



CWSF
COUNCIL OF WESTERN
STATE FORESTERS



ANNUAL REPORT





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About CWSF WHO WE ARE

The Council of Western State Foresters (CWSF) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit membership organization comprised of:

- 17 Western U.S. state foresters
- 6 territorial foresters from American-Affiliated Pacific Islands

CWSF provides insight on the many complex, interrelated factors at play in Western forestry and the programs and strategies of greatest importance to the health and sustainability of Western and Pacific Island forests.

CWSF is committed to responsible forest management that supports the natural resilience of Western forests. Drawing on the expertise of members, CWSF conducts research, compiles reports and delivers legislative comment to inform partners and policymakers about the critical issues in Western forest management.

CWSF collaborates with partners across jurisdictional boundaries to promote sustainable forest management, to protect forests from threats, and to enhance forest health and economic benefits.

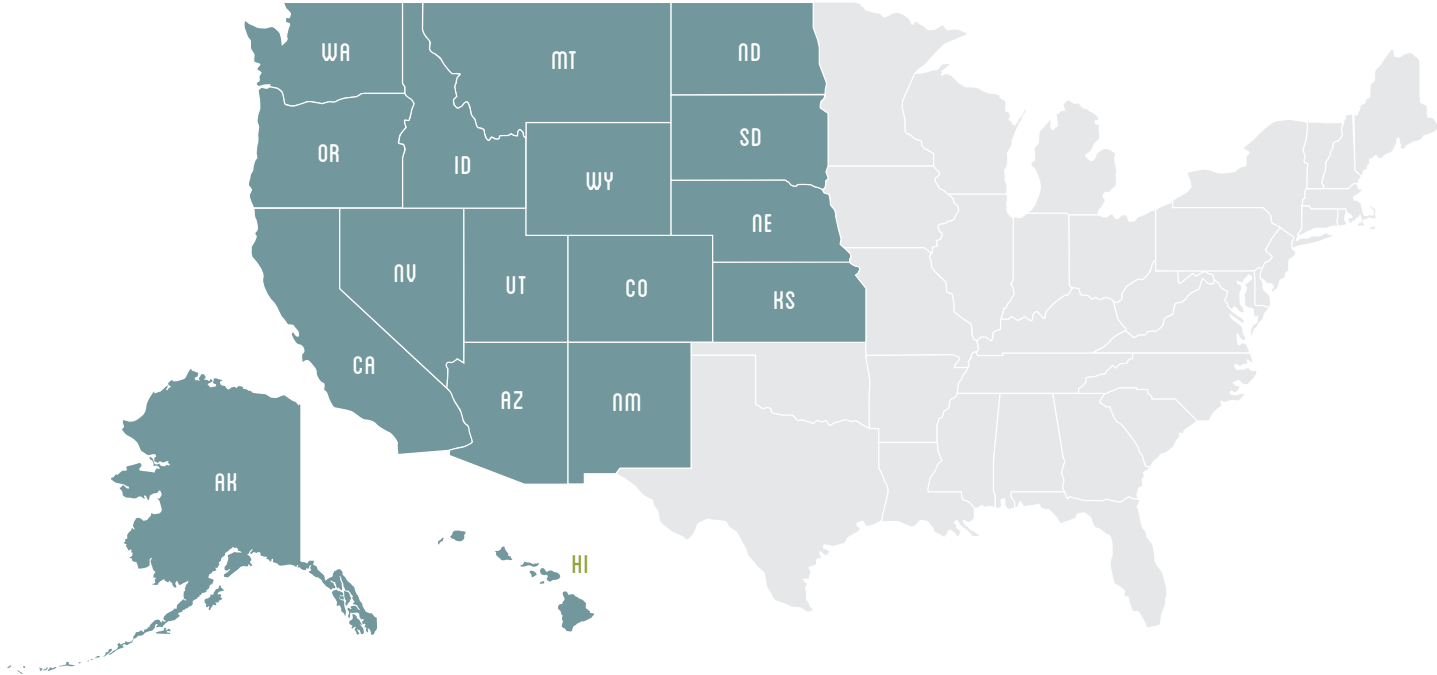
CWSF works to conserve, protect and enhance the many resources, uses and benefits provided by Western and Pacific Island forests.



