

Port Preparedness & Emergency Response

WPPA Small Ports Conference • October 22, 2026

Rich Mueller, Airport Director

PORT OF MOSES LAKE

Heather Rogerson, Planning & Development Director

Port of Skagit

Agenda

1. Relationships
2. Plan
3. Execute
4. Debrief



Relationships
Relationships
Relationships

Establish Relationships BEFORE an Emergency

- Government Partners
  - Cities / Counties
  - Dept of Emergency Management
  - First Responders
- Tenants
- Community Service Providers
- Contractors

Relationships
Relationships
Relationships

Decide the level of cooperation and form of agreement

- Handshake
- Email
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Interagency Agreement
- Resolution
- Create new Organization with members

Plan

- Understand and Plan for Your Unique:
  - Facility Requirements
  - Community Needs
  - Port Resources

- What's your *plan* if it isn't in your Plan?

Port of Moses Lake Planning

- USFS Lease, as well as other leases or subleases
- Contract aircraft, pilots, crews, maintenance teams
- Tower and TRACON (Radar)
- Badges, access and training
- Coordination with base and other tenants, airshow
- Fire forecasts and weather
- Cell phone numbers programmed

Tanker base Planning

- Wake up the base
- Contract aircraft comms and logistics
- Coordinate retardant concentrate deliveries
- Industrial Waste Water connection opened
- Coordinate with Fixed Base Operator, Million Air Moses Lake
  - Fuel dispensing
  - Air stairs and other ground support, ground power, etc.
  - Lavatory servicing

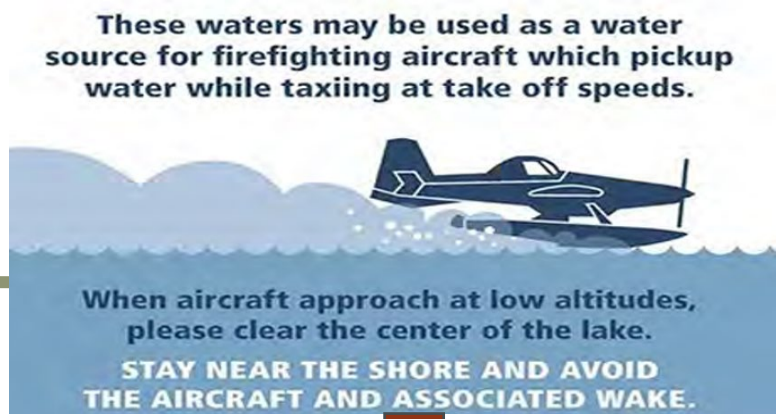
Wildfire State and Federal Planning

The bigger picture, interagency planning on the regional and national level

- DNR Wildland Fire Management Division
- Northwest Interagency Coordination Center
- National Interagency Fire Center

This includes any pre-positioning of air assets

Wildfire State and Federal Planning



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DAVE UPTHEGROVE | COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS

Aviation Program

DNR WFMD AIR OPERATIONS Mission Statement

DNR WFMD Air Operations Team is dedicated to providing safe, rapid, cost effective and efficient Attack Initial/Extended aerial fire suppression and fire support. Primary focus is the public's safety, protection of life, and to reduce the loss of property in the support of the ground firefighter , fire managers, fire districts and the Washington State Citizens.

This is done with a combination of state owned and contract aircraft, helicopter and fixed-wing, with support from JBLM as needed.

*WFMD: Wildland Fire Management Division

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Aviation Program



Northwest Interagency Coordination Center

The Northwest Interagency Coordination Center serves as the **northwest area geographic focal point** to provide logistical support and intelligence relative to anticipated and ongoing wildfire activity for all federal and cooperating state wildland fire suppression agencies. The Center facilitates movement of resources between agencies' units and, concurrently, ensures fire suppression capabilities to support large fire potential by monitoring weather and prescribed burning activity within the area. The Center also responds to requests for support to other geographic areas from the National Interagency Coordination Center at the National Interagency Fire Center.

Though the Center was primarily established to support wildland fire suppression efforts, it also plays a significant role in providing logistical support to the needs of **other natural disasters** such as earthquakes, floods, volcano eruptions, etc. The Center is the focal point in the Northwest for area level support to Emergency Support Function #4 in a Federal Emergency Management Agency declared disaster. In addition, the Center supports the general fire community through training, workshops and response to projects or tasks assigned by the Pacific Northwest Wildfire Coordination Group or others.

Northwest Interagency Coordination Center

U.S. Department of the Interior
Indian Affairs

Oregon Department of Forestry

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

United States
Fish & Wildlife Service

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
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National Interagency Fire Center



NIFC at a glance

NIFC was established in 1965 as the Boise Interagency Fire Center (BIFC) when the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), USDA Forest Service (USFS) and National Weather Service (NWS) recognized the need to pool resources, cut costs, and coordinate national fire suppression and planning efforts. Construction of the first buildings on campus began in 1968.

Throughout the 1970s, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), National Park Service (NPS), and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) established offices at BIFC.

