



Planning For & Recovering from an Emergency

John Vial, Director
City of Medford
Public Works Department



ALMEDA FIRE



■ FIRE ORIGIN

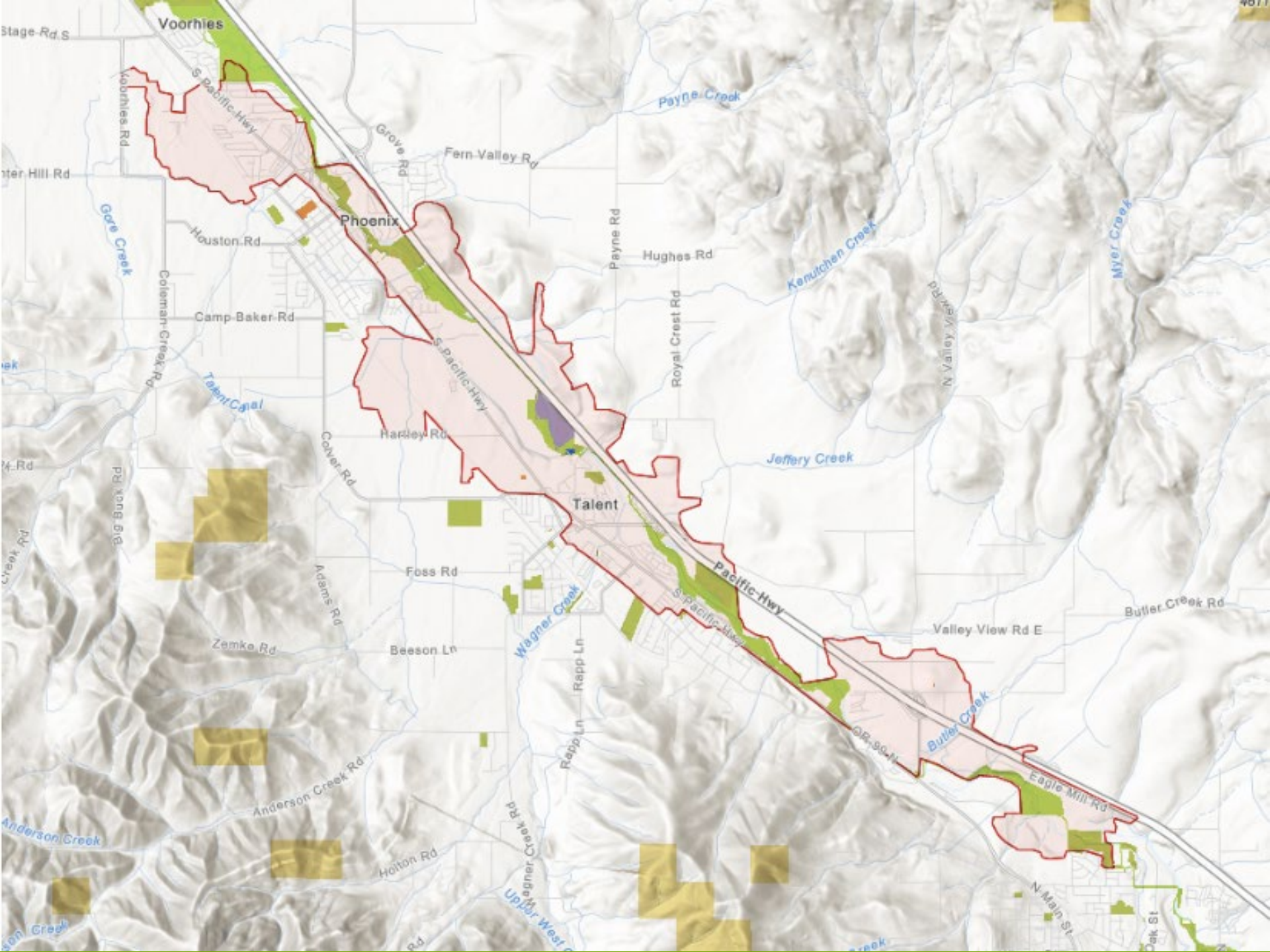
VISUAL INVESTIGATIONS



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- < 3,000 acres
- ~2,500 residences
- ~173 commercial business
- 8,000 –11,000 residents homeless
- At peak of event – evacuation orders for 50,000+ (*largest evacuation in Oregon's history*)
- 3 deaths (*complete miracle*)





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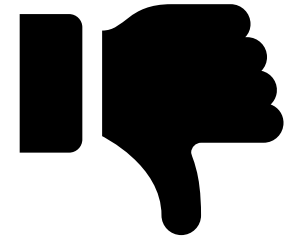
- Self Reported to the EOC
- Hour later - assigned EOC Director
- Step 1 - Messaging



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What we, more like what I, had:

- I've never done anything like this
- Inexperienced Emergency Manager
- No emergency drills in 10+ years
- Little to no staff experience
- No Communication or Public Information Officer
- County Emergency Operations Plan - Paperweight only



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- Don't think it can't happen to you
- Almost no local government can prepare for an event this large – BUT prepare the best you can

Tip #1 – Prepare

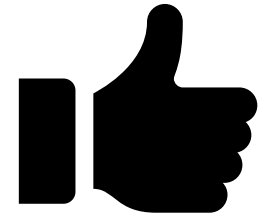
- Conduct Drills
- Org. Charts showing who will fill positions and they know their role
- Get training (ICS)
- Review plans



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What we, more like what I, had

- Very willing & capable staff
- Local and State Disaster Declarations
- Overall, good staff relationships with local governments
- Willing partners

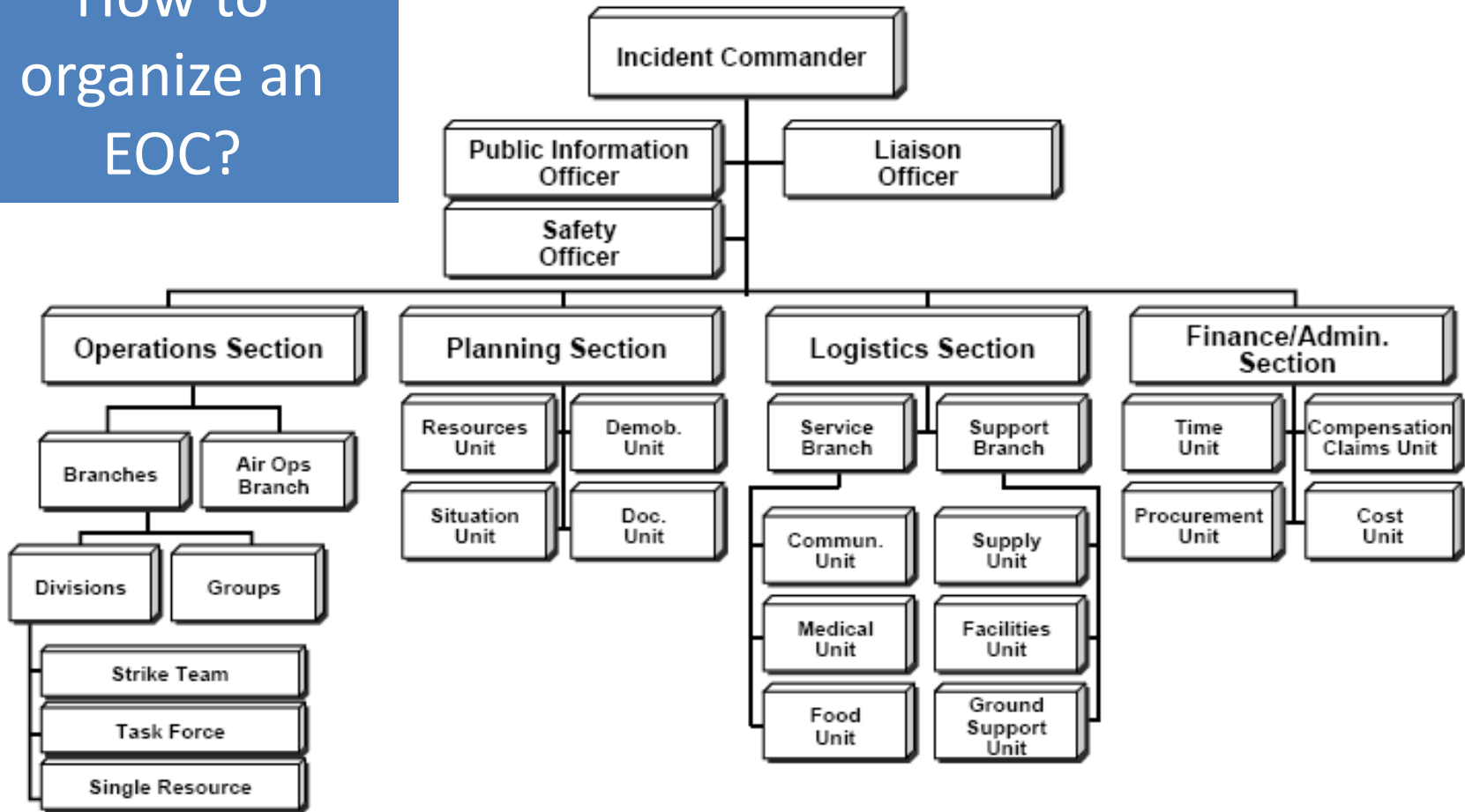


Tip #2: Don't try to "Hero it", ask for help, you will likely get it.

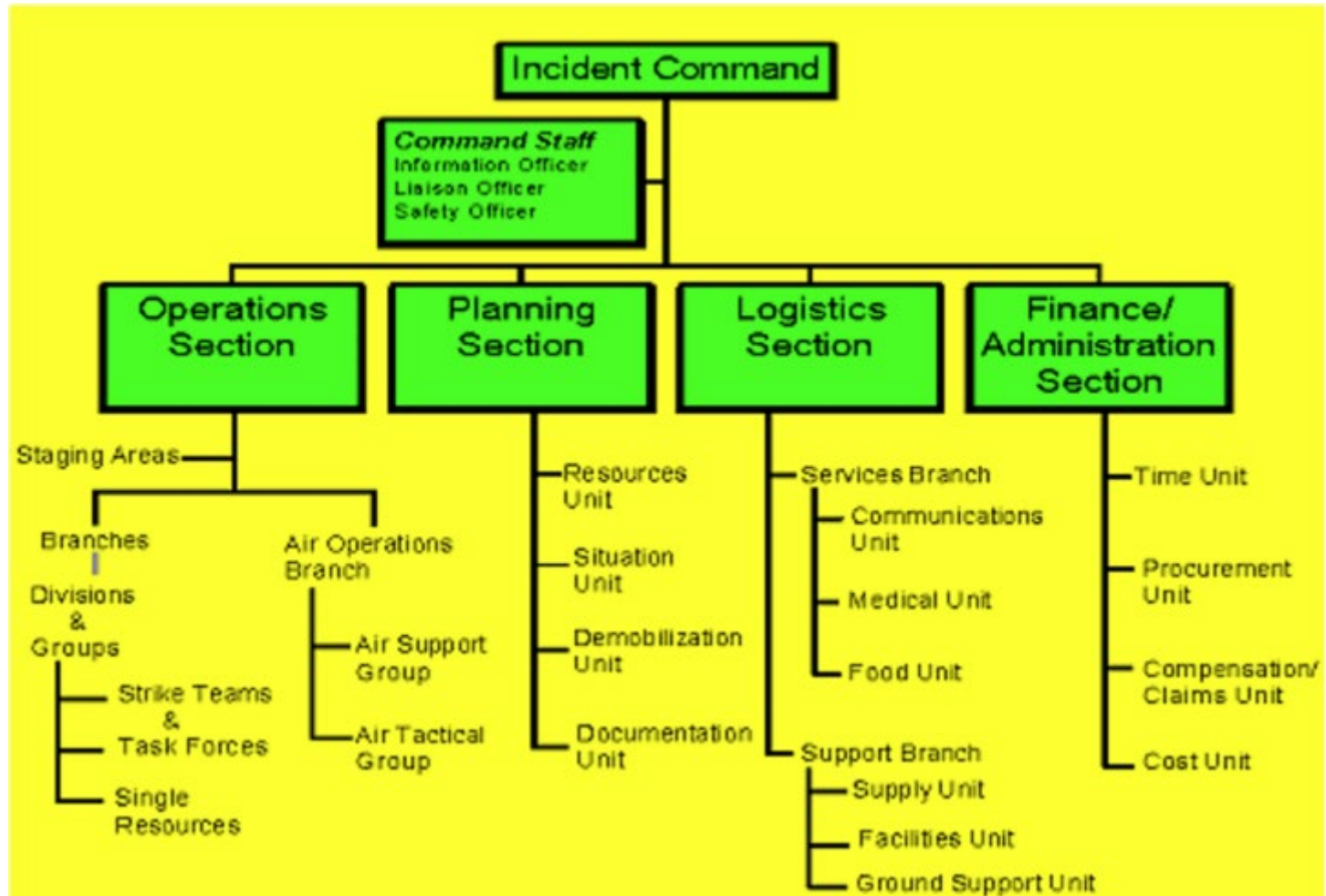


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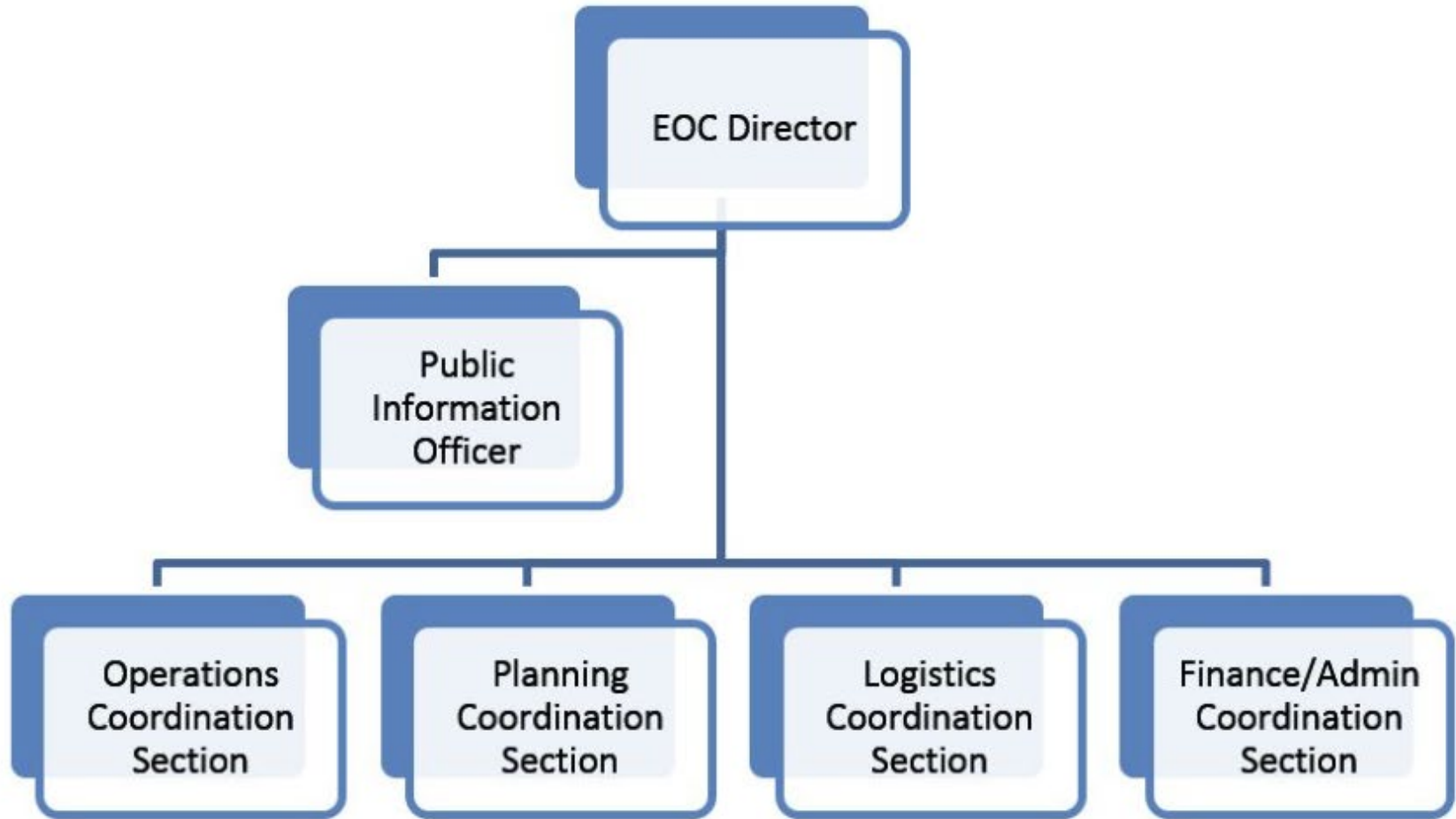
How to
organize an
EOC?



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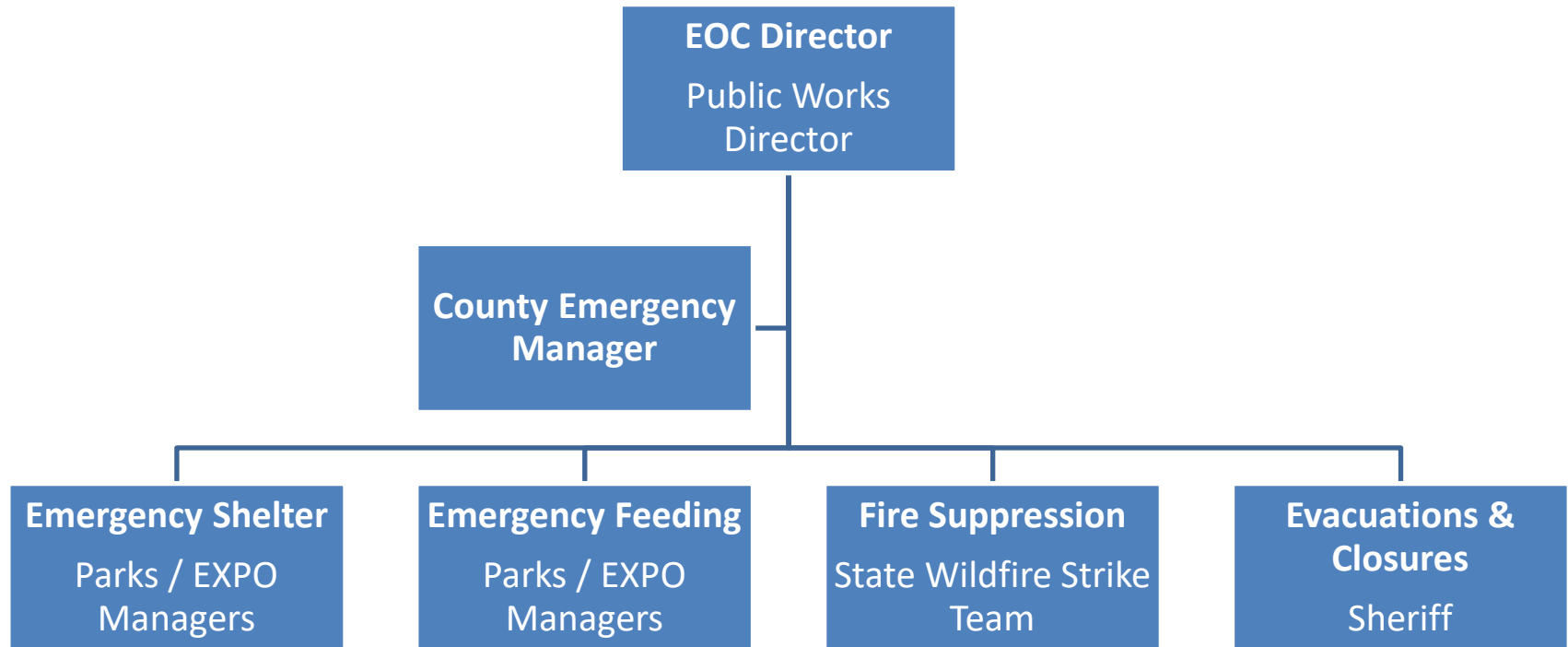


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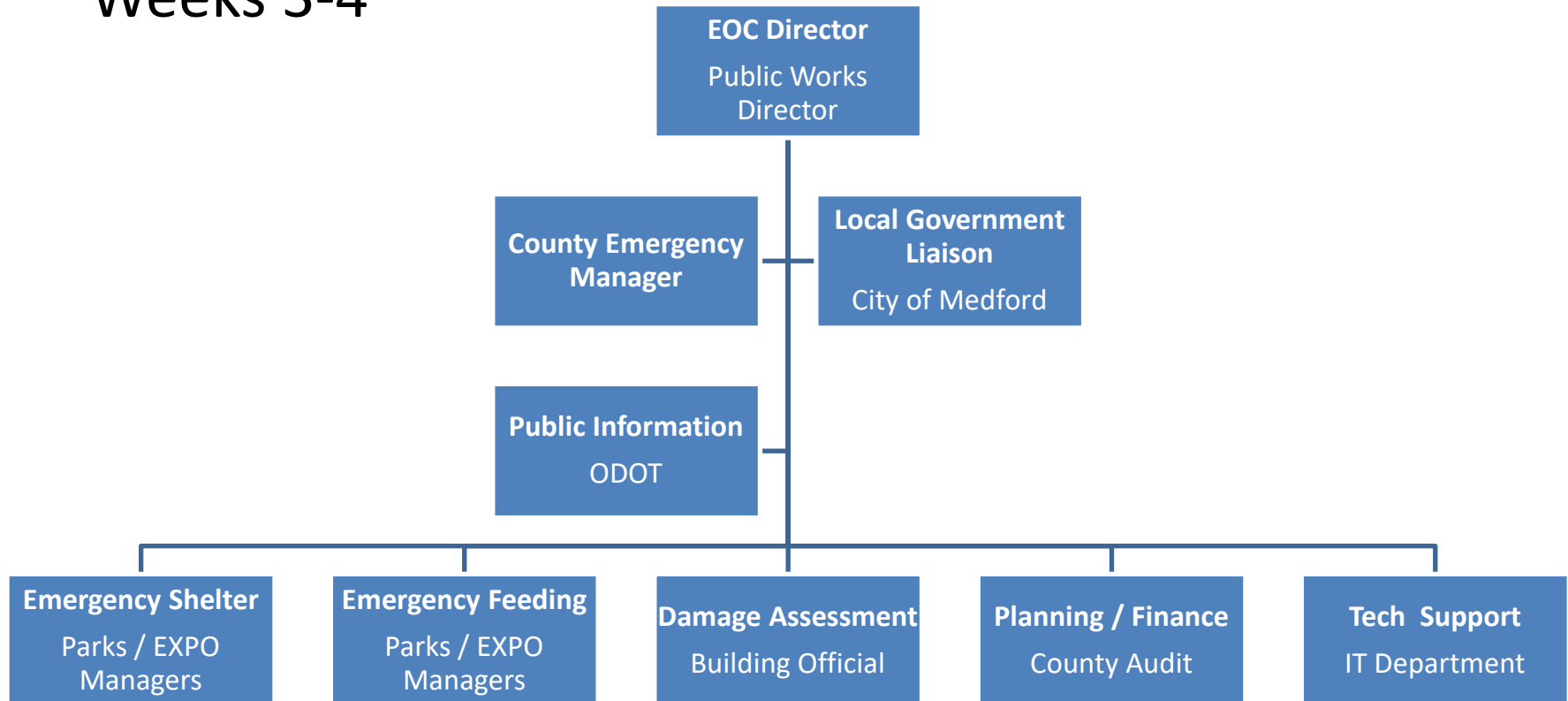
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~ First 1-2 Weeks



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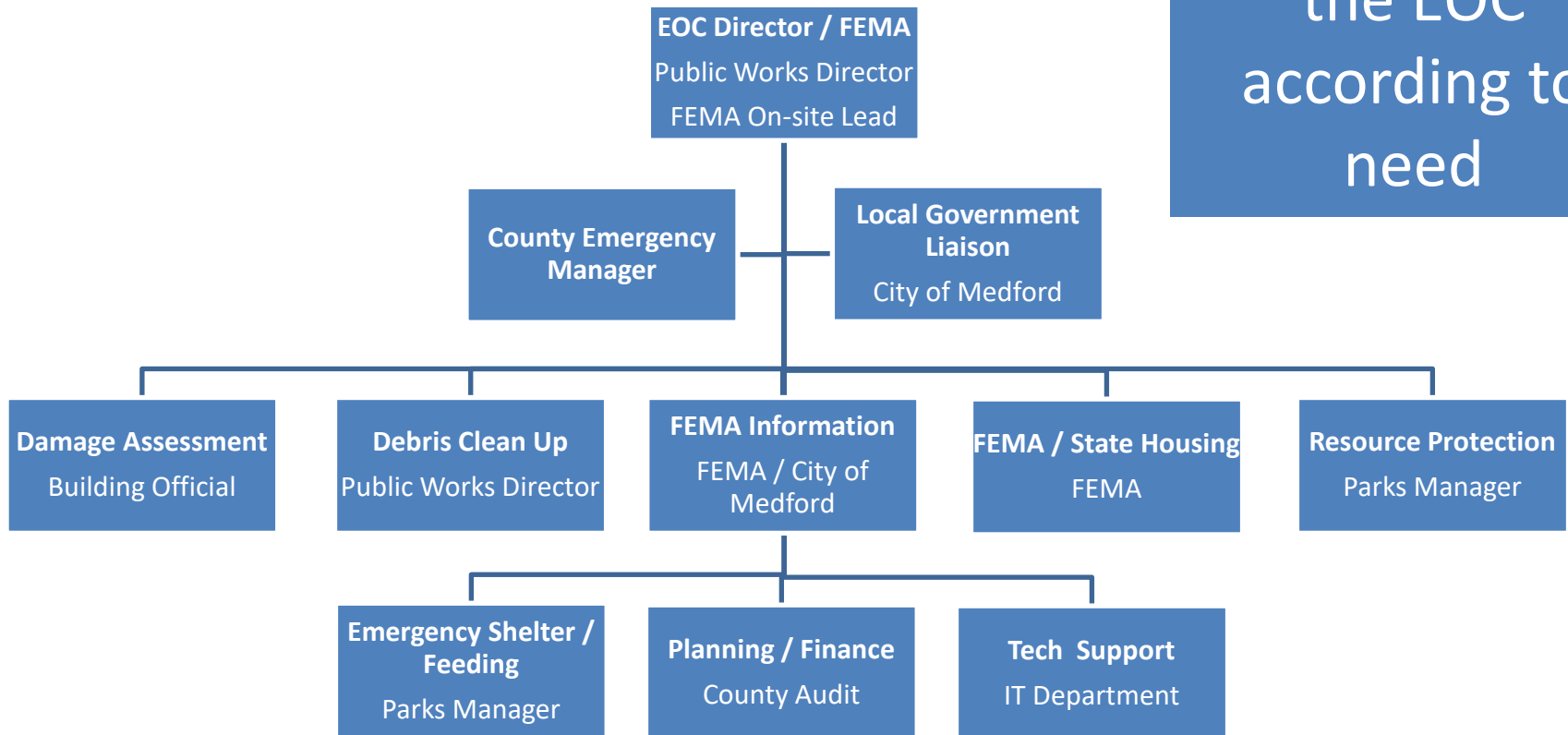
~ Weeks 3-4



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~ Weeks 5-12

Tip #3: Organize the EOC according to need



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Tip #4: Have a Communications Plan

Tip #5: Don't focus on the broadcast media



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FEMA / ODEM (Oregon Department of Emergency Management)

- Huge Help – but took weeks
- Sheltering / Housing / Feeding
 - Immediate – County
 - Short to Mid-Term – Local then to Federal / State
 - Long-Term – Federal / State then back to Locals

Tip #6: While help will come, you will be on your own for several days...maybe for weeks



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FEMA / ODEM (Oregon Department of Emergency Management)

- Debris Clean-up – State w/ Federal reimbursement
 - Early message from ODEM / FEMA – We don't do cleanup
 - Huge undertaking (\$150M+)
 - Local Government couldn't get this done on our own
 - State via ODOT

Tip #7:

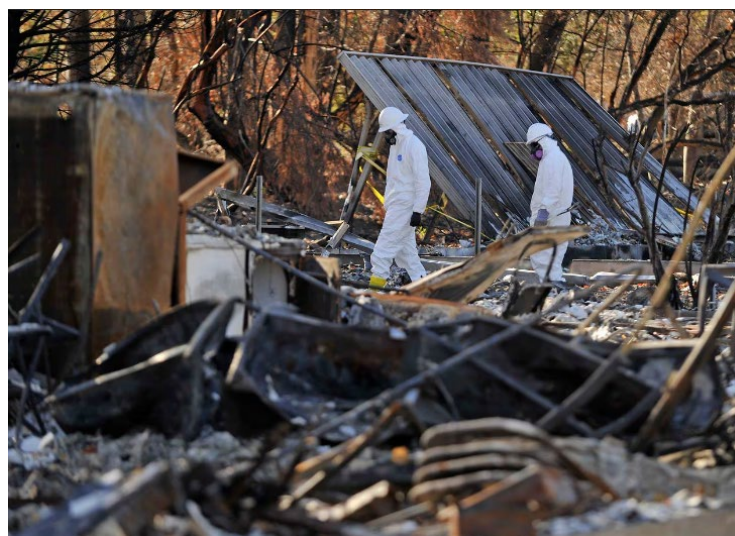
Be Demanding of FEMA and ODEM.

They don't always volunteer areas they can help.

Get state and federal elected officials involved.



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JACKSON COUNTY – When the Almeda Fire began ripping through the Bear Creek Valley in Southern Oregon, John Vial called his wife and daughter from his desk at the Jackson County Emergency Operations Center to tell them they needed to evacuate from their home. “My wife asked me what she should take,” said Vial. “I told her, ‘I don’t care, leave everything. Just get out and get to a safe place. Do it *now*.’”



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Summary

- It CAN happen to you - prepare
- Ask for help
- Relationships matter
- Make the EOC work for you
- Have a Communications Plan
- On your own for awhile
- Be demanding





**THANK
YOU**

City of Medford | Public Works
200 S. Ivy Street, Medford, OR 97501

Planning and Recovering

Jackson County Fire Damage Assessment Dashboard

Instructions

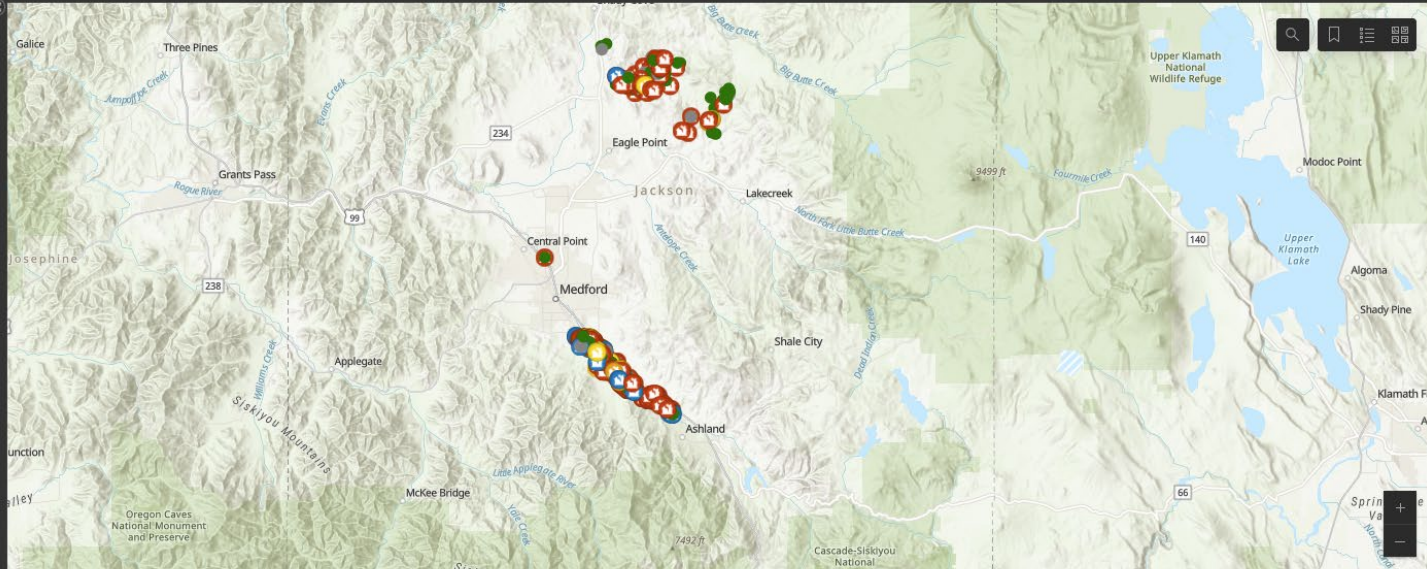
- To search for a property, use the Magnifying glass in the upper right corner of the map.
- To see damage details for a property, click on its dot on the map or select the street address from the list on the left.
- To navigate the map with a mouse: click and drag to move map, use scroll wheel to zoom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

