



## Status Report

**Date: 20 JULY 12**

**Subcommittee: WRSC**

### **Accomplishments Since Last Report:**

Meetings as scheduled of the WRSC Communications Team and WRSC.  
Salt Lake City meeting on Alternative held after deadline for this report.  
Committed funds from Co-Chair resignation for FY12.  
Western Forestry Leadership Coalition and Western Governors Association really stepped up to help us work through some of those issues.

### **Planned Activities for Next Reporting Period:**

WRSCSWG will meet with the NSAT folks July 17&18 SLC for the purpose of solidifying WRSC Alternatives, mapping and modeling of Alternatives, discussion of stakeholder feedback on alternatives, strategize dissemination of WRSCSWG decisions to full WRSC, Writer/Editor interface relevant to P III report, stakeholder feedback report.

### **Issues Identified:**

FY13 direction and funding  
Institutionalization and Infrastructure needs for WRSC success post PIII

### **WFEC Decisions/Approvals Needed:**

NONE

### **References:**

### **Contact Information:**

macdonald.dr@gmail.com



## Status Report

**Date:** July 20, 2012

**Subcommittee:** Northeast RSC

### Accomplishments Since Last Report:

- ⤴ The NE RSC and Working Group representatives met at a face-to-face meeting with NSAT members in Boston, July 10-11. Data acquired to date by the NSAT was reviewed and discussed in the context of the preliminary alternatives developed by the NE RSC. Both teams agreed to work toward refining the alternatives and science information in addressing the risk priorities in order to more effectively use the available data.
- ⤴ The NE RSC communications and outreach work group met and discussed work to be done in preparing monthly updates and updating the NE website starting this month to improve communications with stakeholders.

### Planned Activities for Next Reporting Period:

- ⤴ As a result of the NSAT meeting, the NE RSC will be conducting a survey among its members and working groups to refine and prioritize its preliminary alternatives in preparation for developing the regional risk analysis report.
- ⤴ The Northeast RSC continues bi-weekly conference calls and continues participating in the CSSC and WFEC scheduled calls.
- ⤴ Now that the Phase III Analysis Report template has been approved, the NE RSC Coordinator and Technical/Strategic Working Group will begin work on the "boilerplate" and alternatives portions of the report.
- ⤴ The NE RSC Coordinator has joined the National Writer/Editors team for coordination and sharing resources for preparing the regional risk analysis report.
- ⤴ Communications activities are expected to increase.

### Issues Identified:

Given the discussions with the NSAT regarding the completion of the Regional Risk Analysis Reports, it would be desirable to have a revised time line agreed upon to be able to communicate to stakeholders.

### WFEC Decisions/Approvals Needed:

None

### References:

### Contact Information:

Brad Simpkins or Larry Mastic



## Status Report

**Date: July 20, 2012**

**Subcommittee: Southern RSC**

### **Accomplishments Since Last Report:**

- Input from WG to NSAT on preferred alternatives.
- WG call to discuss preferred alternatives and initialize risk analysis report.
- Preparation for joint meeting with NSAT
- Reverse timeline for accomplishing risk analysis report

### **Planned Activities for Next Reporting Period:**

- Joint RSC, NSAT and WG Meeting on science team input and preferred alternatives
- Determining engagement points for stakeholders and building informal process for interested interest groups.
- Input from social network mapping into stakeholder engagement process.
- Proposal for communications evaluation of regional communications strategies and campaigns.
- Direct contacts to minimally active stakeholders and participants
- Interaction with IAFC and National Council of Forestry Association Executives
- Development of success stories and monthly regional report

### **Issues Identified:**

### **WFEC Decisions/Approvals Needed:**

### **References:**

### **Contact Information:**

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## WFEC Contingency Plan for Insuring Completion of the Cohesive Strategy on Schedule

### Background

On May 3, 2012 the WFEC voted to have a contingency plan developed that in the event of an active fire season would:

- 1) Assure the continuity of work being conducted on the Cohesive Strategy; and
- 2) Proactively ensure that WFLC, WFEC and its associated subcommittees are prepared to address political pressure to accelerate completion of the Cohesive Strategy.

The WFLC tasked WFEC with the development of a contingency plan at their April 2012 meeting.

### **1) Cohesive Strategy Continuity During 2012 Western Fire Season**

If 2012 should have an active western fire season, adjustments may need to be made to the timelines established to produce the deliverables that we have committed to completing. We have a number of dedicated staff on each of the sub-committees that are assigned full-time to the Cohesive Strategy (CS) and who will not be diverted to fire assignments or other work assignments. The top row specifies dedicated staff assigned; bottom row those involved on a more part time basis as members of various teams/committees.

| National  | NSAT  | Regions  | Communications                               |
|---|---|--|--|
| Sandy Cantler – FS<br>Alan Quan – FS<br>Jenna Sloan - DOI | Danny Lee – SRS<br>Tom Quigley - contractor | Mac MacDonald, Corbin<br>Newman – West<br>Mike Zupko – SE<br>Larry Mastic - NE | Judith Downing – FS<br>Erin Darboven - DOI   |
| WFEC Members<br>CSSC Members                              | Other Scientists                            | RSC Members<br>Regional Strategic Teams<br>Regional Technical Teams            | Sarah McCreary – NASF<br>Shawn Stokes - IAFC |

### National Level

As indicated in the chart, Sandy Cantler, Alan Quan and Jenna Sloan are full-time dedicated staff at the national level. Sandy, Jenna and Alan will not be taking any fire assignments or other assignments unless a suitable alternate is available to step in and continue the work. In addition, we have WFEC and CSSC members who may be diverted to deal with wildfires. WFEC and CSSC members will make every effort to remain engaged with the CS when these diversions occur.

### NSAT

Danny Lee and Tom Quigley are the Science Team leads. They are fully funded to work on the CS and will not be assigned to any fires during Phase III. It is unknown if there is a chance that any of the scientists who will be putting any significant time toward the CS will be diverted to a fire assignment. If so, then an alternate will need to be named to ensure continuity.

