



Legislative & Policy Update – July 2022

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The [Council of Western State Foresters](#) (CWSF) Legislative & Policy Update provides information on issues of importance to CWSF. Policy and legislative updates are found on the CWSF webpage [here](#). Please note that the items highlighted in these updates are only a selection of the issues CWSF and the Western Forestry Leadership Coalition (WFLC) are monitoring. Keep an eye out for our monthly newsletter that will provide summaries on other key legislative and programmatic issues. If you have not yet subscribed, you can do so [here](#). For more information, please contact [Danielle Okst](#), Director of Policy.

This month saw a [major announcement](#) in the implementation of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) aimed at assisting at-risk communities in planning for and mitigating wildfire risks. The Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG) program provides a historic amount of funding that can help communities better prepare for the increasing threat of wildfires seen across the western United States.

BIL Community Wildfire Defense Grant

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack gave a keynote address this week at the [Western Governors' Association 2022 Annual Meeting](#) where he announced the [launch of the CWDG program](#). The BIL provides \$1 billion over five years for the CWDG program to provide grants to at-risk communities to develop or revise a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) or implement projects in a CWPP that is less than ten years old.

The CWDG program will be collaboratively delivered by the USDA Forest Service (Forest Service) and State Foresters. The National Association of State Foresters [press release](#) highlights the proven efficacy of CWPPs and their importance in “enhancing cross-boundary hazardous fuels reduction work in support of National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy priorities and the shared goals identified in state Forest Action Plans.”

CWDG prioritizes at-risk communities that are in an area identified as having high or very high wildfire hazard potential, are low-income, and/or have been impacted by a severe disaster. The program is anchored in the three goals of the [National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy](#):

- Restore and Maintain Landscapes: Landscapes across all jurisdictions are resilient to fire-related disturbances, in accordance with management objectives.
- Create Fire Adapted Communities: Human populations and infrastructure can withstand a wildfire without loss of life and property.
- Improve Wildfire Response: All jurisdictions participate in making and implementing safe, effective, efficient risk-based wildfire management decisions.

More information on this program, including the fiscal year 2022 Notice of Funding Opportunity, application, and other resources, will be made available soon on:

- [Forest Service CWDG webpage](#)
- [CWSF CWDG webpage](#)
- [Grants.gov](#) (Click CWSF for western materials)