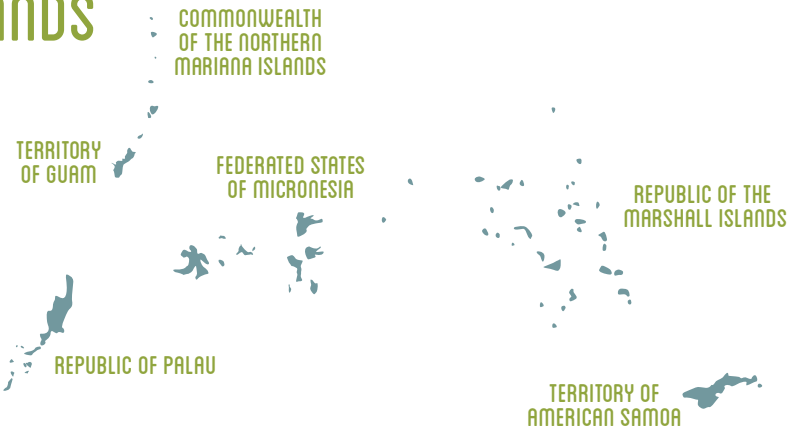
Membership ACROSS THE WEST

23 MEMBERS

17 STATES



6 PACIFIC ISLANDS



*Map not to scale.



Letter from the Chair

KEN PIMLOTT

2016 was an exciting year of growth for the Council of Western State Foresters (CWSF) and it has been my pleasure to serve as Chair of the Executive Committee.

During my tenure as Chair, I worked closely with CWSF staff, other members of the Executive Committee and the entire CWSF membership. Jointly, we accomplished a great deal of work in 2016. I applaud the CWSF staff and membership for the milestones accomplished in 2016.

The CWSF Annual Report highlights the accomplishments of the past year. Organizationally, CWSF's work is guided by our strategic plan, which is structured around four goals: Trusted Source; Member Focused; Strong Organization, Strong Results; and Power of Partnerships. This report highlights accomplishments under each of those areas.

We look forward to new projects in the upcoming year, under the leadership of Mike Lester, Colorado State Forester, who will serve as Chair for the 2017 year. I am confident that CWSF will witness continued success in the year ahead.

CWSF is committed to the health and sustainability of Western and Pacific Island forests. For more information about CWSF, please visit our website at www.westernforesters.org.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ken Pimlott".

Chief Ken Pimlott
CAL FIRE Director
CWSF Chair



Strategic Plan Goal

TRUSTED SOURCE

NEW LOOK

Over the past year, CWSF witnessed major improvements in the external ‘face’ of the organization. CWSF completed a complete overhaul of the communications program, including development of a new look, new logo and new icons for CWSF's five issue areas, featured below.



In addition to the new look and feel, CWSF also established a new website which serves as a standalone platform to highlight CWSF's issues and work. CWSF launched a newsletter in April, which provides a regular stream of communications to members and partners. CWSF also recently became active on social media, primarily utilizing Twitter to highlight the work of members and partners. View the new website, along with recently developed one pagers, at www.westernforesters.org.

FOREST POLICY

CWSF members and staff completed numerous hill visits this year. Among the issues communicated to congressional offices were fiscal year (FY) 2017 appropriations priority programs for state foresters, the need for a comprehensive wildfire funding solution, and federal forest management reforms.

CWSF staff worked with several CWSF members and the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) to develop written testimony for congressional hearings including the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources Field Hearing in Alaska, where AK State Forester Chris Maisch provided comments on state forester priorities.

In addition, CWSF staff worked with CAL FIRE Director Ken Pimlott and his team, and NASF to provide testimony at the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources hearing on the Wildfire Budgeting, Response and Forest Management Act of 2016 discussion draft. Chief Pimlott's testimony included state foresters' feedback on the discussion draft (specifically the need for a comprehensive wildfire solution and on forest management reforms).

CWSF staff also assisted NASF in the development of their FY 2017 Appropriations testimony for the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies.

FEATURED STORIES

CWSF was featured in the Summer edition of the National Woodland Owners Association Magazine (NWOA), which is distributed to 14,000 readers including family forest owners, forestry associations, and similar groups. The article titled ‘What’s Happening in Western Forests’ provided an overview of CWSF's issue areas and the relationship to NWOA regions.

CWSF was also featured in the Society of American Foresters' (SAF) Western Forester March/April publication titled - Political Implications of the 2016 Election. The publication was distributed to state societies of SAF in the Oregon, Washington, Alaska and the Inland Empire. The article called attention to CWSF's top issue priorities in 2016, engagement with the Western Forestry Leadership Coalition (WFLC), and the national and regional state forester associations.