## Regions

Each of the regions has a fully funded, full-time lead position to ensure coordination and continued progress in completing the CS. As such, these leads will not be accepting any fire assignments or other assignments throughout Phase III unless a suitable alternative is available. Mac MacDonald and Corbin Newman are the dedicated leads for the West. The Southeast dedicated lead is Mike Zupko; and the Northeast is Larry Mastic.

In addition, the regions all have three committees/teams that are staffed with people who dedicate part of their time to the Cohesive Strategy including the Regional Strategy Committees, the Regional Strategic Teams and the Technical Teams. The people on these teams play a key role and will be making critical decisions at various points throughout Phase III. Therefore, the regions need to assess the membership and name alternates, as necessary, to ensure work continues uninterrupted.

## Communications

Finally, we have two full-time staff on the Communications Team – Judith Downing and Erin Darboven. Judith is a member of a NIMO Team and may be called to fires for extensive periods of time. However, Erin is capable of handling the major communications work and assignments through the fire season if that were to happen, and she can tap into the full-time intern at the BLM office in Washington, D.C. who has been assigned to the Cohesive Strategy. The intern brings to the table a skill set that includes experience in social media, writing, editing, and other communications tasks.

## **2) Contingency Communications**

An active fire season can bring about strong emotions from those affected personally, or whose communities and livelihoods are threatened. Regardless of the kind of progress being made in developing the Cohesive Strategy, these emotions can result in pressure to push things forward faster. It is critical that WFEC be prepared to manage such pressure.

### ***Key Audiences***

This contingency effort is geared toward the following key audiences:

- National, State and Local Elected Officials and their staff, particularly those whose districts or areas are being affected by wildland fire in the 2012 season.
- Administration Officials
- Media covering wildland fires
- Legislative Affairs personnel within agencies involved in wildland fire

### ***Key Messages***

Messages will explain why changing the path or schedule of the Cohesive Strategy development is counterproductive. General information about the Cohesive Strategy is available through other venues, and only the high-level issues are included within this plan's key messages.

- Fire Behavior has become more intense and fire effects more severe. As a result, solving our nation's wildfire problem is not something that will happen overnight. And the responsibility is a shared one.
- The Cohesive Strategy is in its third and final stage, with plans for completion in less than a year. Shortening the completion schedule will not only affect the quality of the final

outcome, but more importantly, would significantly set back the unprecedented collaboration among local, state, federal, tribal and non-governmental participants that has served as the foundation of this process.

- At a time in which it is often difficult to find common ground, the Cohesive Strategy process has made exceptional strides in getting stakeholders on the same page. Key within the plan's development is the universal agreement on a core list of guiding principles. Principles that incorporate critical values and set the tone for the future of wildland fire management in the United States. By continuing to work together on completing the Cohesive Strategy, we will enhance shared understandings already in place and lay the groundwork for the development of joint actions and policies that will be implemented at all levels of government and stakeholders in the future.
- Wildfire is more than a fire management issue – it's a larger land management, urban interface and societal issue. The Cohesive Strategy is an 'all-lands, all-hands' approach to improved wildland fire management, centered on working together. It doesn't start from scratch, but is building upon success. Key to its long-term sustainability is the strategy's ability to address the wide diversity of situations within our country, recognizing that a one-size-fits-all approach cannot work.
- Cohesive Strategy development and implementation rely on collaboration among a wide variety of stakeholders and across jurisdictions and landowners. Fire Management excels with cooperation among fire agencies. The development of the Cohesive Strategy has demonstrated that stakeholders from a wide variety of backgrounds and interests can come together in a common purpose and take joint actions to solve problems that none can achieve themselves.
- But there ARE things that can be done right now that can help prevent destructive fires from happening in the future.
  - Support Congressional action to continue efforts under the FLAME Act
  - For local governments, if your community is not Firewise, then go to [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org) to find out how you can help protect your area.
  - Make sure your community has a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). To find out how to develop one, go to [www.westgov.org/initiatives/foresthealth](http://www.westgov.org/initiatives/foresthealth).
  - Learn how your community can be a fire adapted community by going to [www.fireadapted.org](http://www.fireadapted.org). Share information with your residents so they can take action personally that will help them in the event of a wildland fire.

### ***Available Spokespersons***

Pressure to push ahead more quickly with the Cohesive Strategy completion can come from a variety of people. To prepare, it is essential that there be a diversity of spokespersons to choose from among depending upon source of concern and intensity of criticism. Officials and representatives from federal agencies, NGO's participating in the process, local elected officials, local and state fire officials and others must be available, and "trained," to be ready to participate in this targeted communications effort. The following individuals will be available as spokespersons, on an as needed basis:

- ❖ Roy Johnson, WFEC Designated Federal Official
- ❖ Tom Harbour, Forest Service National Fire and Aviation Director and WFEC Chair
- ❖ Douglas "Mac" MacDonald, WRSC Co-Chair
- ❖ Corbin Newman, WRSC Co-Chair and Regional Forester, USDA (SW Region)

- ❖ Mike Zupko, SERSC Chair
- ❖ Brad Simpkins, NERSC Chair
- ❖ Ryan Yates, WFEC member and Associate Legislative Director, National Association of Counties
- ❖ Bob Roper, I-Chief representative
- ❖ Mary Hamman-Roland, Mayor of Apple Valley, MN and member of WFLC
- ❖ Dan Shoun, County Commissioner, Lake County, OR and member of WFLC
- ❖ Ernie Mitchell, Jr., U.S. Fire Administrator, FEMA
- ❖ Glenn Gaines, Deputy U.S. Fire Administrator, FEMA, and member of WFEC

### ***How It Will Work***

In order to be in a position where concerns and challenges to the Cohesive Strategy development are identified proactively, engagement of key people must be planned, and steps taken to involve appropriate people in watching for potential situations that could require triggering implementation of this contingency plan.

