? UPDATES

- Year 2 of 4
 - Inventory
 - Phase 1 and Phase 2's
 - Area Wide Planning (preliminary discussions with Talent downtown)
- Looking at areas for housing opportunities (affordable, temporary, and permanent)
- Working with Phoenix and Talent
- Other areas in Jackson County



LESSONS LEARNED

- Prepare, Prepare, Prepare – Brownfields can help!
- Timing – It proved to be difficult to overlap brownfield funding with redevelopment (application process)
- Be flexible – Talent Commons
- Information sharing/communication– determining the extent of clean-up activities is proving to be a challenge (above vs below ground)
- Resources (personnel) spread thin, lots of funding coming in making it tough to coordinate on projects and rebuilding
- Institutional hurdles – floodplains, public versus private utilities, mobile home parks, codes



QUESTIONS?

- Contact Information
- Greg Stabach, Natural Resources Program Director
 - gstabach@rvcog.org
 - (541) 423-1370
 - PO Box 3275/155 North First Street
 - Central Point, OR. 97502



Table 6: Homes Damaged by County and Damage Level*					
County	Single Family	Multifamily	Manufactured Homes	Major Damaged Homes	Destroyed/ Damaged Homes
Clackamas	62	0	0	0	62
Douglas	126	0	12	0	138
Jackson	610	193	1,561	9	2,373
Klamath	11	0	0	0	11
Lane	463	0	0	1	464
Lincoln	63	3	222	0	288
Linn	71	0	0	0	71
Marion	629	0	0	4	633
Total	2,035	196	1,795	14	4,040
Source: Oregon Office of Emergency Management					

PARTNERS

Brownfields Program

- Pre 2016 – Individual Projects
- Inventory (Business Oregon)
- Coalition Community Wide Assessment Program 2017-2020
- Post Fire Inventory (Business Oregon)
- Community Wide Assessment Grant (2022-2026)

Partners

- Phoenix*
- Talent*
- Central Point**
- Medford
- Jackson County*
- Grants Pass (Coalition grant only)