WHITE HOUSE ROUNDTABLE ON WILDFIRE

CWSF Chair and CAL FIRE Director Ken Pimlott, CWSF Past Chair, Oregon State Forester Doug Decker and CWSF Executive Director Caitlyn Pollihan participated in a roundtable at The White House on wildfire mitigation and firefighter safety on May 18. The goal of the event was to identify policy actions needed to enhance community resilience within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). President Obama signed an Executive Order and all roundtable attendees made a commitment to a collaborative approach to address the challenge of wildfire in the wildland urban interface.



WUI Roundtable



Left to Right: CWSF Past Chair, Oregon State Forester Doug Decker, CWSF Chair and CAL FIRE Director Ken Pimlott and CWSF Executive Director Caitlyn Pollihan.



Strategic Plan Goal

MEMBER FOCUSED

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

Over the course of the past year, CWSF has made great progress to ensure a strong business structure. A plan was put in place to formalize committee/network structure, both on the CWSF side, as well as with the committees and networks chartered by WFLC. As a result, all CWSF/WFLC associated committees and networks are now required to develop a budget and workplan which is reviewed and approved by the membership.

INFORMATION SHARING

Engagement from the CWSF membership is a key component of organizational success. In 2016, CWSF staff worked with the membership to develop a variety of internal and external documents. These documents are key to highlighting CWSF's work among members and partners, including Congress.

Several examples include the newly implemented CWSF monthly newsletter, issue one pagers, various policy updates, informational documents and briefs including a publication highlighting Urban and Community Forestry and Green Infrastructure in the West.

View these publications, along with others, in the CWSF publication library at <http://westernforesters.org/publications>.

NATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

CWSF's engagement with NASF is conducted through membership collaboration and staff work across geographical and organizational boundaries. This allows each association to leverage the work of one another, while doing work to benefit state forestry agencies across the country.



Collaboration

NASF Executive Committee members gather for a yearly retreat to discuss items of shared interest.

COMMUNICATIONS

In an effort to increase engagement and information sharing among the states, CWSF launched a communications network in January 2016. This network is an informal committee made up of communication leads in CWSF's member states. This network met for the first time in January to discuss communication priorities, share challenges and lessons learned, and determine how the group can work together to leverage communication efforts. The network engages regularly by participating in webinars, sharing best practices and utilizing one another as a resource.



Building a Network

Communicators from 13 Western states participated in the first annual communications meeting in Sunriver, OR.

MEMBER SERVICES

The CWSF team is comprised of four full-time professionals dedicated to ensuring CWSF members have the latest information and resources to effectively support their work on the ground. Each CWSF staff member brings a diverse set of skills and experiences and contributes to the overall success of CWSF and WFLC.

In late 2015, CWSF established a new role and hired Grace Mirzeler to serve as a full time Member Services Associate to increase engagement and deliver exceptional value to members. In this role, Grace works closely with CWSF members and staff and is responsible for meeting planning, providing assistance with communications work, and managing the grants portal and associated committees.



Strategic Plan Goal

STRONG ORGANIZATION, STRONG RESULTS

FINANCIALS

CWSF is a well-managed, financially sound organization and as a result had a clean, successful audit in 2016. In addition, CWSF transitioned to a new bank, which will allow for more streamlined financial processes. CWSF continues to focus on increasing operating reserve funds and this will remain a priority in 2017.



UPDATED POLICIES

CWSF is committed to implementing nonprofit best management practices. This includes a thorough review of current policies, procedures and handbooks to identify any new policies that are necessary. In 2016, the CWSF Executive Committee reviewed and updated all organizational policies as well as added two policies including a maternity/paternity/adoption policy and a social media policy. The new CWSF website provided a secure space to store these materials while also making them available to CWSF members.

MEMBER FEEDBACK

CWSF regularly captures member feedback at meetings and at timely milestones throughout the year. This feedback helps CWSF staff to implement changes and ensure yearly meetings and projects provide value to the membership.

GRANTS PORTAL

CWSF effectively utilized the web portal, www.forestrygrants.org, for the FY 2017 grant year for LSR, WUI, and Southern Group of State Foresters (SGSF).

In addition to using the portal for applying, scoring, and reviewing, CWSF gained valuable feedback for additional improvements towards the portal to continually make application and scoring a smoother process. Stay tuned for additional improvements to come in 2017!

