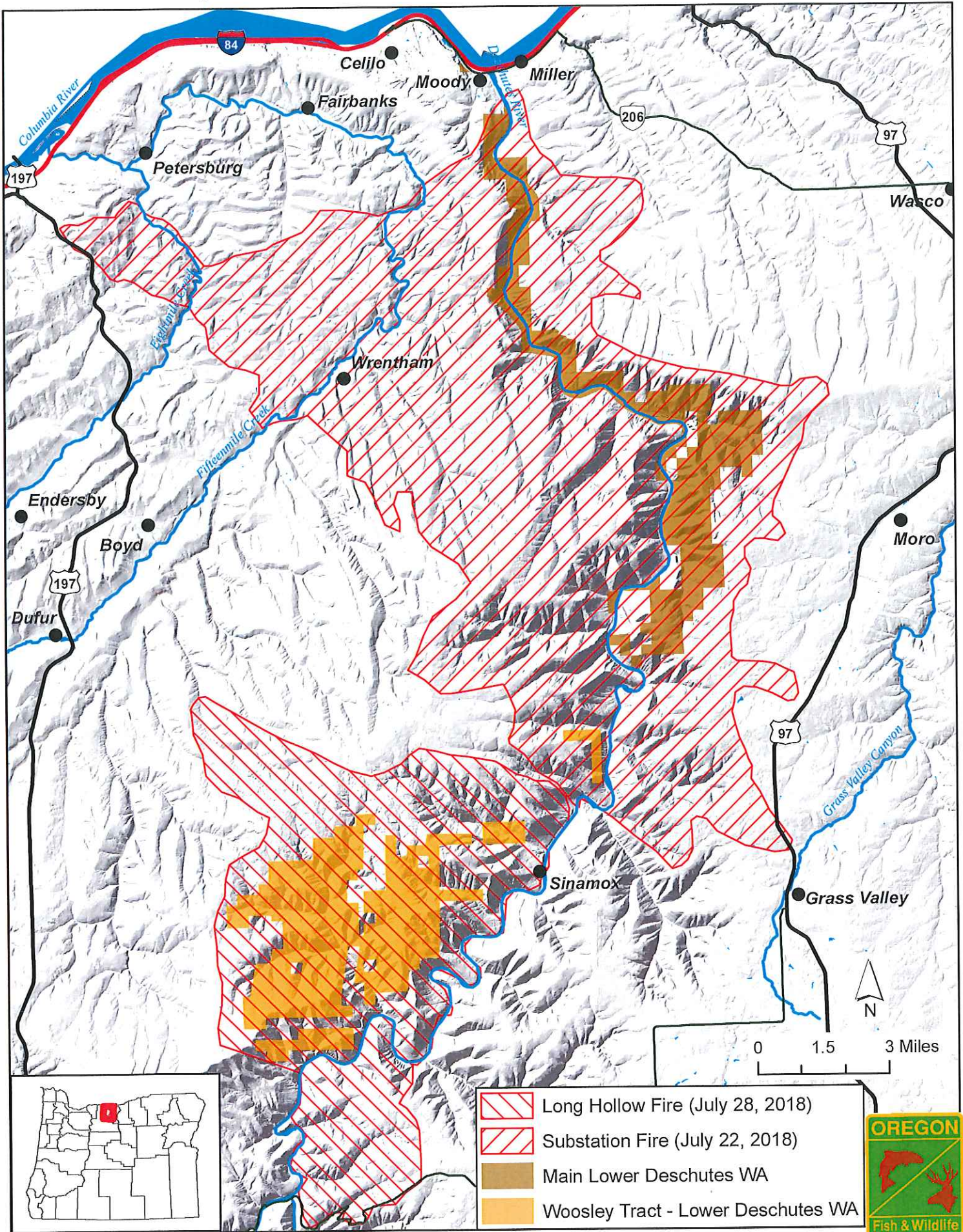


Fires in July 2018 and the Lower Deschutes Wildlife Area





Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Fish and Wildlife
Wildlife Division
4034 Fairview Industrial Dr. S.
Salem, OR 97302
(503) 947-6301
FAX: (503) 947-6330
Internet: www.dfw.state.or.us