#### Ear to the Ground

- Incident Information Officers and Public Affairs Officers are in unique positions to hear comments and be aware of media stories that could elevate emotions on wildfire policy. A webinar will be scheduled for the week of July 9 in which a short briefing of the Cohesive Strategy is presented, along with a request that these people communicate “up the chain” situations or comments that WFEC should be aware of for potential implementation of the contingency plan. The briefing will be conducted by Bill Kaage and Judith Downing.
- All RSC members should also be informed of the contingency effort and request that they communicate potential issues of concern to their respective regional chairs, who will filter appropriately to Tom Harbour.
- A memo will be drafted by Judith Downing for consideration by the U.S. Forest Service to send to its District Rangers and Forest Supervisors. The memo will briefly outline the intent of listening for concerns, specify who to share such concerns with, and include the Cohesive Strategy primer document developed by the Communications Subcommittee. Memo should be distributed by July 15.
- A similar memo will be drafted by Erin Darboven no later than July 1 for review by each agency, appropriately modified for their audience, including Legislative Affairs staff, with the same attachment. Memo should be distributed by July 15 and include the Cohesive Strategy primer document as background.
- NGO’s will be encouraged to send information to key personnel in their respective agencies. The Communications Team will work with any NGO who needs assistance in drafting such a memo for distribution.

#### Spokesperson Preparation

- The week of July 9, Mary Jacobs will contact identified spokespersons and brief those who have not been participating in the WFEC calls on the expectations and process. Questions beyond the communications effort will be elevated to other WFEC members

or the DFO as appropriate. The following briefing materials will be provided in advance:

- Copy of this contingency plan
- Cohesive Strategy primer
- Guiding Principles and Core Values of Cohesive Strategy
- Success Examples

### ***Triggering Implementation of the Plan***

It is difficult to determine exactly when consideration should be given to implementing the contingency plan. In general, the following things may warrant concern:

- Planning Level 4 or above
- Inquiries by Congressional or Administration staff/officials on progress toward Cohesive Strategy, or on wildland fire policy in general
- Repeated media calls about the Cohesive Strategy, fire management or fire policy
- News articles, local or national television stories as well as blogs or social media activity that have a negative tone or include negative quotes from citizens, elected officials or others on:
  - Fuels treatments
  - Air tankers
  - Environmental restrictions
  - Homes being burned
  - Taxpayer dollars being wasted on fire suppression
  - Etc.

The role of calling the contingency plan into action, and identifying which spokesperson is appropriate for the given situation will belong to Tom Harbour or Roy Johnson

## Goals, Guiding Principles and Core Values of the National Cohesive Fire Management Strategy

The goals of the three focus areas of the Cohesive Strategy:

**Restore and Maintain Landscapes:** Landscapes across all jurisdictions are resilient to fire-related disturbances in accordance with management objectives.

**Fire-adapted Communities:** Human populations and infrastructure can withstand a wildfire without loss of life and property.

**Wildfire Response:** All jurisdictions participate in making and implementing safe, effective, efficient risk-based wildfire management decisions.

The following guiding principles were crafted through discussions with Federal, state, tribal, and local governmental and non-governmental organizational representatives. The goal was to build an overarching set of principles that would apply to all stakeholders in the wildland fire management community – and would also reach across the different elements. In developing regional strategies, these guiding principles are being considered:

- Reducing risk to firefighters and the public is the first priority in every fire management activity.
- Sound risk management is the foundation for all management activities.
- Actively manage the land to make it more resilient to disturbance, in accordance with management objectives.
- Improve and sustain both community and individual responsibilities to prepare for, respond to and recover from wildfire through capacity-building activities.
- Rigorous wildfire prevention programs are supported across all jurisdictions.
- Wildland fire, as an essential ecological process and natural change agent, may be incorporated into the planning process and wildfire response.
- Fire management decisions are based on the best available science, knowledge and experience, and used to evaluate risk versus gain.
- Federal agencies, local, state, tribal governments support one another with wildfire response, including engagement in collaborative planning and the decision-making processes that take into account all lands and recognize the interdependence and statutory responsibilities among jurisdictions.
- Where land and resource management objectives differ, prudent and safe actions must be taken through collaborative fire planning and suppression response to keep unwanted wildfires from spreading to adjacent jurisdictions.
- Safe aggressive initial attack is often the best suppression strategy to keep unwanted wildfires small and costs down.
- Fire management programs and activities are economically viable and commensurate with values to be protected, land and resource management objectives, and social and environmental quality considerations.

## **Examples of Successes in Wildland Fire Prevention, Mitigation and Response**

### **Firewise on the Go!**

#### **New Jersey Forest Fire Service**

New Jersey Forest Fire Service used Federal Grant Funding to create an educational exhibit that takes the Firewise message on the Road. The entirely self-contained educational trailer with audio and video delivers Firewise and fire prevention messages to small and large audiences. The roving unit has two sides that each meets a separate educational need: one side is used to actively engage an audience while the other side provides displays and educational videos.

### **Safer Homes and Healthy Waters**

#### **Lakeside, Maine**

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection and the Maine Forest Service collaborated to produce a brochure “How to be LakeSmart and Firewise” that lists steps to help homeowners maintain and improve water quality while protecting their homes and camps from wildfire. More than 5,000 brochures have been mailed to lake association residents throughout Maine. They have been asked to speak at more than 50 lake association meetings, which also offer a free risk assessment. The Defensible Space Fuel Reduction Program also helps communities remove and dispose of hazardous fuels around the home. Finally, the Forest Service works with lake associations to apply for recognition in the Firewise Program.

### **Using the Firefighter Property Program to Enhance Resources**

#### **St. Joseph, Missouri and nationwide**

The Firefighter Property Program is a Department of Defense Program that provides equipment that firefighting units can use to provide services. Administered by the U.S. Forest Service and the Missouri Department of Conservation, the San Antonio Fire Protection District, a volunteer department that serves a rural community bordering St. Joseph, Missouri was able to acquire and renovate a rescue truck that cost a considerable amount less than buying new. Since the beginning of the program in 2007, 519 vehicles valued at \$17,495,608 and small items and miscellaneous equipment for 71,189 worth \$10,836,058 have been delivered.