In 1993, the name was changed to the National Interagency Fire Center to better reflect its expanding mission.

In 2026, the Department of the Interior unified its wildland fire programs that were previously spread across BIA, BLM, FWS, NPS, the Office of Aviation Services, and the Office of Wildland Fire into a single, cohesive U.S. Wildland Fire Service (USWFS).

NIFC staff are in charge of developing and managing aircraft contracts.

National Interagency Fire Center



U.S. Fire Administration

Port of Skagit Planning



Dr. Kevin Ware
District 1



Melanie Mankamyer
District 2



Mahlon Hull
District 3

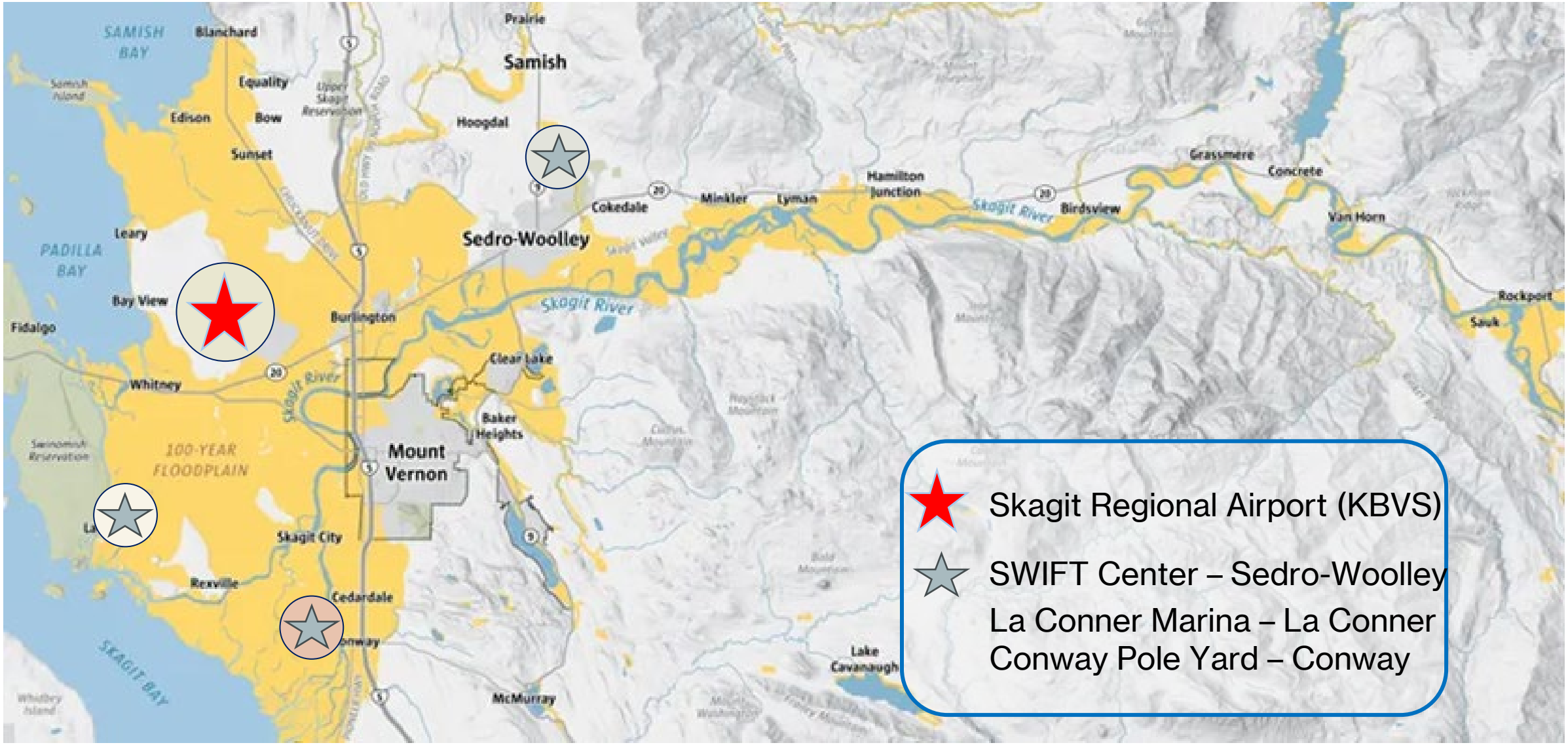
Skagit Regional Airport
Bayview Business Park
Watershed Business Park

