



Wildland Fire: Live With It! How the Cohesive Strategy Is Preparing You

Regional Risk Report Coming in October!

The National Science and Analysis Team (NSAT) and the Western Region Strategy Committee (WRSC) are nearing completion of the Western Region Risk Report, one of the products of Phase III of the Cohesive Strategy development.

The Risk Report will be one of the tools to assist and empower stakeholders, including federal, state and tribal land managers as well as community groups, in making decisions regarding their individual budgeting, prioritization, and policy choices. The report will help to determine the implications of their choices in relation to all of the other possible options available.

For instance, through information displayed in the Risk Report, communities and local fire departments may learn there are some types of actions that do not have as much effect in terms of creating fire-adapted communities and improving response to wildfires. Or they may learn more about how the effects from different fuel treatments can reduce wildfire risk to populated areas. Or where substantial increases in fuels treatments are likely to be effective at reducing risk to important values such as key watersheds or important wildlife habitat.

After reviewing the Risk Report, land managers may want to consider potential increases in fuels treatments within a given region. Similarly, after examining the outcomes and consequences portion of the report, a specific state may want to focus resources and assistance on creating fire-adapted communities, or re-evaluate where they position their firefighting resources.

According to Dr. Tom Quigley, Co-Chair of the NSAT, "... much of the analysis conducted for use in the Cohesive Strategy gets summarized and compared at the county level nationwide and within each of the broad regions. This helps set the stage for a strategic view of actions, policies, and priorities. There appear to be important differences within and among the regions. These differences can help inform important discussions about options and how resources supporting the Cohesive Strategy goals might be aligned to achieve reductions in risk."



Smoke - just one factor in adapting to the changing fire situation on the landscape.

The regional Risk Report will also include performance measures, recommendations and conclusions. These describe the potential impact and utility of the Cohesive Strategy at all levels.

Stakeholder feedback received over the past year has played an important role in the development of the Risk Report, which is expected to be completed by mid-October. Later this fall the WRSC will prepare a draft Implementation Plan with recommended key actions and next steps, relying on results of the Risk Report and stakeholder comments.

Living with Wildfire: The State of Practice in Western Communities - Preliminary Assessment Results

Success Stories

This month we feature stories from BLM – Alaska Fire Service, and FireScope Monterey.

The wildland fire management program in Alaska is a joint effort among federal, state, and Native organizations, with each organization retaining its own mandated policies, regulations, laws and mission.

FireScope Monterey's slogan "Keeping Wildfire in Its Natural Place" says it all: success takes more than simply fighting wildfires— it requires the community to develop adaptive and resilient systems.

Read these success stories from our stakeholders at: <http://sites.nemac.org/westcohesivefire/about-you/>



Western Regional Strategy Committee (WRSC) Update August 2012

The Western Community Fire Management Assessment describes how communities and their partners in the West are working to better live with wildland fire. The assessment was conducted between July 16th and August 12th, 2012 by The Watershed Center in Hayfork, California, at the request of the Western Regional Strategy Committee (WRSC). The sample selection came from the Western Regional Strategy Committee's outreach list and other key networks engaged in community-based fire management around the west. The preliminary report was completed August 24th.

Highlights include:

- A total of 325 completed the assessment survey.
- Federal government employees represented 25% of assessment responses.
- More than 15 participants from every type of entity engaged in community fire management.
- Private businesses and county representatives provided more than 50 respondents each.
- Respondents were working across all three Cohesive Strategy (CS) goals, with well over 300 respondents working on resilient landscapes, fire adapted communities and wildfire response respectively.
- Respondents were working across a broad range of geographic scales and almost universally across jurisdictional boundaries and land ownerships.
- Federal and state agencies were providing leadership most strongly and effectively around wildfire response, while local entities were providing higher levels of leadership in advancing fire adapted communities and landscape resilience.
- Respondents found leadership arrangements to be at least somewhat effective across all three CS goals.

The final report, "Living with Wildfire: The State of Practice in Western Communities", will be available in late-September. The findings and recommendations will help federal managers and stakeholders better align strategies, policies and programs in helping to support community fire management goals through the implementation of the Cohesive Strategy. For more information contact Nick Goulette - nickg@hayfork.net.

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How Many Homes Have Been Lost This Year?

2012 has been and continues to be a challenging, active and severe fire season with more than 19,000 people assigned to fire incidents at the peak in early August. To date, just over 7 million acres have burned in 2012. In the 10 years since 2002, the 7 million-acre mark has been surpassed seven times, reaching a peak in 2006 of 9.88 million acres for the year. In the 10 years prior to 2002 (1992-2001), only one year saw 7 million acres or more burn; and six years in that period saw fewer than 3 million acres burned.

According to Ken Frederic of the National Interagency Fire Center, with likely two months remaining in the fire season, **1,859 homes have been consumed by wildfire to date**, well below the **yearly average losses of 2,600 homes**. By comparison, a single fire in 1991 in the hills of Oakland, California burned more than 3,000 homes.

Got Cohesive Strategy?



See our national Partner Perspectives and Success Stories at:

<http://forestsandrangelands.gov>

Fire Adapted Communities

<http://www.fireadapted.org>