### **Prescribed Burning Education**

#### **Southeastern U.S.**

Through programs like “One Message Many Voices” (OMMV) the public receives a consistent message regardless of the agency doing the burning. OMMV is a joint program of the Southern Group of State Foresters, Tall Timbers Research Station and prescribed fire councils. Advertisements encourage viewers to participate in outdoor recreational activities and are directed to [www.visitmyforest.org](http://www.visitmyforest.org) for local outdoor recreational opportunities. In the process of viewing the recreational opportunities, the view is exposed to prescribed burning messages and to the website [www.goodfires.org](http://www.goodfires.org).

### **Smoke Management**

Working with the States and/or EPA through SGSF, USFS, SERPASS and prescribed fire councils to find an opportunity to enhance opportunities for prescribed burning through the modification of regulations. Managing smoke under controlled conditions vs. wildfire incidents is the preferred alternative.

### **Strong Regional Wildland Fire Coordination 13 States in Southeastern U.S.**

Coordination through the Southern Area Coordination Center (SACC) and \_\_\_\_\_ (SACG) is very strong across the entire south due in part to having one area of coordination. A well-organized team is in place to manage multiple large fire situations as occur annually.

### **Prescribed Burning Southeastern U.S.**

Continued Increase in the Use of Prescribed Burning – Prescribed burning is critically important in the South for landscape restoration, hazardous fuel reduction, habitat maintenance and so on. Most of the burning done in the South is done by private landowners or their contractors. Several states in the South have Prescribed Burner Certification programs which provide some protection from liability if the certified burner is trained and meets certain requirements such as having a written prescribed burn plan, etc. The state forestry agencies typically responsible for managing the Rx Burner Certification programs and providing the required training.

### **Enhancing Network of Type 3 Teams Texas**

Texas has developed the Texas Intrastate Fire Mutual Aid System (TIFMAS) and a network of interagency type 3 all hazard IMTs. TIFMAS is made up of structural fire departments from across Texas that can respond to structural or wildland fire incidents when needed. Funding for the responding fire departments is provided through the Texas Division of Emergency Management. The Texas Forest Service (TFS) was very involved in the development of interagency type 3 IMTs in Texas. These type 3 IMTs are composed primarily of city and county personnel. When these type 3 IMT are deployed, they are assigned a Texas Forest Service liaison to assist with coordination. When the TFS request TIFMAS resources on a wildfire, they also request a type 3 IMT to provide coordination and assistance for TIFMAS responders. TIFMAS has provided 700 pieces of firefighting equipment and over 3,000 firefighters to support wildfire response in Texas this year.

### **Greater Okefenokee Landowner Association (GOAL) – Public/private partnership Georgia and Florida**

The Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge is adjacent to high value private timberlands (working forest), state forest, National Forest and towns and communities in SE Georgia and NW Florida. Heavy fuel, difficult terrain and WUI make fire response in this area difficult, complex and dangerous. GOAL was formed to allow concerned private landowners, homeowners, state and federal agencies to better communicate and coordinate pre-suppression and suppression activities, in essence a “unified command” that encompasses Government and non-Governmental entities alike who combine resources that can be used in fire response and suppression in coordination with state and federal partners.

### **Changing the fire suppression paradigm Idaho and Montana**

The 1.3 million-acre Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness (SBW) in north central Idaho and western Montana is managed by the Bitterroot, Lolo, and Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests. Beginning in 1972, the SBW was a pilot area for assessing the potential value of fire use – allowing lightning-caused fires to play their natural ecological role on the land. The integration into the Cohesive Strategy of the lessons learned from the SBW during the pilot years and since:

- Make it possible to allow fire to return to ecosystems to accomplish the restoration and maintenance of resilient landscapes on a much larger scale than was previously possible;

- Contribute to and increase the safety of firefighting resources by reducing exposure of firefighting resources on fires that are of much lower priority to suppress than fires where values of life and property are much higher;
- Will help reduce the size and intensity of future fires, leading to a self-regulating ecosystem in which over time new fires burn into older fire areas, so that fire behavior becomes much more benign; and
- Enables reduction of the high costs associated with fully suppressing a fire (especially in remote, inaccessible areas).

### **The Karuk Tribe – Returning Fire to the People California and Oregon**

The Aboriginal Territory of the federally recognized Karuk Tribe includes over 1.48 million acres in California and Oregon, including the Klamath and National Forests. In the 1990s, alarmed at the deteriorating condition of the forests and watersheds across that remote and sparsely populated landscape resulting from past non-Tribal management and use, the Karuk initiated discussions with community members and several federal agencies to explore possible solutions.

Since then, working with an extensive network of supporters, partners, advisors, technical experts, funders, and others, the Tribe has built a diverse local capacity for integrated fire management. Through projects on federal, Tribal, and private lands, it demonstrated how to enhance, restore, and maintain the resiliency of historic plant and animal communities and other forest conditions using traditional management principles and practices. At the same time, the Tribe has worked with neighboring Tribes and communities to build a local workforce that not only can perform that needed landscape stewardship, but also can provide safe, effective wildfire response. Having resources such as engines, chipper modules, and multi-skilled Type 1 and II crews employed in ongoing landscape restoration but ready to respond immediately to emergency fire assignments creates a more affordable and scalable response framework. Maintaining that capacity should create long-term employment in fuels reduction, prescribed fire, planning, and other integrated wildland fire management activities

### **Successful Community Fire Planning Flagstaff, Arizona**

The greater Flagstaff area is a community of 75,000 surrounded by the Coconino National Forest, one of the more extensive Ponderosa Pine forests in the nation. In a location averaging hundreds of ignitions per year, the Flagstaff Fire Department's wildland fire management mission is to "create and maintain a sustainable healthy forest ecosystem and a FireWise community, thereby protecting and enhancing public safety and community well-being."