SWIFT Center

La Conner Marina

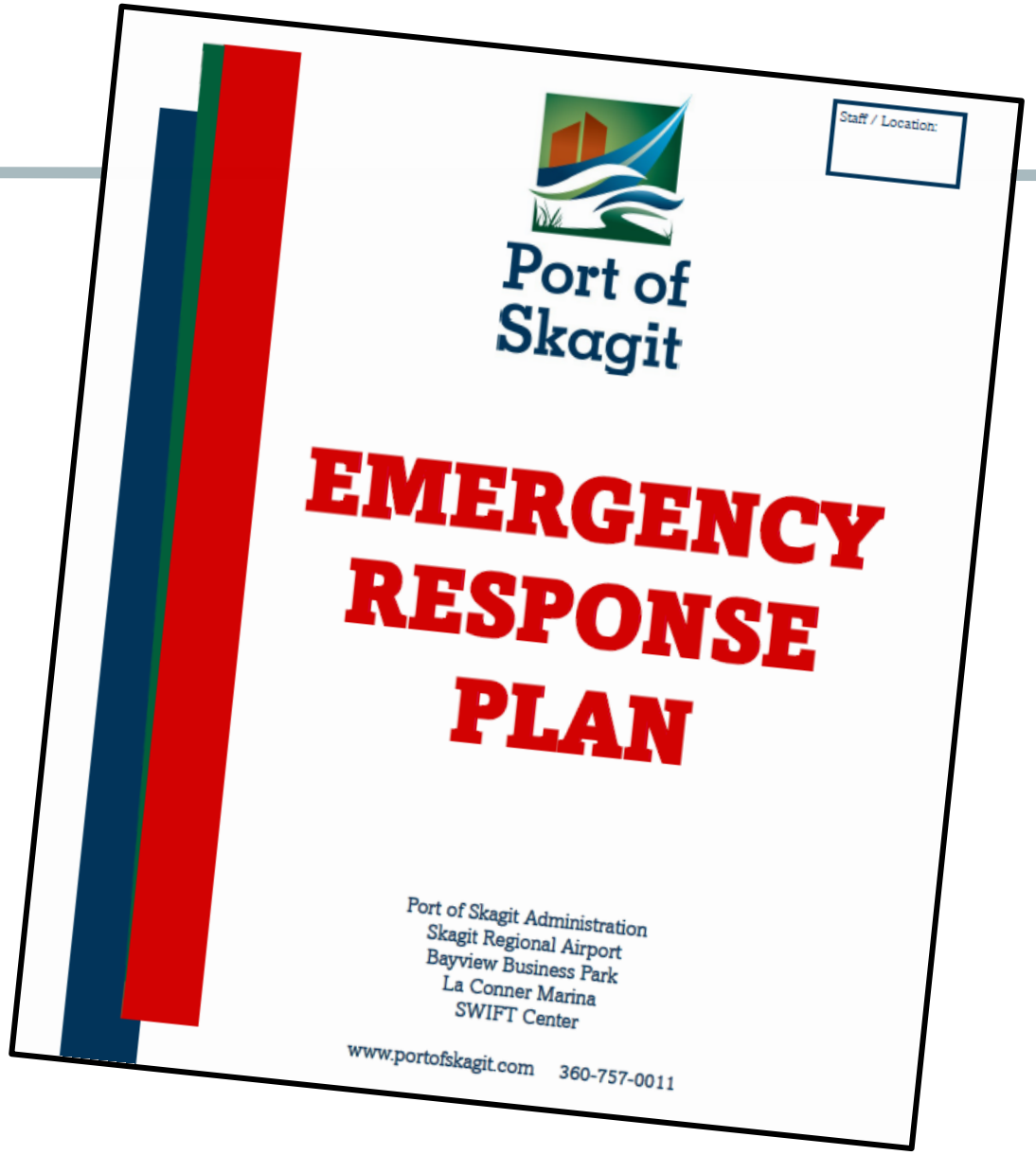
Conway Pole Yard

Skagit County 100-Year Flood Plain



Port of Skagit Planning

- Essential / Critical Public Facility Designation (BVS)
- Emergency Response Plan
- Established Agreements
  - Fire District 6
  - Skagit County
  - US Army Corps of Engineers



Port of Skagit Planning





Port Staff Training

- NIMS IS-700 & ICS -100
- Basic First Aid & CPR (Annual)
- Field Exercise (Every 3 years)