DATE: August 1, 2018

TO: Ian Johnson
Associate Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
State Historic Preservation Office
725 Summer Street NE, Suite C
Salem, Oregon 97301

FROM: Daniel K Pettit Jr.
Archaeologist & Tribal Liaison

SUBJECT: **Substation Fire (2018): Destroyed Historic Structures**
Lower Deschutes Wildlife Area
T1N, R15E, Sec 23, 25; T1S, R16E, Sec 4, 5
Emerson and Locust Grove Quads
Sherman County, Oregon

*Sherman
County*

*Emerson and Locust
Grove Quads*

*T1N, R15E, Sec 23,
25; T1S, R16E, Sec 4,
5*

Dear Ian,

On the weekend of July 20, 2018, the Substation Fire burned over 7,000 acres in the Lower Deschutes Wildlife Area, owned by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW). Several historic structures previously documented with the Oregon SHPO were destroyed in the fire. These included two railroad cars associated with the Deschutes Railroad War, the Harris Ranch House, Harris Ranch Shearing Shed & Corrals, Harris Ranch Barn/Shed, and Harris Ranch Railroad Water Tower. Two other historic structures not previously documented, the Harris Ranch Bunkhouse and Rattlesnake Grade Bridge, were also destroyed. The only previously recorded historic structure in the area unaffected was the Freebridge over the Deschutes River (which only consists of concrete bridge pillars).

A site visit was made of each of the areas on July 30, 2018. Destruction of all of the aforementioned historic properties was near total. Legal locations are depicted below in Table 1. Maps of the locations are provided in Figures 1 and 2. Photos of the structures after the fire follow below along with a brief description of each resource. Note that each resource was recorded via GPS in the field with five meter accuracy. Some of the locations do not exactly match locations in the SHPO database that were recorded in 1995.

Table 1. Location of Resources Described in Letter

Resource	Township, Range, Section
Harris Ranch and Outbuildings	N ½ of NE ¼ of T1S, R16E, Sec 5
Harris Ranch Water Tower	SE ¼ of NW ¼ of T1S, R16E, Sec 4
Railroad Car 1	SW ¼ of NE ¼ of T1N, R15E, Sec 23
Railroad Car 2 and Rattlesnake Grade Bridge	SE ¼ of T1N, R15E, Sec 25



Sharps Corral

Railroad Car #1

Freebridge

Railroad Car #2 Rattlesnake Grade Bridge

Harris Ranch House Harris Barn

Harris Bunkhouse

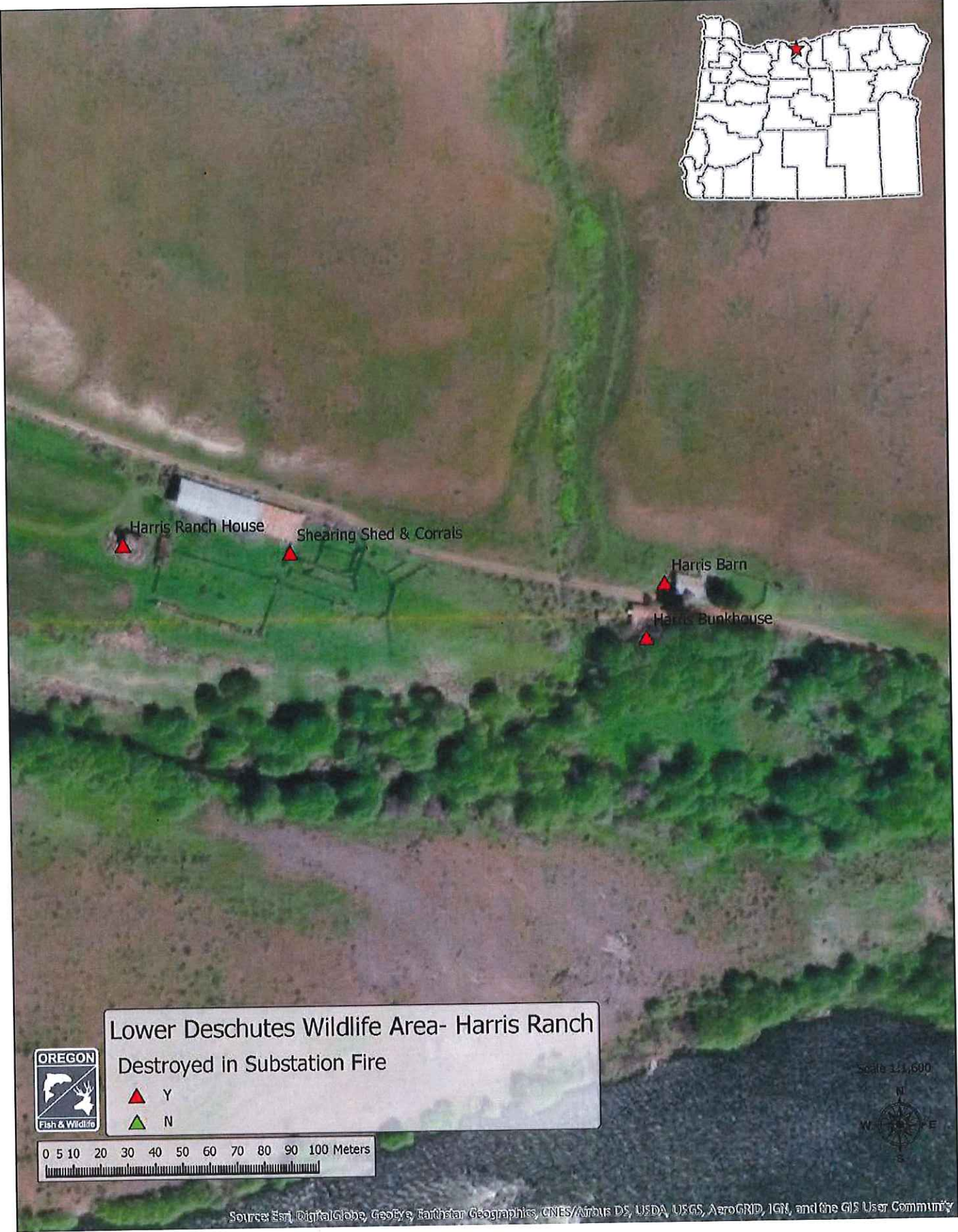
Water Tower



Scale 1:36,380



Sources: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community



Lower Deschutes Wildlife Area- Harris Ranch
Destroyed in Substation Fire



- ▲ Y
- ▲ N





Figure 3. Scar of the substation fire, taken from the north entry road to the Lower Deschutes Wildlife Area, facing west-southwest.



Figure 4. "Sharps Corral". This was a corral made of railroad ties near Sharps Bar. Sharps ranch was established after Harris Ranch, and was purchased by ODFW in 1983. The age of the resource is unknown- it may have been constructed by Sharps or as part of the earlier Harris Ranch. It was not previously recorded in the SHPO historic sites database. The only surviving features following the substation fire are six standing, heavily charred posts.



Figure 4. "River Mile 12: Deschutes River Harris Ranch Railroad Car #1". This was a historic railroad car presumed to be associated with the Deschutes Railroad Wars, circa 1908. There were no logos on the original train car. It was set alongside the main wildlife area road, which was the original railroad alignment on the east side of the Deschutes River. This was the railroad constructed by the Deschutes Railroad, a Union Pacific subsidiary owned by Edward H. Harriman. The car was completely destroyed, with only partially slagged metal remaining. Facing southwest.



Figure 5. "River Mile 12: Deschutes River Harris Ranch Railroad Car #1".



Figure 5. "Rattlesnake Grade Bridge". Rattlesnake Grade Bridge was not previously recorded in the Historic SHPO database, but is presumed to have been part of the historic Harriman railroad alignment. The only portion of the bridge that survived the fire are the earthen bridge approaches and rock rip-rapped abutments. Facing northwest.



Figure 6. Rattlesnake Grade Bridge, north abutment. Facing northwest.



Figure 7. "River Mile 12: Deschutes River Harris Ranch Railroad Car #2". This historic railroad car was recorded in the Historic SHPO database. It was previously destroyed in a wildfire sparked by lightning circa 2008, and the metal remains were subsequently removed. The only evidence remaining of the railroad car is an earthen pad (built by ODFW after 1983) on which it was placed.



Figure 8. Historic Photo of the Harris Ranch Homestead on a display at the ranch. The photo and display sign was the only structure on the ranch that did not burn in the Substation Fire.



Figure 9. "Harris Ranch Shearing Shed and Corrals." The Harris Ranch shearing shed and corrals were destroyed in the fire, with only a handful of charred posts remaining of the corrals. Pictured is a hay barn that was attached to the north side of the shearing shed. The hay barn was built in 1954, and post-dated the shearing shed and corral. Facing south-southeast.



Figure 10. "Harris Ranch Shearing Shed and Corrals." The shearing shed featured a mechanical shearing system (axle pictured in center). It was built at an unknown time after the Harris House, but the worker bunkhouse (pictured below) associated with the shearing shed was constructed out of two railroad cars associated with the Deschutes Railroad that was deconstructed around the 1930s. Facing East.



Figure 11. "Harris Ranch Shearing Shed and Corrals." Showing the shearing shed (left) and attached 1954 barn (right). Facing northwest. Remains of the Corrals are in the background.



Figure 12. "Harris Ranch Shearing Shed and Corrals." Charred posts are all that remains of the shearing corrals.



Figure 13. "Harris Ranch Barn/Shed." The Harris Ranch Barn/Shed was completely destroyed in the fire. Facing east.



Figure 14. "Harris Ranch Barn/Shed". Facing east.



Figure 15. "Harris Ranch Bunkhouse". The Harris ranch bunkhouse was not previously recorded in the SHPO historic sites database, but was immediately across the road from the recorded "Harris Ranch Barn/Shed". The bunkhouse was constructed out of two historic railroad cars. One was converted into a kitchen and social space, and the second had been converted into bunks for workers at the sheep corrals. Both railroad cars burned in their entirety. Facing northwest.



Figure 16. "River Mile 12: Deschutes River Harris Ranch House". The Harris Ranch house was recorded in the SHPO historic sites database on 6/1/1995 and was documented as being constructed circa 1880. The building was completely destroyed in the Substation Fire. The only structural remains are a brick lined root cellar on the east side of the structure. Photo facing northwest.



Figure 17. "River Mile 12: Deschutes River Harris Ranch House". Remains of the root cellar of the Harris Ranch House. Facing east.



Figure 18. "River Mile 12: Deschutes River Harris Ranch House". Remains of the Harris Ranch House. Facing north.



Figure 19. "River Mile 12: Deschutes River Harris Ranch Water Tower." Interpretive sign at the site of the water tower. The sign survived the fire but was subsequently stolen. Facing west.



Figure 20. Figure 19. "River Mile 12: Deschutes River Harris Ranch Water Tower." The water tower had been restored approximately 10 years ago with private funds and SHPO consultation. It was completely destroyed in the Substation Fire. Facing southwest.



Figure 21. Support pillars are the only intact feature remaining of the water tower. Facing west-northwest.



Figure 21. The renovated water tower in January 2018, prior to the Substation Fire.

