



# THE NEED FOR DEDICATED WILDFIRE AND FOREST HEALTH FUNDING

DNR's plan for dedicated funding is a simple, affordable, and common-sense solution to Washington's wildfire crisis. This proposal reduces wildfire damage and cost by investing in proven wildfire prevention and preparedness strategies.



#### Endorsed by:

- Washington Fire Chiefs
- The Nature Conservancy
- American Lung Association

**EVERY \$1 SPENT RESTORING THE HEALTH OF FORESTS SAVES \$1.45 IN FIREFIGHTING COSTS.**

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## We are all at risk from wildfire

Wildfire poses a clear and present danger to our health and safety, economy, and way of life. More than 2.2 million homes in Washington are exposed to heightened wildfire risk.

**Wildfire suppression costs statewide averaged \$153 million per year over the past five years.**

If we do not act, wildfire danger will continue to increase.

## A blueprint for tackling our wildfire crisis

This plan invests \$126 million each biennium toward:

1. Improving our state's wildfire response capability; and,
2. Restoring natural wildfire resistance in our forests.

This proactive approach responds to the rise of severe fires by providing firefighters with the helicopters, equipment, and training they need to get to fires early and keep them small.

And it invests in longer-term efforts to prevent wildfires in the first place—restoring the health of 1.25 million acres of forest via selective thinning and prescribed burns.

Funding will implement the science-based strategies laid out in the 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan and the 10-Year Wildland Fire Protection Strategic Plan, both of which were approved and supported by the Legislature.

## An affordable, common-sense funding source

This plan is funded by a surcharge of a few cents on property and casualty insurance policies, which have a clear nexus to the danger wildfire poses to our homes and communities. This revenue will be deposited into a new dedicated account.

By sharing the burden of tackling our wildfire crisis across everyone, we minimize the impact on each resident. **For the average household (i.e., one homeowner's policy and two auto policies), the cost will be just over \$1 per month. The cost of a Coke.**

**FIRE  
SUPPRESSION  
STATEWIDE  
COSTS \$153  
MILLION EACH  
YEAR.**

**2.2**   
**MILLION**

Number of homes in  
Washington exposed to  
wildfire.

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**FUNDING PRIORITIES, GUIDED BY DNR'S 10-YEAR  
WILDLAND FIRE PROTECTION STRATEGIC PLAN, INCLUDE:**



**42** New Fulltime  
Firefighters  
**\$8.4 million**

**15** Fire Engine  
Leaders  
**\$5.2 million**



**1**  
Modern Type 2  
Helicopter  
**\$25.6 million**

- **Restore the health of our forests**  
**\$26 million**
- **Investments to protect fire-prone communities in the wildland-urban interface**  
**\$15 million**
- **Assistance and resources to help property owners and small forest landowners secure and protect their property from wildfire**  
**\$7.5 million**
- **Embed training experts throughout the state to train volunteer firefighters at local fire districts and departments**  
**\$1.9 million**

**Preventing destruction by building economic opportunity**

When it comes to wildfire, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

The benefits far exceed just reduced wildfire suppression costs. That's because suppression costs make up only 9 percent of the total cost of wildfires once you factor in disaster recovery, lost business, infrastructure and timber damage, and health impacts.

Even better, by being proactive we also create new economic opportunity.

Investments in forest health create family-wage jobs, especially in rural communities.

Two cross-laminated timber facilities have opened this year (Colville and Spokane Valley). These facilities take timber thinned from unhealthy forests and turn it into sturdy, environmentally friendly building material for our towns and cities.

**Protecting the health of people and wildlife**

A focus on forest health also supports fish and wildlife by protecting and improving habitat. Healthy forests mean clean water and clean air.

Wildfires are a significant source of carbon pollution. Less wildfires means less air pollution. This protects public health, in addition to keeping our precious blue skies clear of choking smoke.