The Department has collaborated actively with the Greater Flagstaff Forest Partnership and the Ponderosa Fire Advisory Council in developing innovative plans to protect the community from the impacts of wildfire. In 2005, the community developed a comprehensive Community Wildfire Protection Plan covering over 900,000 acres of mixed ownership surrounding Flagstaff, and over the last year, the Department has implemented a localized version of the Cohesive Strategy, with accomplishment performance measures defined for each of the three Strategy goals. This outstanding local effort could very easily be applied more broadly to encompass all ownerships, including the state and federal lands surrounding the community.



## Responding to an Escalating National Problem

Over the past two decades, there has been an escalation of severe fire behavior, with home and property losses, higher suppression costs, increased threats to communities, and worsening conditions on the land. Congress, the fire community and the public have recognized the need for a new strategy — one that incorporates a broad-based, collaborative and cohesive response to wildland fire response and mitigation.

From that acknowledgement, Congress directed that a National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy (Cohesive Strategy) be developed, ultimately paving the way for national wildland fire management policy. Beginning in 2010, hundreds of stakeholders from the fire community, land owners and managers, federal agencies, as well as Tribal, state and local governments across the nation have been working toward that end. Starting with a consensus of shared values, the Cohesive Strategy is in its third and final phase of development.

### A New National Strategy

Through work completed to date, the Cohesive Strategy has already identified a shared vision among all stakeholders, a vision that is guiding the next steps in the strategy development. As a nation, we must:

- ✓ **Safely and effectively extinguish fire when needed.**
- ✓ **Use fire where allowable.**
- ✓ **Manage our natural resources.**
- ✓ **Live with wildland fire.**

As a result of that vision, the Cohesive Strategy is structured on three key components:

- ✓ **Restoring and maintaining resilient landscapes -- a recognition of the lack of ecosystem health within many of our forests and rangelands across the country and the need to address it.**
- ✓ **Creating fire-adapted communities – acknowledging the need to develop options and opportunities to engage communities at the lowest level to help them become more resistant to wildfire threat.**
- ✓ **Effectively responding to wildfire -- a critical component to insure all levels of government, local, state, tribal and federal, work together when wildland fire happens.**

### More than Just a Fire Issue

Wildfire is more than a fire management issue – it's a larger land management, urban interface and societal issue. The Cohesive Strategy is an 'all-lands, all-hands' approach to improved wildland fire management, centered on working together. It doesn't start from scratch, but builds upon success. Key to its long-term sustainability is the strategy's ability to address the wide diversity of situations within our country, recognizing that a one-size-fits-all approach cannot work.

The Cohesive Strategy seeks to reflect and incorporate the values and concerns of the public and all governments. We must recognize the differences and tensions that exist among partners and stakeholders and why those differences exist. Success depends on stronger relationships. And we are

building those relationships at both the national and regional levels through the wide range of dedicated people working diligently to find long term solutions to wildland fire mitigation and response.

## **A Shared Responsibility**

In order to oversee this national effort, Congress and the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior have established two governing boards made up of representatives of federal, tribal, state and local governments and agencies, as well as other key stakeholders. The Wildland Fire Leadership Council and the Wildland Fire Executive Council are working with hundreds of people nationwide to make sure the Cohesive Strategy is a unified approach.

Our country is made up of many jurisdictions and land ownerships, which is why an all lands approach is so important. State, federal and tribal lands are expansive in many states, but equally important are private landowners and communities because they have a responsibility to make their own properties fire-resistant as well. To date, the Cohesive Strategy has established goals; developed regional action plans; and is in the process of scientifically analyzing options to help identify long-term solutions. Accomplishing those solutions will require involvement from both the public and private sectors. Actions and policies must be implemented at the federal, tribal, state and local levels.

## **Take Action**

To become more involved, or simply to learn more about the background, phases, updates, and successes surrounding the cohesive strategy effort, visit [www.forestsandrangelands.gov](http://www.forestsandrangelands.gov).



## **TASKING MEMORANDUM**

July 6, 2012

**Subject:** Wildland Fire Governance

### **Background:**

The Wildland Fire Governance document was originally presented to WFLC at their July, 2010 meeting in Reno, Nevada. The Council requested time to review and comment. Modifications to that document were made and we have been operating under that structure ever since. However, that document was never signed and formally adopted.

With the increase in the intergovernmental activities associated with the development and implementation of the Cohesive Strategy, along with the inevitable changes in scope and focus, it is time to review and improve wildland fire governance.

A few of the observations that WFLC shared include the following:

1. We have some redundancy and overlap in purpose, membership, etc.
2. Some organizations question their representation
3. There are some loose ends that should be addressed
4. There are opportunities to improve on the governance structure that we have
5. Want to put a permanent governance structure in place to transcend the transition to a new administration
6. It's not broken, but it's not perfect
7. Clearly define roles and responsibilities for each governance body
8. Make tweaks – and take advantage of the progress that has been made

### **Tasking:**

At the April 17, 2012 meeting of the Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC), the Wildland Fire Executive Council (WFEC) was requested to look at the intergovernmental wildland fire governance structure and develop a proposal for modifications.

Jim Karels, Jim Erickson, Douglas MacDonald, and Bill Kaage with assistance from Shari Eckhoff have been identified as the core group for this tasking.

They will conduct business via teleconference and/or video conference as necessary.

## Outcome / Deliverables:

The outcome is to have a clear proposal for WFLC to consider at their November 2012 meeting. The package will include a formal proposal for any recommended changes with the identification of considerations and the rationale for the recommendations. Backup material will include:

1. Intergovernmental Wildland Fire Governance Diagram
2. Charters for each of the Wildland Fire Governance Entities which will include the following information :
  - a. Name
  - b. Authorities
  - c. Purpose/Mission/Scope
  - d. Functions/Products
  - e. Membership and Organization
    - i. Primary
    - ii. Alternates
    - iii. Subcommittees
  - f. Responsibilities
    - i. Chair
    - ii. Vice-Chair
    - iii. Executive Secretary
    - iv. Members
    - v. Meetings and Reports
  - g. Decision Making Roles and Processes
  - h. Relationships to other Wildland Fire Governance Groups and Organizations
3. Summary of the recommended changes and the implication of those changes
4. Formal WFLC Proposal

## Timeline and Responsible Parties:

| Task   | Who            | Start     | End       |
|--|----------------|-----------|-----------|
| Approval of Tasking  | WFEC           | 7/6/2012  | 7/6/2012  |
| Review and approval of Wildland Fire Governance Guiding Principles | WFEC           | 7/6/2012  | 7/6/2012  |
| Task Team meet - Conceptual Intergovernmental Structure            | WFEC Task Team | 7/6/2012  | 7/13/2012 |
| Review Conceptual Structure  | WFEC           | 7/13/2012 | 7/20/2012 |
| Draft Purpose, Roles & Responsibilities, Authorities               | WFEC Task Team | 7/20/2012 | 8/17/2012 |
| Review   | WFEC           | 8/17/2012 | 8/24/2012 |
| Update and Draft Membership and Relationships                      | WFEC Task Team | 8/24/2012 | 9/21/2012 |

| <b>Task</b>   | <b>Who</b>     | <b>Start</b> | <b>End</b> |
|---|----------------|--------------|------------|
| Review  | WFEC           | 9/21/2012    | 9/28/2012  |
| Update and Develop Package for WFLC – including the summary of recommended changes and the implication of those changes | WFEC Task Team | 9/28/2012    | 10/19/2012 |
| Review  | WFEC           | 10/19/2012   | 10/26/2012 |
| Finalize Package for WFLC including briefing material   | WFEC Task Team | 10/26/2012   | 11/2/2012  |



## Wildland Fire Governance Guiding Principles

1. Governance Structure will promote an effective and efficient Wildland Fire Management Program.
2. Clear authorities with defined roles and responsibilities.
3. Limit overlap where we can; where overlap is inevitable, establish collaboration protocols.
4. Risk accountability determines appropriate decision maker.
5. Decisions made at the lowest appropriate and accountable level.
6. Timely decisions based on need and risk.
7. Closed loop governance, no loose ends.
8. Participation at the right level. Participation means active engagement.
9. FACA Compliant Governance
10. Enable well informed, sustainable, and timely decisions

**Fiscal Year:** 2012

**State:** Idaho

**Agency:** National Park Service

**Theme:** Maintain and Restore Landscapes

## **National Park Service Communicates Cohesive Strategy to Stakeholders**

### **National Interagency Fire Center, Idaho**

### **Cohesive Strategy – Maintain and Restore Landscapes**

On a daily basis, the National Park Service (NPS) Division of Fire and Aviation Management (FAM) works with interagency counterparts and other stakeholders to facilitate implementation of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy. The Cohesive Strategy (CS) is an ongoing effort by Federal, Tribal, state and local governments and non-government organizations to address growing wildfire challenges in the United States. For more information, visit <http://www.forestsandrangelands.gov/>. Since the inception of the CS, NPS FAM has learned many valuable lessons about communicating the CS effort. First and foremost, is that effective implementation of the Cohesive Strategy will only occur if the NPS has successfully communicated the CS tenets first to the NPS community.

Good communications is inherent in the mission of the NPS. It is a recognized part of the job of all employees. As part of the strategy of open communication, FAM collects success stories focused on how units implement Cohesive Strategy at the ground level. This is done using the existing chain of command; from the park unit to the region where the material is reviewed and subsequently submitted to NPS FAM. . In the spirit of a national, multi-agency, multi-stakeholder approach to Cohesive Strategy, the NPS success stories are shared with all interested parties via the National Park Service website (<http://www.nps.gov/fire/wildland-fire/connect/fire-stories/2012-parks.cfm>) and the Forest and Rangelands website ([www.forestandrangelands.gov](http://www.forestandrangelands.gov)).

In addition to compiling success stories, NPS leadership initiated bimonthly phone calls for the first two phases of the CS, connecting the Wildland Fire Branch Chief to NPS employees on regional and park-level committees. . As the CS moves into Phase III, calls occur on a monthly basis, reinforcing internal agency communication in order to support the goals of the Cohesive Strategy.

Through already tested modes of communication, the NPS FAM community has been able to disseminate the key messages of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy in an efficient and effective manner. The National Park Service understands that it must do its part in this “All-Lands, All-Hands” approach to fire.

**Contact: Bill Kaage, Branch Chief, NPS Wildland Fire**

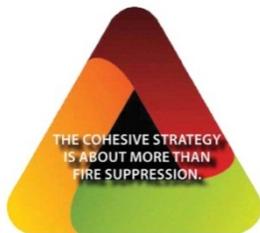
**Phone: (208) 387-5225**



# Cohesive Strategy Key Messages

## Purpose and Intent of Cohesive Strategy

The National Cohesive Wildfire Management Strategy is an all-lands approach that reaches across jurisdictional boundaries. This strategy – born from an act of Congress (Federal Land Assistance, Management, and Enhancement Act of 2009) and overseen by the Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC) and the Wildland Fire Executive Council (WFEC) is leading the way towards a more cohesive approach to how all stakeholders manage wildland fire.



## Three Phases of Cohesive Strategy

To facilitate stakeholder participation in planning for, responding to, and recovering from wildland fire incidents the CS has three phases. These are:

- Phase I: Development of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy (*complete*).
- Phase II: Development of Regional Strategies and Assessments (*complete*).
- Phase III: Implementation (*Current phase*).

## Historical Background to Cohesive Strategy

In response to the danger, impacts and costs of large fires, Congress passed the 2009 FLAME Act, which:

- Directed the USDA and DOI to develop a new Cohesive Wildfire Management Strategy.
- WFLC established to provide oversight and direction.

## The Vision of Cohesive Strategy is to:

- *Safely and effectively extinguish fire when needed.*
- *Use fire only when allowable.*
- *Manage our natural resources.*
- *Live with wildland fire.*

## More than a Fire Management Issue...

- Wildland fire is more than a fire management, fire operations, or Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) challenge. Wildland fire is a complex land management and societal issue. The Cohesive Strategy addresses these issues head on.
- CS is an “*All-Lands, All-Hands*” approach to improved wildland management, engaging stakeholders from all levels of government, NGOs, and people with interests in wildland fire, working together collaboratively.

