



**WESTERN FORESTRY  
LEADERSHIP COALITION**

## Forest Stewardship Program/Landowner Assistance Committee

### 2025 Annual Report and 2026 Work Plan

## LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW

### COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP

2025 Leadership Team	2026 Leadership Team
<p><b>Chair:</b> Matt Provencher (WA)  <b>Vice Chair:</b> Trevor Dobell-Carlson (AK)  <b>Secretary:</b> Tanya Rubenstein (HI)  <b>Past Chair:</b> Stew McMorrow (CA)  <b>State Forester Advisor:</b> Kelly Norris (WY)  <b>CWSF/WFLC Staff Liaison:</b> Neil Simpson</p>	<p><b>Chair:</b> Trevor Dobell-Carlson (AK)  <b>Vice Chair:</b> Tanya Rubenstein (HI)  <b>Secretary:</b> Erik Castello (CO)  <b>Past Chair:</b> Matt Provencher (WA)  <b>State Forester Advisor:</b> Kelly Norris (WY)  <b>CWSF/WFLC Staff Liaison:</b> Neil Simpson</p>

View the mission on the committee’s webpage at

<https://www.westernforesters.org/committees/forest-stewardship-programlandowner-assistance-committee>

## 2025 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Created a 3-page Forest Stewardship Highlights and Accomplishments Report to inform policymakers on the importance and impacts of Western states’ stewardship programs.
  - Focuses on how the program reduces wildfire risk and can increase timber harvest and landowners’ long-term economic viability.
  - Highlights that federal dollars are amplified through investments by states, landowners, and other partners.
- Exchanged information through bi-monthly meetings between states about ongoing changes to FY25 funding, USDA, and USDA Forest Service (Forest Service) reorganization, and how different states operate. Facilitated state-to-state support in the face of uncertainty.
  - Federal partners attended every other meeting, resulting in three meetings involving only the states and three meetings with state and federal partners.
  - Hearing from the Forest Service Washington Office about ongoing changes at the federal level helped state programs prepare for the future.
- Utilized meetings to coordinate with the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) Partnership coordinator, James Wright, to share information, progress reports, and to keep many of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) partnership agreements progressing.
- Annual Meeting - focused on partnerships and other ways to reach landowners and partners. Virtual due to travel restrictions and reduced budgets.

- o Updates from Washington State Forester George Geissler and Wyoming State Forester/Committee State Forester Advisor Kelly Norris, the Forest Service, and NASF.
- o Topics included Tribal Forestry in WA, working with utilities, certified burner programs, and avoided conversion in Washington.
- o Breakout discussions covered topics such as successes and challenges, top partners, and strategies for engaging partners.
- Created an FSP/LOA Resource library in Google Drive to house and share various documents amongst states.
  - o Examples include Forest Management Plan templates and information on other programs, such as NRCS.

## 2026 WORK PLAN

### MEETING(S) AND CALLS PLANNED FOR 2026

- Bi-monthly virtual meetings starting in February. They are on the third Thursday of the month at 2 p.m. MST. Regular meetings involve only the states. Every other meeting, federal and NASF partners are invited.
- Annual meeting, virtual or in-person, specific dates and location TBD.
- Chair attendance at the CWSF/WFLC Fall Meeting.

### KEY ACTIVITIES, DELIVERABLES, AND OUTCOMES PLANNED FOR 2026

- Committee members will continue to develop a stronger peer network to share information, lessons learned, and helpful resources, and discuss forest stewardship/landowner assistance topics that impact western state forestry agencies and their partners.
  - o Primarily through bi-monthly meetings, ad-hoc communication, and document sharing via the Committee Library housed on the Committee's Google Drive folder.
  - o Encourage and help facilitate individual site and state visits as opportunities allow.
  - o Hold subject-focused meetings to educate the committee on key topics as needed.
- Discuss issues and brainstorm the impacts of emerging federal organizational changes and state funding reductions on forest stewardship and landowner assistance.
  - o Develop innovative solutions.
- Utilize CWSF processes and protocol to provide feedback to federal and state funders on matters of importance or impacts to state programs as a result of funding opportunities.
- Provide a platform for state forestry agency staff with forest stewardship/landowner assistance responsibilities to daylight emerging issues in their states and elevate issues, as appropriate, to the CWSF membership for discussion and/or action.
- Enhance direct communication with the Forest Service National Stewardship Program.
  - o Continue to involve Forest Service Regional Office and Washington Office staff at every other meeting and as needed to coordinate on items such as USDA and Forest Service reorganization.
- Work to advance the state – NRCS partnership.
  - o Provide a platform for state forestry agencies to share successes, information, and opportunities amongst themselves, and with NRCS at both the state and national levels.
  - o Coordinate with the NASF Forestry Partnership Coordinator on items related to the NRCS.
- Engage with other partners such as the National Association of Conservation Districts, tribes, and utility companies as appropriate.
  - o Create a shared spreadsheet to capture the multitude of traditional and non-traditional partners with which states are engaged.
- Explore what a Shared Stewardship Strategy across Western states means for FSP/LOA programs.
- Seek opportunities to highlight state success stories utilizing communication tools such as blog posts and the FSC website.

- Seek opportunities to strengthen coordination and communication with other committees on joint topics of interest.
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## FOR APPROVAL BY CWSF/WFLC MEMBERSHIP

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Recommendation for State Foresters to approve the Forest Stewardship Program/Landowner Assistance Committee's 2026 Work Plan.