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CWSF is committed to providing professional development opportunities to staff. Throughout 2016, CWSF staff members attended various trainings including engagement with the Institute for Organization Management, the American Society of Association Executives and other relevant professional organizations/associations.

WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE GRANTS

The CWSF Western States Fire Managers (WSFM) Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Grants Committee met in October 2016 to discuss and finalize the Committee's recommendations for Western State Fire Assistance (SFA) funding for FY 2017. These recommendations were presented and accepted at the CWSF Fall Business meeting.

Additionally, CWSF Member Services Associate Grace Mirzeler attended the meeting to facilitate the scoring discussion and conversed with the WSFM WUI Executive Committee on ways to advance the online portal system for the next fiscal year.





Strategic Plan Goal

POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS

Photo Credit: Grace Mirzeler

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

CWSF continues to strengthen our relationship with the Western Governors' Association (WGA). In 2016, CWSF members and staff engaged in WGA Chairman and Montana Governor Steve Bullock's, National Forest and Rangeland Management Initiative. At the Initiative workshops, individual state foresters and CWSF staff acted as speakers or moderators in various workshop panels. At the Fall Meeting, WFLC hosted a WGA partner discussion to share ideas relevant to the Initiative and examine future partnership opportunities.

At the WFLC 2016 Spring Meeting, the organization once again hosted two partner focused panels with the intent to introduce WFLC members to other organizations engaged in Western forestry issues. Members heard from the The Conservation Fund, the Nature Conservancy, Rural Voices for Conservation, Society of American Foresters, USDA Forest Service Region 6, and from Oregon Governor Kate Brown's Office. Speakers shared their interests in Western forestry and spoke of partnership opportunities with WFLC members.



2016 Spring Meeting

Mike Cafferata with the Oregon Department of Forestry guides attendees through a field tour at Tillamook State Forest. Photo Credit: Marcus Kauffman, Oregon Department of Forestry.

PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

CWSF staff remain engaged in relevant teams, committees and coalitions to further issue priorities of Western state foresters. CWSF policy staff engages weekly with the State Foresters Policy Team, which is comprised of the policy staff from NASF, Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters (NAASF), SGSF and CWSF, and with a Western state forester representative on the NASF Legislative Committee. CWSF engages on coalitions such as the Partner Caucus on Fire Suppression Funding Solutions, the Forest Climate Working Group, and the Forests in the Farm Bill Coalition.

REPRESENTATION

Over the course of the year, CWSF worked to ensure state forester and staff representation at relevant meetings. This engagement helps keep a pulse on what is happening and keeps members engaged in the conversations.

PHOTOGRAPHY FELLOW

CWSF partnered with NASF to utilize staff talent in the 2016 NASF Photography fellowship program. Grace Mirzeler, Member Services Associate for CWSF partnered with NASF and the Colorado State Forest Service to capture interactions with landowners and state foresters. These images were utilized by CWSF, NASF, and other partners to illustrate the many types of forests, lands, landowners, and diligent efforts made to keep forests healthy.



Capturing Colorado

Photos courtesy of Grace Mirzeler, captured during visits with Colorado State Forest Service and Colorado landowners.



Federal Partnership

POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS - CONTINUED

An important part of CWSF's work is fulfilled through a relationship with the Western leadership of the USDA Forest Service. This relationship is realized through the Western Forestry Leadership Coalition (WFLC).

The WFLC membership consists of 34 members which includes 23 CWSF members and 11 individuals from the Western Forest Service leadership. WFLC is staffed by CWSF and is governed by an Executive Board that includes the CWSF Executive Committee, two Forest Service Regional Foresters, a Station Director and a Western State & Private Forestry Director.

Over the course of the year, WFLC completed the following:

NEW LOGO, NEW WEBSITE

In 2016, WFLC worked with a local communications firm to refresh the current WFLC logo and revamp the WFLC website. The refreshed logo was revealed in August and represents a clean, updated version of the old logo.



WESTERN FORESTRY LEADERSHIP COALITION

The new WFLC website was launched in November and is accessible at www.thewflc.org. The newly designed website features a user friendly layout, a secure members' portal, a publication library and ultimately serves as a platform to highlight WFLC's work. In addition to the new website, an organizational one pager was recently developed. This one pager provides a high level overview of WFLC's work and is available on the WFLC website.

