



## City of Tacoma

## City Council Action Memorandum

**TO:** Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager  
**FROM:** Lee Law, Deputy Chief, Operations  
Sionna Stallings-Ala'ilima, Fire Chief SSA  
**COPY:** City Council and City Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** Resolution – Interlocal Agreement with Washington State Department of Natural Resources for Forestland Response Agreement (FLRA) to provide mutual assistance and cooperation for the suppression of wildfires  
**DATE:** June 13, 2025

---

### SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

A resolution authorizing the execution of an interlocal agreement with the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for forestland response to allow for mutual assistance and cooperation between the Tacoma Fire Department (TFD) and DNR in the control and suppression of wildfires for a three-year term.

### BACKGROUND:

**This Department's Recommendation is Based On:** With the hotter, drier and longer summers, the City has been experiencing a growing number of brush and wildland urban interface (WUI) fires. These fires often include heavy fuel loads, rugged terrain, limited or absent water supply systems, and diminished access for Type 1 engines (standard TFD fire engine). These target hazard WUI areas are capable of fire behavior that can impact civilian and firefighter life safety, commercial and residential infrastructure, and the livelihoods of our community members. This agreement provides an avenue for mutual aid assistance from DNR to assist TFD with the suppression of wildfires within our jurisdiction. With the execution of this agreement, DNR air resources, dozers, heavy equipment, or other resources deemed necessary to contain and control the fire would become available for use within hard to access areas TFD's jurisdiction.

The contract allows for TFD to provide fire protection services within the jurisdiction of DNR, and for DNR to assist in fire suppression within TFD's jurisdiction. It also establishes a process for TFD to be reimbursed by DNR for apparatus and personnel costs related to TFD providing firefighting assistance to DNR.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:

All residents and businesses benefit from having a fire department that is well trained and experienced in wildland firefighting given the increasing wildfire/WUI risks within our city.

### 2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

**Livability:** *Equity Index Score:* Very High Opportunity

Increase positive public perception of safety and overall quality of life.

### Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s).

By increasing TFD's effectiveness in responding to wildland fires within the City, we will reduce carbon emissions generated by large wildfires, and thus improve air quality for our residents. Many of the areas within the City that are at the greatest risk for a WUI fire are within the Very Low to Moderate range on Tacoma's Equity Index Map. For example: Snake Lake, Mullen Street Woods, Old South Tacoma Airport, Wapato Hills Park, Wapato Lake Park, Blueberry Park, Ryan's Park, SR7 Gulch, McKinley Park, Swan Creek/Salishan and Pipeline Road.



**ALTERNATIVES:**

Presumably, your recommendation is not the only potential course of action; please discuss other alternatives or actions that City Council or staff could take. Please use table below.

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. Not enter into the proposed interagency mutual aid agreement	No changes would be made with this alternative, so there would be no positive impact	No access to mutual aid assistance through DNR and TFD resources would not be deployable with DNR in WA State for wildfire mobilization or nationwide for incident management team needs
2.		
3.		

**EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:**

TFD will track the number of times TFD requests mutual aid assistance from DNR and the number of TFD personnel are deployed within the State of Washington through DNR for wildfires and nationwide for all-hazard Incident Management Teams (IMT). This information will be recorded annually.

**STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the City enter into a three-year forestland response agreement with the Washington State Department of Natural Resources as an avenue to increase the effectiveness of TFD's wildland firefighting response by allowing for mutual aid from DNR.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

This action is not expected to have a fiscal impact. It is for mutual aid though may result in some reimbursed cost.

**Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?**

No

**Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?**

No

**Will the legislation change the City's FTE/personnel counts?**

No

All oversight, management & participation in the program will be done by positions currently within TFD.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Forestland Response Agreement, Washington State Department of Natural Resources