## Three Principal Goals of CS

- **Restoring and maintaining resilient landscapes:** - a recognition of the lack of ecosystem health within many of our forests and rangelands across the country and the need to address it.
- **Creating fire-adapted communities:** acknowledging the need to develop options and opportunities to engage communities at the lowest level to help them become more resistant to wildfire threat.
- **Effectively responding to wildfire:** a critical component to insure all levels of government, local, state, tribal and federal, work together when wild fire occurs.

*Prepared by NPS Division of Fire and Aviation Management, Branch of Wildland Fire.  
For more information, contact [William Kaage@nps.gov](mailto:William.Kaage@nps.gov).*



# Cohesive Strategy Questions and Answers

## What is the Cohesive Strategy?

The Cohesive Strategy (CS) is an ongoing effort by Federal, Tribal, state and local governments and non-government organizations to address growing wildfire challenges in the United States. For more information, visit <http://www.forestsandrangelands.gov/>.

Wildland fire is more than a fire management, fire operations, or Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) challenge. Wildland fire is a complex land management and societal issue. The vision of the Cohesive Strategy is to: *safely and effectively extinguish fire when needed; use fire where allowable; manage our natural resources; and as a nation, live with wildland fire.*

## Why is it important?

The CS provides participants at all levels of government and non-governmental organizations a framework to engage in partnerships to address wildland fire management decisions.

## Who oversees and implements the CS?

- Congress and the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior have established two governing boards.
- Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC), provides oversight of the Cohesive Strategy effort.
- Wildland Fire Executive Council (WFEC), makes recommendations to the WFLC on the development and implementation of the CS.
- Representatives include: Federal, state, Tribal, local governments, agencies, nonprofits as well as other key stakeholders.

## How is the CS different than other strategies?

- More stakeholders are engaged now than in previous initiatives.
- Working together, the CS will be implemented by the collaborators. The CS has established systems for collaborative solutions to the problems.
- Research scientists are directly involved.

## What is the CS vision?

- Safely and effectively extinguish fire when needed.
- Use fire only when allowable.
- Manage our natural resources.
- Live with wildland fire.

## What are the guiding principles for the CS?

- Reducing risk to the public and firefighters is the first priority in every wildland fire management activity.
- Risk management is the foundation for all management activities.
- Wildland fire prevention programs are supported across all jurisdictions.
- Wildland fire, as an essential ecological process and natural change agent, may be incorporated into the planning process and wildfire response.
- Decisions are based on the best available science combined with experience to evaluate risk versus gain.
- Federal, state, local and Tribal governments actively engage in collaborative planning and the decision making process, recognizing the independence and statutory responsibilities among jurisdictions

## What are the three goals of the CS?

- Restore and maintain resilient landscapes—recognize and address the lack of ecosystem health within many of our forests and rangelands across the country.
- Create fire adapted communities—develop options and opportunities to engage communities at the lowest level to help them become more resistant to wildfire threat.
- Effectively respond to wildfire—ensure all levels of government—local, state, Tribal, and Federal—work together when wildland fire happens.

## What is the current status of Cohesive Strategy?

- Phase I: Development of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy—Completed.
- Phase II: Development of Regional Strategies and Assessments—Completed.
- Phase III: Implementation—In progress. This will not just be done by Federal agencies, it will also be implemented by Firesafe councils, groups working on restoring ecosystems, fire adapted communities, ranchers and many other stakeholders: All-hands, All-lands.

*Prepared by NPS Division of Fire and Aviation Management, Branch of Wildland Fire. For more information, contact [William.Kaage@nps.gov](mailto:William.Kaage@nps.gov).*



April 13, 2012

## DRAFT - Department of the Interior (DOI) Success Stories Requirements

*The National Park Service will follow this guidance until new guidance from DOI is released*

### Submission Guidance:

#### Themes:

Department of the Interior agencies' success stories submissions will be tied to the overarching themes of the *National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy* and DOI priorities. All submissions will be categorized under at least one of the following themes:

#### 1. Maintain and Restore Landscapes –

Activities and projects that move landscapes toward desired condition or projects that maintain desired conditions, including those which specifically:

- Ensure project efficiencies
- Include contributed (non-bureau) labor and funding
- Maintain previous investments
- Protect special interest species
- Address areas of high-priority fire regime/condition class
- Establish and restore resilient landscapes
- Protect or restore treasured landscapes
- Promote carbon sequestration
- Provide collaboration opportunities
- Include joint (intra-bureau) labor and funding

#### 2. Fire-Adapted Human Communities –

Activities and projects that protect values-at-risk and achieve fire management objectives identified in applicable management, including projects which specifically:

- Protect Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) or will influence the risk to the WUI if not treated
- Support a CWPP or CWPP equivalent
- Provide economic opportunities for communities, tribal members, or youth
- Perform work through the use of a contractor or cooperator

#### 3. Response to Wildfire –

Activities and projects that provide the greatest opportunities to improve wildfire response, including projects which specifically:

- Provide for firefighter safety

- Reduce large fire costs
- Enhance full spectrum response to wildfires

### **Keyword Descriptor(s):**

Keyword descriptor(s) are optional to include with submissions; however emphasis should be placed on submitting success stories which illustrate accomplishment in the following priority areas:

- Climate Change
- America's Great Outdoors
- Treasured Landscapes
- Youth Involvement, Volunteerism and Employment
- Water Conservation and Restoration
- New Energy Frontier
- Native American Nations
- Cost Effectiveness and Efficiencies
- Partnerships
- Woody Biomass Utilization
- Fire Ecology and Restoration
- American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)

Keywords should be integrated into the text of the story. For those keywords that reference an initiative or program (e.g. "America's Great Outdoors," "Treasured Landscapes," etc.) keywords should be capitalized in the story. In the cases where keywords are not initiatives or programs (e.g. "cost effectiveness and efficiencies," "partnerships," "fire ecology and restoration," etc.) leave them lower-cased in the story text.

