FEMA Provides Federal Funds to Help Fight Chetco Bar Fire

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SEATTLE – The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has authorized the use of federal funds to help with firefighting costs for the Chetco Bar Fire burning in Curry County, Oregon.

The FEMA Acting Regional Administrator, Sharon Loper, determined that the fire threatened such destruction as would constitute a major disaster. Loper approved the state of Oregon's request for a federal Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) at 12:35 a.m. PDT on August 20, 2017.

At the time of the request, the fire was threatening 700 homes in and around the communities of Tillman Ranch, Wilderness Retreat and South Fork Campground. Approximately 350 of the threatened homes are primary residences and 350 are secondary homes. The fire was also threatening supporting infrastructure in the area. Mandatory and voluntary evacuations were issued for approximately 1750 people. The fire started on August 12, 2017, and had burned in excess of 43,000 acres of federal, state, private, and tribal land. Seventeen other large fires were burning uncontrolled within the state. The fire was zero percent contained at the time of FMAG approval.

The authorization makes FEMA funding available to pay 75 percent of the state of Oregon's eligible firefighting costs for managing, mitigating and controlling designated fires. These grants provide reimbursement for firefighting and life-saving efforts. They do not provide assistance to individuals, homeowners or business owners and do not cover other infrastructure damage caused by the fire.

FMAGs are provided through the President's Disaster Relief Fund and made available by FEMA to assist in fighting fires that threaten to cause a major disaster. Eligible items can include expenses for field camps; equipment use, repair and replacement; mobilization and demobilization activities; and tools, materials and supplies.

Photo of trees smoldering from a forest fire in Santa Fe National forest. Text overlay reads: