



Moving Forward with Implementation

While the WRSC Action Plan is considered by the Wildland Fire Executive Council (WFEC), the WRSC is gearing up for a busy year of accomplishments. Galvanizing the WRSC membership and outlining leads for highest priority actions are top priorities over the coming weeks. One of the first action items already accomplished under the Plan is the formation of the WRSC Guidance Document which outlines the structure and capacity of the WRSC including an Executive Committee of the three Co-Chairs and the Coordinator.

US Forest Service FAC Program Helps Implement Cohesive Strategy Actions

The Fire Adapted Communities (FAC) Learning Network kick-off was held in Boise April 10-11. Representatives from 8 communities (Santa Fe, NM; Incline Village, NV; Hiwassee, GA; Orleans and Somes Bar, CA; Glenwood, Wenatchee, and Yakima, WA; Rogue Valley, OR; Ely, MN; and Lake George, CO) met to develop work plans for the national Fire Adapted Communities Network pilot. The 2-day meeting was designed to outline goals and work plans for year one of the pilot. The network is designed to help communities work toward being more fire adapted, identify best practices to share on a wider scale, and grow a network of communities at reduced risk as a result of adapting to wildfire. The effort was led by representatives of The Nature Conservancy and The Watershed Center through agreements with the U.S. Forest Service FAC program. Also in attendance were the International Association of Fire Chiefs, National Fire Protection Association, and The Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety. The U.S. Forest Service began developing the Fire Adapted Communities program in 2009 and will help implement some aspects of the Cohesive Strategy. For more information on FAC, go to <http://fireadapted.org/> or contact Pam Leschak, U.S. Forest Service Fire Adapted Communities program manager at pleschak@fs.fed.us or Tim Melchert, U. S. Forest Service Cooperative Fire Specialist at tmelchert@fs.fed.us.

WRSC Announces Federal Co-chair

The WRSC welcomes **Kent Connaughton** as the new federal Co-Chair on the WRSC. Kent serves as the Regional Forester for the US Forest Service in Region 6 (OR & WA) in Portland, OR.



Tom Harbour, USFS and Bob Roper, IAFC
on the March 19th WFEC call

WFEC Expresses Support for Regional Action Plans

Members of the WFEC conveyed broad support for the regional Action Plans on their April 5th call. Recognizing that the "Action Plans are dynamic" and the result of "collaborative efforts as intended in the Cohesive Strategy," the WFEC is looking forward to how the regional plans will provide the building blocks for the National Action Plan this fall.



State-to-State Reciprocity for EMS

The National Wildfire Coordinating Group’s (NWCG) Risk Management Committee expressed support for WRSC’s Action Item 3.2D: *Improve firefighter safety and health by increasing the recognition and acceptance of certification of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) responders on incidents from state to state.* In many areas across the nation, EMS providers are not afforded reciprocity between some states regarding scope of practice on incident fires. A recognized EMT Paramedic in Oregon for example, may experience scope restrictions while working on a fire in Washington. This is presenting firefighter safety and health issues on incident fires. The Committee asked the Wildland Fire Executive Council (WFEC) to consider expanding that action from the Western Regional Action Plan to the National Action Plan.

The Western Governors’ Association (WGA) has been tasked as lead for this action under the WRSC Action Plan. “The western Governors are currently reviewing policy revisions to address this issue,” says Ann Walker, Forest and Rangeland Health Program Director for WGA and Co-Chair for the WRSC.

Progress is also occurring in the realm of qualifications and training. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) under the National Response Framework is completing the qualifications and training standards for all positions supporting emergency operations nationwide. The revised standards and qualifications are expected to be approved soon. Concurrently, a variety of NWCG efforts specific to the wildland fire part of the qualifications and training standards are coming together to improve incident responder succession planning, reduce redundant requirements, and provide a more agile process for an experience-based training and qualifications standard.

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Reducing Barriers Through Legislation

Several recent Congressional solutions are working their way through the legislative process that will assist in reducing barriers to implementation of the three Cohesive Strategy goals. Draft legislation addresses key components:

- Identification of high hazard landscapes such as bug-killed or diseased trees
- Timely mitigation through active forest management
- Expedited implementation of timber sales and hazardous fuels treatments in high risk areas
- Permanent establishment / expansion of Stewardship End Result Contracting

Legislative efforts are only part of the solution, we encourage you to remain aware of these efforts and assist your elected officials find practical solutions to our complex land and fire related challenges in the West.

Visit www.house.gov and www.senate.gov

to keep in touch with current legislative activities.

Follow us on Twitter
[@US_Wildfire](https://twitter.com/US_Wildfire)

We’ve moved! Find Cohesive Strategy information at:

http://www.forestsandrangelands.gov/strategy/Regional_Strategy_Committees/