Community

- Law Enforcement
- CERT & DART



Execute

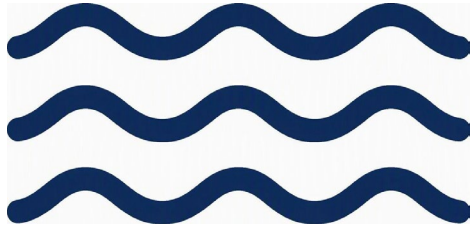
Port of Moses Lake

2026 Fire Season

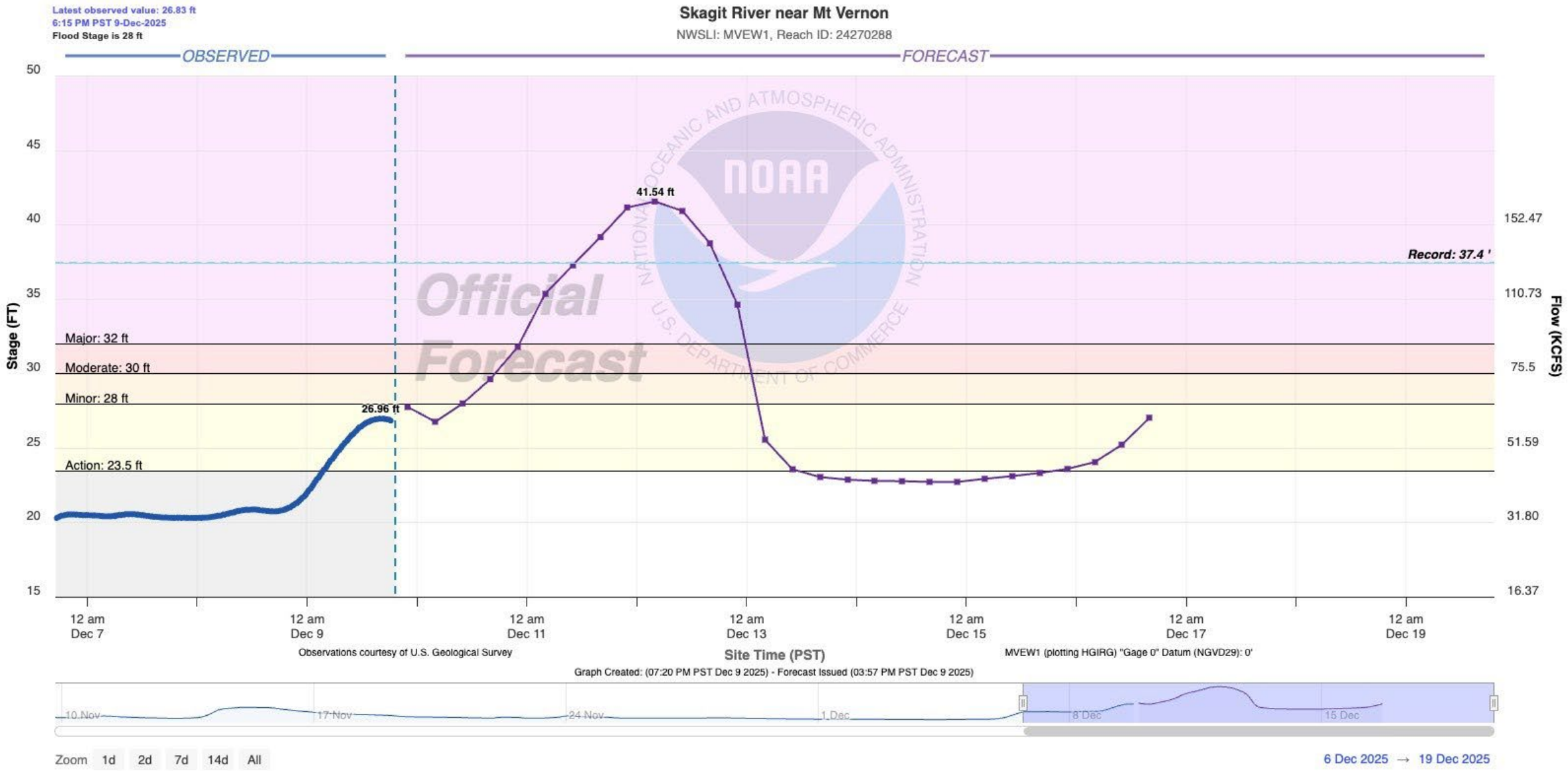


Port of Skagit

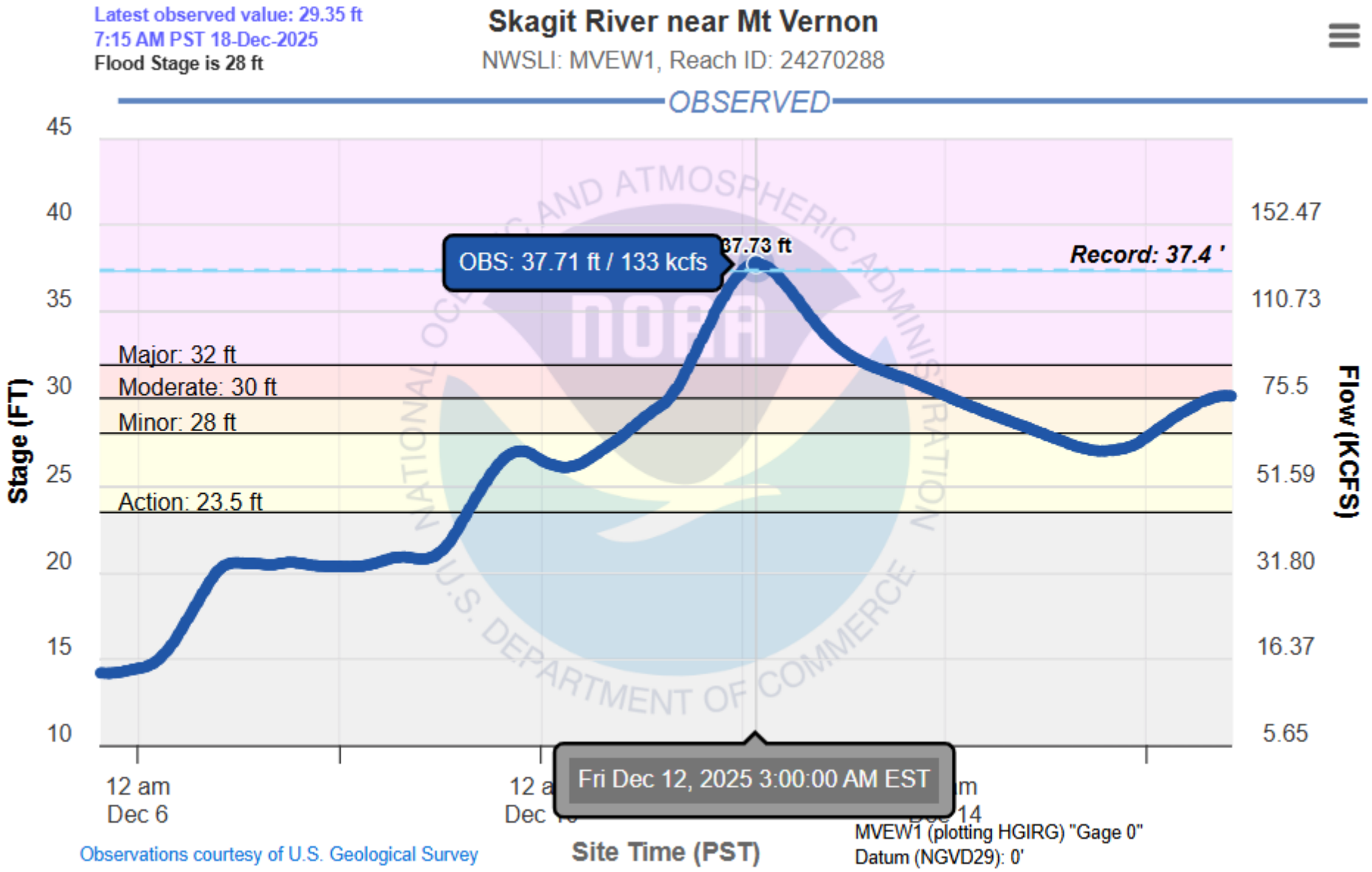
2025 Flood Event Response



2025 Flood Event – Skagit River Forecast



2025 Flood Event – Skagit River Observed



Skagit County Flood
December 2025













Skagit Regional Airport (KBVS)

WA State National Guard









Port of Skagit





La Conner Marina

Bayview Business Park

SWIFT Center



Email excerpt from Keith Love, Port of Skagit Airport Manager :

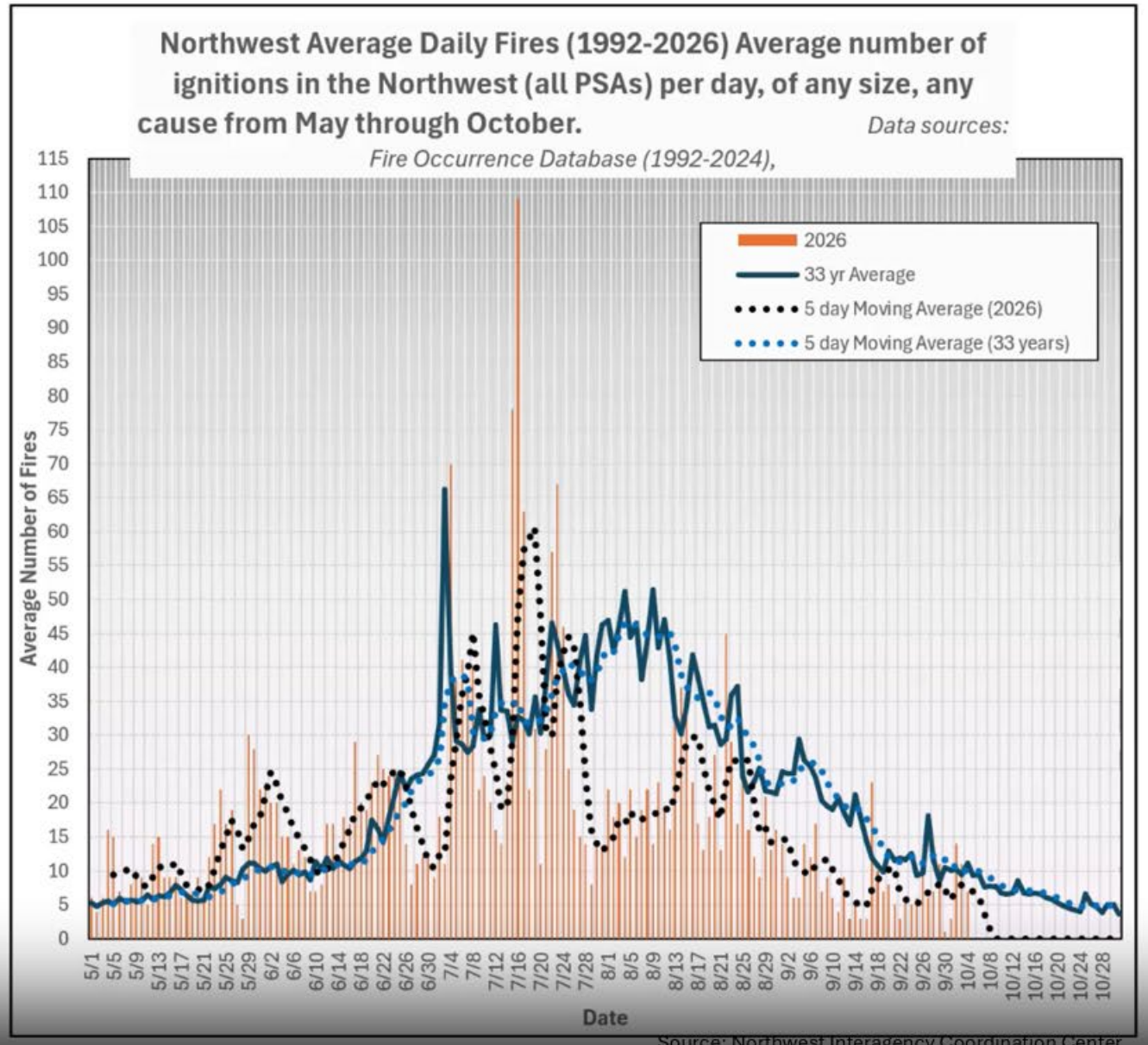
> *….[The tenant] is a yes. I will put them all together.*
>
> 🐴🐴🐶🐶🐈🐈🐐🐐🐓🐓🐄🐄🦞🦞👍





2026 Fire Season Ignitions

- **May through most of June** saw above-average ignition activity, although the very wet May 27–29 lightning outbreak produced comparatively few ignitions.
- Following a **late-June lull**, activity returned to near average around July 4.
- **Late July defined the 2026 fire season**, beginning with mixed wet/dry thunderstorms July 15 followed by a dry cold front July 18, then another lightning episode July 22 and dry front July 25.
- Another dry front and unstable conditions on **August 1** produced relatively few but significant ignitions.
- **New ignition activity remained well below average thereafter**, generally consistent with the 2005, 2015, 2018, and to a lesser extent, 2024 climate and fire season analogs.
- Despite fewer new starts, **resource needs remained heavy** due to the number and size of ongoing incidents.



Source: Northwest Interagency Coordination Center

PORT OF MOSES LAKE

VLAT: Very Large Tanker Base

- Grant County International Airport has the only VLAT in Washington State, which covers parts of four states
- The MWH VLAT is owned and operated by the USFS
- It has an agreement with state DNR for shared use
- Four large tankers or two VLATS can be filled simultaneously
- There is room for expansion at the base, and the Port is willing to support
- There is more ramp available off base as needed





PORT OF MOSES LAKE

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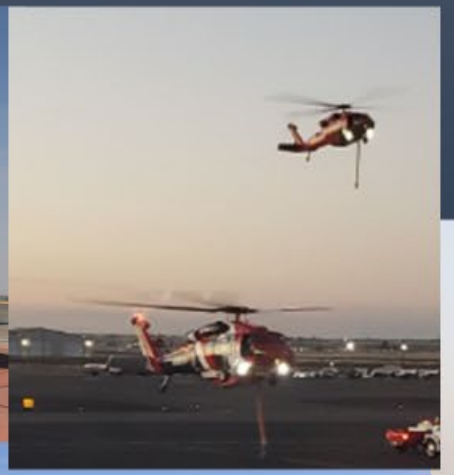
The various aircraft you will see at the Grant County International airport during fire season

















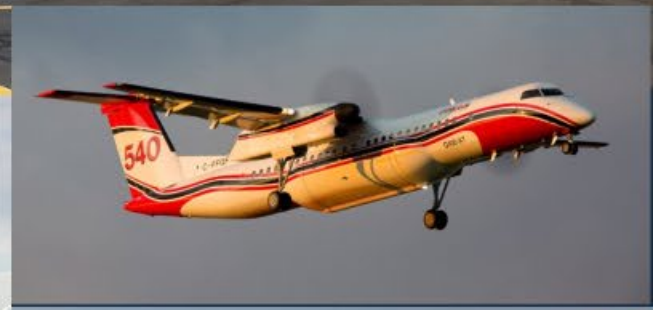














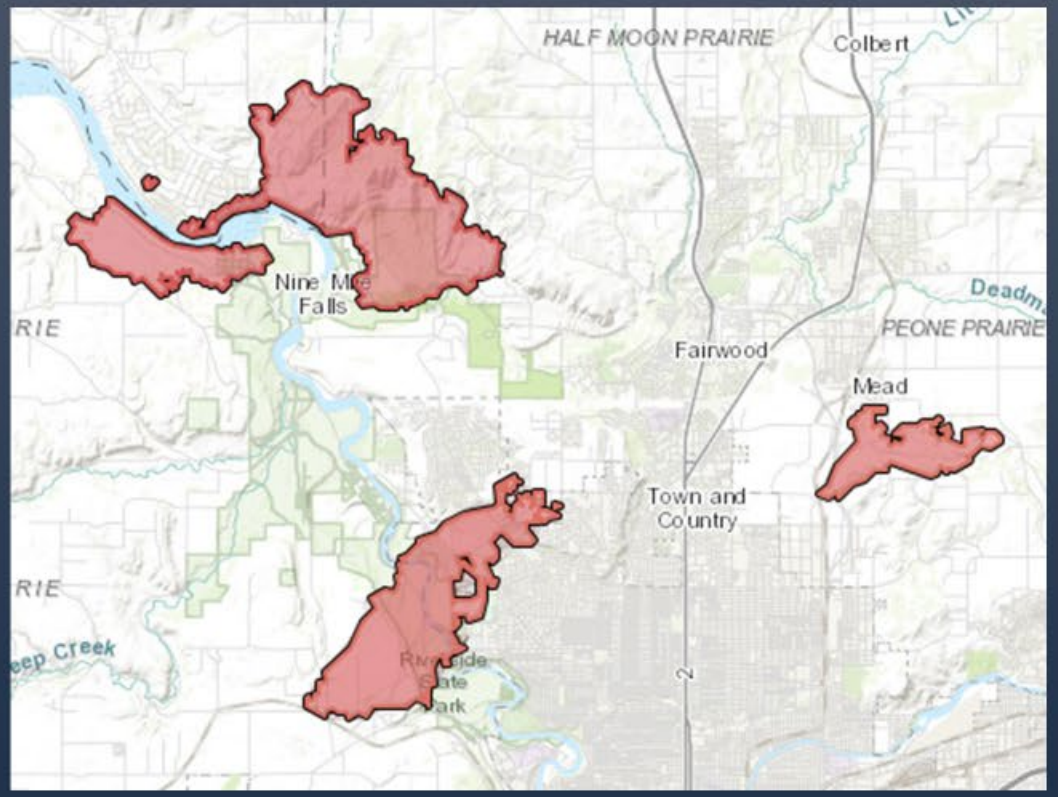


Spokane Complex Fire

Dry Summer
Windy Weather
Plenty of natural and man-made fuel
An arsonist on the loose

Old Trails Fire, August 1, 3,500 acres,
Autumn Lane Fire, August 3, 5,600 acres,
Fairview Fire, wildland-urban interface,

Destroyed 649 primary residences
Damaged an additional 2,542 homes
Burned nearly 369,000 acres

