

COUNTY OF BAKER
BOARD of COMMISSIONERS

DECLARATION OF LOCAL DISASTER

WHEREAS, the County of Baker on this 18th day of February, 2026 has determined that the Baker County agricultural industry, and related economy is suffering widespread and severe economic damage, potential injuries and loss of property resulting from extreme cyclical weather conditions within the county.

And

Temperature has been warmer than normal for most of this water year so far as well as below normal precipitation. This December became the warmest in the Baker Valley based on recordings from the Baker City Airport since 1943. January was 5 degrees warmer than average with only 0.18 of an inch of rain making this the second-lowest on record since 1943.

And

Snowpack below 7,000 feet is well below normal. Snow run off helps those that are not located under irrigation reservoirs with water that will likely not occur this year. Baker County Emergency Management along with help from the Water Resources Department has been measuring snow since 2013 at Anthony Lakes (elevation 7,100), Little Alps (elevation 6,300), and Little Antone (elevation 4,500) snow courses. The observations where the higher elevations are doing better but still not well. From our snow measurement that Anthony Lakes SWE (Snow Water Equivalent) was 11 inches making it the eight-lowest since 1936. At the Little Alps snow course the SWE was 2.2 inches making it the second lowest since 1959, when annual surveys started. This is the first year that I can remember having to do a "bulk sample" of snow on this snow course since I have been doing measurements. The Little Alps snow course is contained a SWE of 1.2" making it the second lowest since records have been kept for this site.

And

Since the beginning of the water year Baker County has had part of the county in D0 (abnormally dry) and D1 (moderate drought).

And

These disaster conditions will result in loss of economic stability, and decreased water supplies for Baker County agricultural producers. Ranchers are having to move livestock to other rangeland for grazing earlier than normal which will equate to a shortage of rangeland feed later in the year. Those producers not located under stored water will likely yield less than normal unless they are able to provide water from other sources.

WHEREAS, the Baker County Board of Commissioners, have determined that extraordinary measures must be taken to alleviate the suffering of people and livestock and to protect or mitigate economic loss, and to be responsive to the threat of wildfires;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED by the Baker County Board of Commissioners:


Section 1. That a local disaster is declared within Baker County.

- Section 2. That the Baker County EOP, Drought Annex plan has been implemented and that all county departments are directed to utilize all available resources to respond to and mitigate the effects of this disaster.
- Section 3. That this proclamation shall take effect immediately from and after its issuance and shall remain in effect until rescinded by subsequent action of the Board of Commissioners or until December 31, 2026.
- Section 4. To raise awareness and encourage producers to use the Condition Monitoring Observer Report (CMOR) system to report conditions affecting them at:
<https://droughtimpacts.unl.edu/Tools/ConditionMonitoringObservations.aspx>
- Section 5. The Board of Commissioners, request that the Honorable Tina Kotek, Governor, of the State of Oregon declare: "A Local Disaster and State of Emergency" exists in Baker County. That a drought declaration under Oregon Revised Statute 563 be used to allow the Water Resources Department to use a number of water-related tools that include temporary drought permits to use groundwater and emergency water rights under ORS 540.

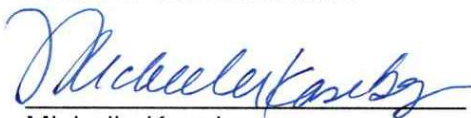
And

Request the Honorable, Brooke Rollins, Secretary, of the United States Department of Agriculture, to expedite assistance to local agricultural industries/producers who have suffered extensive and ongoing loss from the drought and continue recovery efforts associated with the wildfires, and for technical assistance on drought mitigation through the Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service.

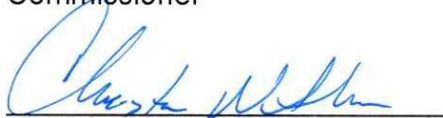
ORDERED this 18th day of February, 2026



Shane Alderson, Chair
Board of Commissioners



Michelle Kaseberg
Commissioner



Christina Witham
Commissioner