LSR GRANT CYCLE

WFLC manages and delivers the Western Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) grant allocation process. WFLC is charged with overseeing this competitive process that recommends Western projects for funding through the USDA Forest Service LSR Competitive Grant. The FY 17 LSR grant cycle had a successful year with a total of forty-two project proposals submitted. Out of the submitted proposals, 15 projects were fully funded with two partially funded projects from the remainder of the funds. Additionally, the WFLC membership approved a \$300,000 competitive grant side pool accessible specifically to Pacific Island members. Recommendations for funding were approved during the 2016 WFLC Fall Meeting in San Diego. The proposals, comments, and scores can be found at www.forestrygrants.org and the recommendation for funding letter is available on www.thewflc.org website.

 **SUBMITTED**
42 proposals  **FULLY**
15 funded

ANNUAL MEETINGS

The WFLC membership convenes in-person twice a year to discuss items of shared interest. These meetings play a critical role in helping to build the relationship between state forestry agencies and Forest Service leaders. The WFLC members met in May 2016 in Portland, OR and again in November 2016 in San Diego, CA.

URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY

The Western Urban & Community Forestry Network (WUCF) provides a channel for ongoing communication and collaboration between Western states and Forest Service regions and forestry partners. In 2016, the WUCF Network met for their annual meeting in Bismarck, ND. This meeting brought together urban and community forestry (UCF) coordinators and provided an opportunity to discuss emerging issues at the state and national level, collaborate on program delivery, and advance UCF in the West.

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORESTRY

The Pacific Islands Forestry Committee (PIFC) gathers annually to discuss emerging issues in U.S.-Affiliated Pacific Island forests. PIFC membership includes the Western Pacific Island Foresters, representatives from the Forest Service Region 5 and the Pacific Southwest Research Station and the CWSF Executive Director. The PIFC met in October 2016 at the USDA Forest Service Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry in Hilo, HI. This meeting served as an opportunity to hear updates on forestry research in the Pacific, forest inventory analysis status and updates from each of the Island Foresters.



Hilo, HI

Members of the Pacific Islands Forestry Committee gather for presentations during the 2016 PIFC Meeting in Hilo, HI.



Leadership

STAFF AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

STAFF



Caitlyn Pollihan
Executive Director
cpollihan@westernforesters.org



Sara Goodwin
Communications Director
sgoodwin@westernforesters.org



Kelsey Delaney
Policy Director
kdelaney@westernforesters.org



Grace Mirzeler
Member Services Associate
gmirzeler@westernforesters.org

2016 CWSF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Ken Pimlott
Chair
CAL FIRE Director
California State Forester



Doug Decker
Past Chair
Oregon State Forester



Mike Lester
Incoming Chair
Colorado State Forester



Greg Josten
Secretary/Treasurer
South Dakota State Forester

2016 WFLC EXECUTIVE BOARD

CWSF Executive Committee members are also members of the WFLC Executive Board.



Nora Rasure
Co-Lead
Regional Forester
USDA Forest Service Intermountain Region



Rob Mangold
Research Lead
Station Director
USDA Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station



Cal Joyner
Incoming Co-Lead
Regional Forester
USDA Forest Service Southwestern Region

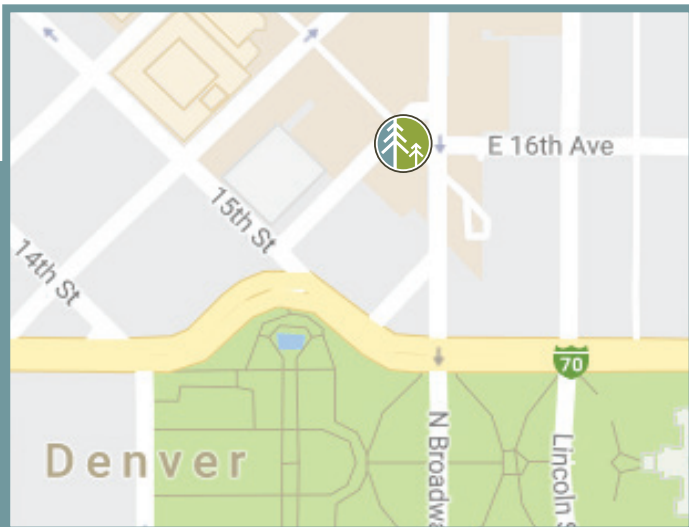


Sherry Hazelhurst
State & Private Forestry Lead
State & Private Forestry Director
USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region



Contact

LEARN MORE



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