In addition, keywords should be called out and referenced as a field at the bottom of the story under the title "**Keywords**" – see attached story for example to follow on formatting.

### **DOI Utilization of Success Stories**

Success stories are an important way for DOI to celebrate accomplishments made in reducing risk posed by wildfire. Submissions will be utilized in a variety of ways by the Office of Wildland Fire Coordination, such as:

- Updating the Wildland Fire Leadership Council's website, located at <http://www.forestsandrangelands.gov>.
- Including a selection in future DOI Annual Reports
- Posting on [www.doi.gov](http://www.doi.gov) as a Featured Story or Latest Happening on the homepage
- Including in DOI publication(s)
- Including anecdotes in briefings materials, testimony, congressional hearings, etc. [note follow-up would likely occur with the submission office in these cases].

## **NPS Utilization of Success Stories**

The National Park Service Division of Fire and Aviation will also utilize all stories submitted to DOI in support of the Cohesive Strategy. Stories will be posted on the NPS Fire and Aviation website at <http://www.nps.gov/fire> and may be also utilized for other purposes including:

- Briefing packages
- Congressional requests
- FAM / Visitor and Resource Protection / NPS publications

## **NPS-specific Due Dates**

Stories should be submitted to the NPS Branch of Communication and Education at the National Interagency Fire Center through regional fire communication and education contacts on a quarterly basis:

- March 15
- June 15
- September 15
- December 15

The FTP location - <ftp://ftp.den.nps.gov/incoming/FIRE/Tina/SuccessStories/> is the designated location for all success stories that have been approved at the regional level. Upon reaching the national level, stories not meeting all standards, or requiring edits, will be returned to the regional contact for editing and follow-up.

## **Success Stories Template**

### **Font and Identifying Information**

Submissions should be in Word using 12 point, Times New Roman font. You do not need to include the banner as the Web Manager will provide it. Please include all of the following as identifying information:

- **Fiscal Year:**
- **State(s):**
- **Agency(s):**
- **Theme(s):** Maintain and Restore Landscapes; Fire-Adapted Human Communities; Response to Wildfire
- **Contact:**
- **Contact Email and Phone:**
- **Keyword(s) (optional):**
  - Climate Change
  - America's Great Outdoors
  - Treasured Landscapes
  - Youth Involvement, Volunteerism and Employment
  - Water Conservation and Restoration

- New Energy Frontier
- Native American Nations
- Cost Effectiveness and Efficiencies
- Partnerships
- Woody Biomass Utilization
- Fire Ecology and Restoration
- American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)
- Or define a new general keyword category if one of these does not apply. New categories are subject to approval.

**Content:**

Provide enough information about a success story to develop a web page for internal and external audiences. Describe who, what, when, where, and why about the project, accomplishment, or event in a word document. Generally submissions are between 500-1000 words, although there is no minimum or maximum word requirement.

- Provide who (entity or entities), including the department, agency, state, institution, organization to specifically identify the party or parties involved.
- Describe completely and concisely what the story is about, the project, accomplishment, or event.
- Include where the story took place or is taking place.
- Include when the story took place or is taking place. Include start and/or stop dates, by calendar or fiscal year.
- Describe why the story took place or is taking place. Concisely, provide as much detail as possible about the story.

**Photos:**

You are encouraged to provide photo(s) with your submissions. Photos can be worth 1,000 words. Provide caption and photo credit information. You may insert the image into the Word document for the story, but must also provide the related story images separately as jpg images.

## Sample Story Using Cohesive Strategy Template

**Fiscal Year:** 2011

**State:** California

**Agency:** National Park Service

**Theme:** Maintain and Restore Landscapes

### **The Rehabilitation of Travertine Springs Death Valley National Park, California Cohesive Strategy – Maintain and Restore Landscapes**

On August 9, 2010, the Travertine Fire burned 22 acres of a lush desert oasis in Death Valley National Park. The Travertine Springs complex provides habitat to four rare plant species and nine endemic aquatic invertebrates. This habitat was particularly vulnerable to fire due to the invasion of non-native palm trees that had been introduced to nearby Furnace Creek over a century ago. A mixture of date palms from Africa and fan palms from the Coachella Valley created a dense and volatile thatch that not only shaded and crowded native species, but also used a tremendous amount of water, making precious resources unavailable to native plants and wildlife.

A Burned Area Rehabilitation plan was developed and fully funded in 2011 providing crucial resources to remove invasive palms from the burned area. While the areas with the densest palm growth were left completely scorched and sterilized of native vegetation, over 99% of the palm trees survived. Both date palms and California fan palms are highly adapted to fire and will produce even more fruit with the post-fire release of water and nutrients. Palms are notoriously difficult to control and can often re-sprout from roots even after herbicide treatments. The control of palm trees was critical for the recovery of this sensitive spring habitat. The project was aimed at water conservation and restoration as well as fire ecology and restoration.

In January 2011, contractors were hired to extract all of the palms with roots included. With the use of heavy machinery, over 500 palm trees were removed in just 15 work days. All disturbed sites were smoothed using an excavator and tracks were raked out by hand. Just days after the project was completed, it was difficult to imagine the presence of heavy machinery or the hundreds of palms that had dominated the landscape around springs.



*Photo point at Travertine Springs: pre-fire in February 2009 (top), during rehabilitation in February 2011 (middle), and five months after palm removal in August 2011 (bottom).*

Since the removal of palms, the burned area has been monitored closely and all non-native plants have been tightly controlled. With the release of large amounts of water formerly held by palms, the recovery of native vegetation is occurring at a rapid rate.

**Contact: Jane Cipra, Botanist**

**Email: [Jane\\_Cipra@nps.gov](mailto:Jane_Cipra@nps.gov)**

**Phone: (760)786-3233**

**Keywords:** Water Conservation and Restoration, Fire Ecology and Restoration