



CWSF
COUNCIL OF WESTERN
STATE FORESTERS

Western Forestry Issues: WILDLAND FIRE



Wildland fire is a pervasive issue, and a pressing management challenge, across the West.

What was once a four month fire season now lasts six to eight months¹. States spend an annual average of \$1.6 billion in the prevention, control, and management of wildfire in addition to \$2 billion expended annually by the USDA Forest Service². As the fire season extends to a fire year, wildland fires are expected to be hotter, longer, more unpredictable, and more expensive.

Why is the wildland fire risk increasing across the West?

- Human development in the wildland urban interface (WUI)
- Deteriorating forest health across large-scale landscapes
- Increased presence of, and tree mortality by, native and non-native invasive pests
- Climate variability, extreme weather, and drought

The Council of Western State Foresters (CWSF) works with partners, western and national leaders on policies and programs to address wildland fire. CWSF supports a comprehensive approach to wildland fire management that meets the three goals of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy:

1. Resilient Landscapes
2. Fire Adapted Communities
3. Safe and Effective Wildfire Response

1, 2, 3 USDA Forest Service

The USDA Forest Service State Fire Assistance and Volunteer Fire Assistance programs are two programs that are critical to wildfire response nationwide. These programs have significant impacts on the West and the West's ability to reduce risk, prepare, mitigate, and respond to wildland fire. They provide crucial financial and technical assistance to states and local fire departments for fire prevention and suppression, as well as resources to protect local communities and reduce the risk of future fires.

CWSF supports these and other vital wildfire prevention and preparedness programs to protect communities and reduce the risk to people and property, including the Federal Excess Personal Property and Firefighter Property Program³.

CWSF works with our members, 17 State Foresters and six Pacific Island Foresters, to strategically allocate resources via western competitive grant processes; ensure a strong western voice on policy issues; and provide leadership on program delivery for critical state and federal programs.

Photo: Wes Schultz courtesy of CAL FIRE