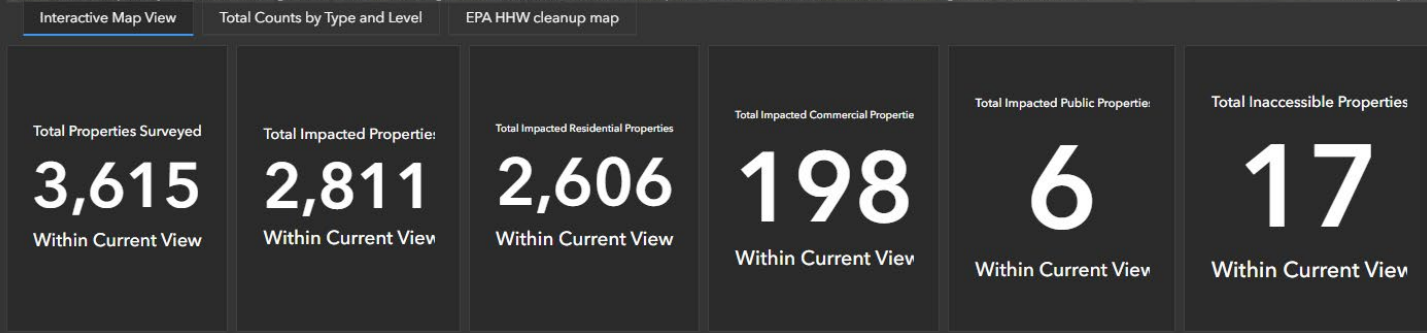
Disclaimer

Data on this site may change as additional information is gathered, analyzed, and verified. Data was collected from visual surveys conducted by local agency teams, not FEMA. Therefore, the damage-level assessments should be considered a preliminary estimate. This data is being supplied to FEMA to speed their final damage assessment, but FEMA reserves the right to do their own field surveys, if needed, to confirm damage, and FEMA makes their own determinations of benefit eligibility. Data may contain errors or omissions. If you find an error in the data or disagree with the damage assessment for your property, please contact us through [this form](#).

Jackson County disclaims any responsibility for the accuracy or



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- 4069 S PACIFIC HWY Unit 91
Destroyed
- 3712 S PACIFIC HWY
Destroyed
- 4069 S PACIFIC HWY Unit 108
Destroyed
- 5358 S PACIFIC HWY
Minor
- 4069 S PACIFIC HWY
Destroyed
- 3708 S PACIFIC HWY
Destroyed
- 4069 S PACIFIC HWY Unit 39
Destroyed



Planning and Recovering

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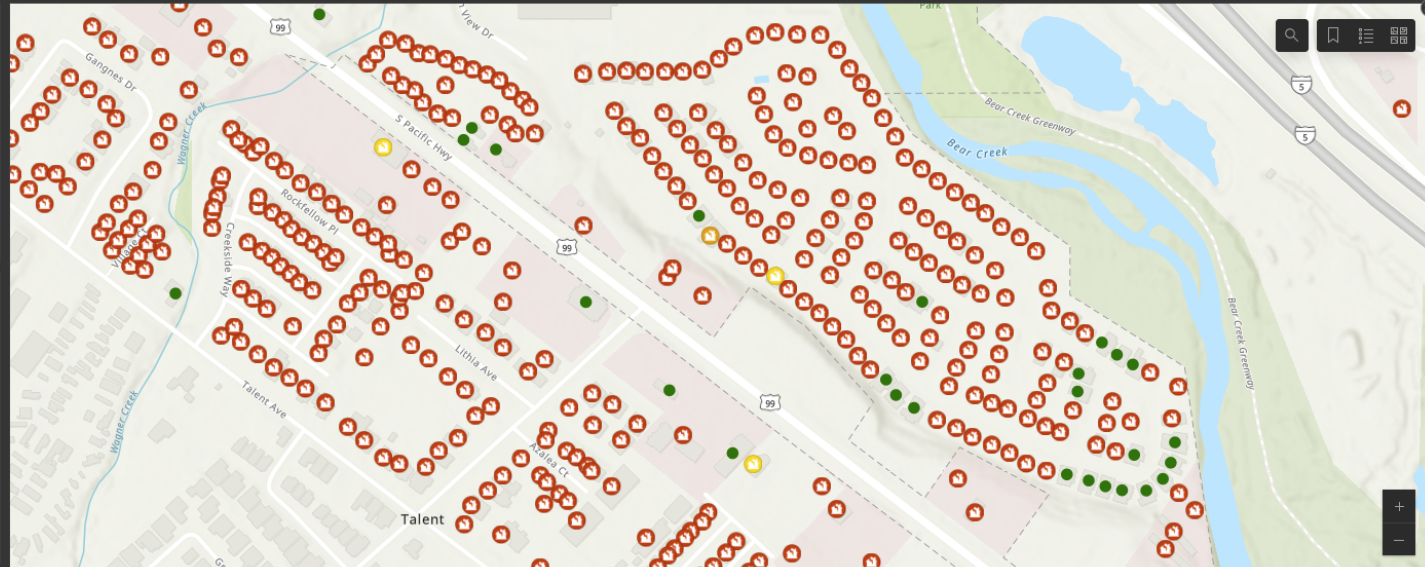
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Interactive Map View Total Counts by Type and Level EPA HHW cleanup map

Total Properties Surveyed

477

Within Current View

Total Impacted Properties:

444

Within Current View

Total Impacted Residential Properties

405

Within Current View

Total Impacted Commercial Properties

39

Within Current View

Total Impacted Public Properties:

0

Within Current View

Total Inaccessible Properties

0

Within Current View

- 322 Lithia Ave Destroyed
- 333 Mountain View Dr Unit 139 Destroyed
- 333 Mountain View Dr Unit 142 Destroyed
- 333 Mountain View Dr Unit 115 Destroyed
- 333 Mountain View Dr Unit 137 Destroyed
- 333 Mountain View Dr Unit 118 Destroyed
- 333 Mountain View Dr Unit 120 Destroyed