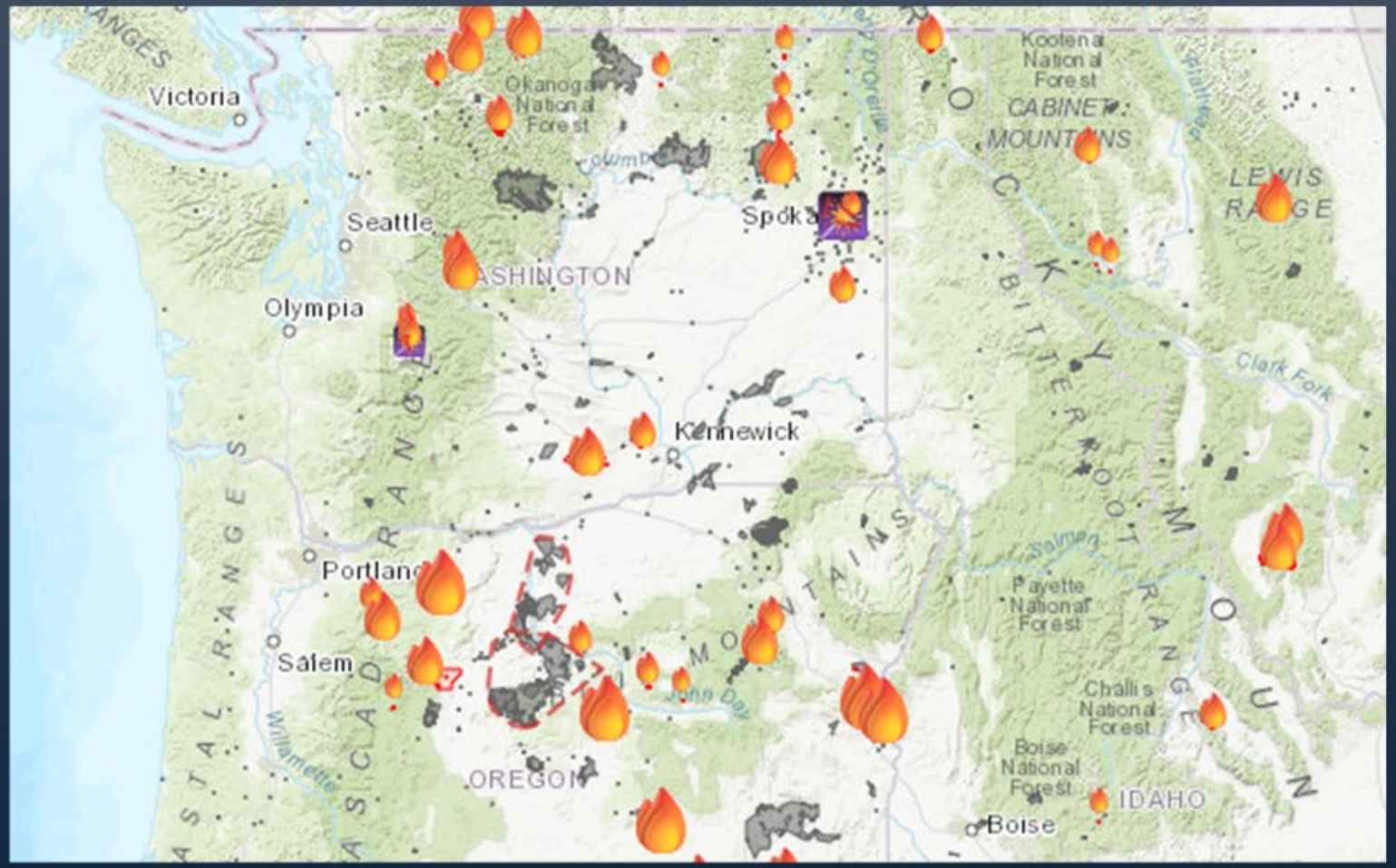


Air Attack was critical, but still just a piece of a massive mobilization, and the Port played a very slight part of this operation.

Our hats are off to the thousands of women and men from the various emergency services, government agencies, community services, and non-profit organizations who worked tirelessly to protect life and property, and help with the ongoing task of clean-up, rebuilding, and re-homing families and businesses.

PORT OF MOSES LAKE

The MWH Tanker base had aircraft in position after the first week in June and it looked like a record year but then the pace slowed.
August kicked off with the Spokane Complex Fire but by mid August the fire season thankfully slowed to a trickle.
We thought we would have a full-blown fire season into October, but rain came to the rescue



Tanker base numbers for the 2026 fire season were about average:
685 Sorties, 2,335,155 gallons of retardant, 490,000 gallons of jet fuel

PORT OF MOSES LAKE

PORT OF MOSES LAKE

MWH based aircraft in action over the Spokane area:



Debrief



What went well

What could be improved on

What to update for next time

Write it down!

(but you don't have to reinvent the wheel)

MY PORT, WA

Big Deal Emergency

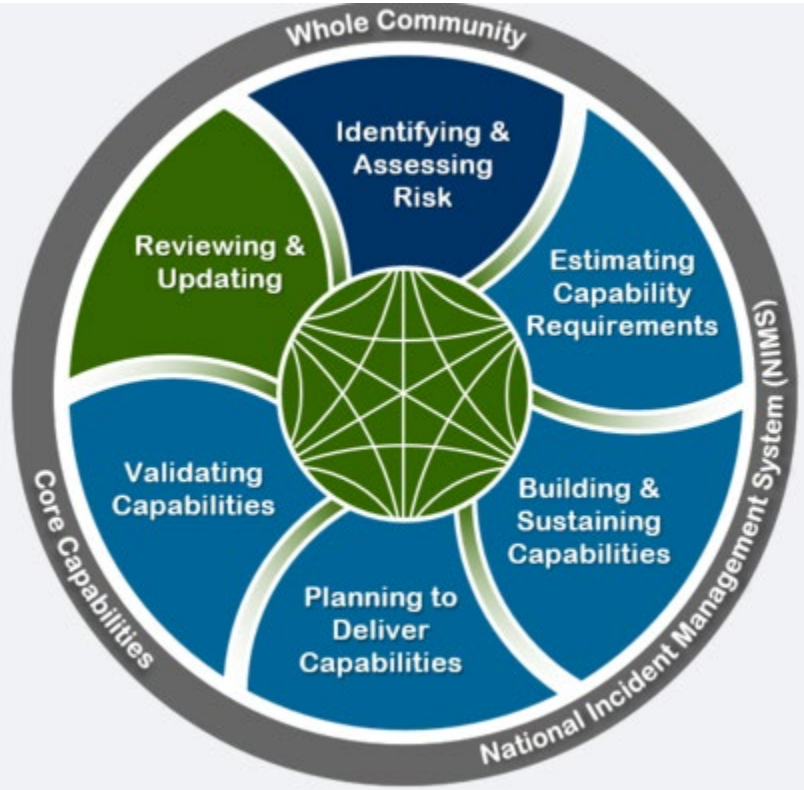
• After-Action Report

Decemberary 35, 2027

DRAFT 1.5.5

Ready-made FEMA Template

Resources to get you started: https://preptoolkit.fema.gov/



Questions?

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