



Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy
National Goals; Collective Solutions

Response to Wildfire
Fire Adapted Communities
Resilient Landscapes
Supported by Science



Northeastern Regional Assessment



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Process Overview – Membership

RSC Members			
George Baker, co-chair	IAFC	Chief, Mashpee Fire & Rescue Department	Mashpee, MA
Doreen Blaker	Keweenaw Bay Indian Community	Tribal Council Member	Baraga, MI
Tim Hepola	U.S. Fish & wildlife Service	Fire Ecologist	Bloomington, MN
Jim Johnson	NACO	Cook County Commissioner, District 4	Grand Marais, MN
Logan Lee	USFS, Region 9	Deputy Regional Forester	Milwaukee, WI
Jim Loach	National Park Service	Associate Director (operations) of Midwest Region	Omaha, NE
Tom Remus	Bureau of Indian Affairs	Fire Management Officer, Midwest Region	Grand Rapids, MN
Matt Rollins, chair	USGS	Fire Science Coordinator	Reston, VA
Tom Schuler	USFS	Supervisory Research Forester, Northern Research Station	Parsons, WV
Brad Simpkins	NASF	New Hampshire Interim State Forester	Concord, NH
Additional Team Members			
Maureen Brooks	NA State and Private Forests ,USFS	Community Fire Planner	Newtown Square, PA
Terry Gallagher	USFS, Region 9	Fuel Operations Specialist	Milwaukee, WI
Danny Lee	USFS, Eastern Forest Environ. Threat Assess. Center	Director	Ashville, NC
Jenna Sloan/ Gus Smith	Office of Wildland Fire Coordination	Strategic Planner	Washington, D.C.



Process Overview – Meetings

- Committee, Virtual meeting April 18.
- Committee, Virtual meeting April 26.
- Committee, Minneapolis May 9-10.
- Committee and Working group, Baltimore June 27-29
- Writing Team, Washington D.C. Aug. 30-31.
- Committee, Milwaukee Sept. 7-9.
- Bi-Weekly conference calls/Weekly conference calls since late August.



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Process Overview – What worked?

- Mimicking WFEC Membership
- OWFC Coordination (Jenna and Gus)
- US Forest Service staff commitment (Maureen and Terry)
- Outreach
- The functionality of the NE RSC improved throughout the process



Process Overview – What didn't

- Required time investment was much more than originally communicated.
- Committee member participation & leadership.
 - Meeting attendance, participation
 - ‘Cascading’ participation
 - Result = we didn't have the horsepower or endurance
- Working group leads acted as ‘working group’ for RSC.
- RSC had no experience with Phase I.
- Timeframe of the process was too short to really get good involvement in the report
- Membership should more closely reflect the landownership (needed more state involvement)



Process Overview – What didn't

- Time available for good collaboration
- Western bias
- The CRAFT “objectives hierarchy” was hard to explain to RSC members
- Unclear about transition from filling in the CRAFT questions on portal to writing the report
- AAR Results (Rollins)



Process Overview-Building on Previous Relationships

- Existing 'Trust-based' relationships within the fire community in the region
- The team relied on effective, existing networks for outreach.
- Compacts provided a network for state engagement.
- Strategies from the 2010 statewide forest resources strategy documents in the northeast and midwest
- LMPs (Land Management Plans) in the Region



Process Overview-Recommendations

- Collaboration between NSAT and RSCs is necessary for the success of Phase III.
- Capitalize on investment in time during phase II by the Committee members.
- Ensure that regional uniqueness remains intact.
- Ensure that performance measures remain quantitative, and are monitored effectively.
- Increase communications with other regional committees.
- Opportunity to monitor and refine implementation strategy periodically.



Process Overview-Outreach

- Outreach occurred June 22 – August 19
 - Direct interaction with individuals and organizations by phone and email.
 - A set of 4 virtual discussion forums (48 people).
 - Posting the Draft Regional Assessment and soliciting written comments on the full document (six people)
 - A web-based survey (10 people).
- 500 contacts through presentations, meetings, conference calls.



Policies and Regulations

Policies unique to the region

- Eastern Area Mobilization Guide
- Fire Compacts – Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Big Rivers, Great Lakes
- Agreements between agencies and organization for wildfire response on federal lands, including Department of Defense (DOD) installations.
- Master Interagency Fire Management Agreement
- State Cooperative Agreements and Annual Operating Plans



Policies and Regulations

Barriers

- Smoke management plans – restriction of prescribed burning: seasonally, extent, duration.
- The federal budget system doesn't account for blow-down events (boundary waters, etc). This conflict in the budget allocation system is not unique to the NE.
- Lack of a Multi-agency Coordination (MAC) process; however , a successful, local working model is the Minnesota Incident Command System.
- Reliance on rural/volunteer fire departments for initial attack.



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Values

- Public and Firefighter Safety.
- Land and Resources.
- Protection of Private Property and Investment.
- Willingness to Collaborate and Create Partnerships across Jurisdictions.
- Education and Awareness.



Risks

- Public and firefighter safety
- Increased parcelization/fragmentation
- Loss of fire dependent ecosystems (lack of fire and parcelization)
- Education and awareness
- Increased development (WUI)
- Invasive plants
- Increased human population in the WUI and decreasing wildland fire protection personnel available leads to increased reliance on local fire departments



Trends

- Increasing population and patterns of development.
- Decreasing public awareness due to infrequent fire regimes and immigration to wildlands.
- Increased role of public & private partnerships relative to reliance on more traditional fire responses models.
- Diminishing infrastructure and wood products industry limits the economic feasibility of fuel treatments.



Goals and Regional Objectives

Landscapes across all jurisdictions are resilient to fire-related disturbances in accordance with management objective

- 1.1 Restore and maintain structure, composition, and function of fire-dependent ecosystems.
- 1.2 Treat event fuels expeditiously.
- 1.3 Protect threatened, endangered and sensitive animal and plant habitat.
- 1.4 Prevent the spread of invasive plants.
- 1.5 Maintain/increase skills and resource capacity to use wildfire.



Goals and Regional Objectives

Landscapes across all jurisdictions are resilient to fire-related disturbances in accordance with management objective

- 1.6 Use the best available science to improve treatment effectiveness and wildfire planning.
- 1.7 Identify and address policy barriers and conflicts.
- 1.8 Foster communication among stakeholders and build partnerships.
- 1.9 Reduce landscape fragmentation by building shared objectives.
- 1.10 Use existing BAER/BAR funding and expertise to identify and treat invasive organisms, water quality issues, and erosion.



Goals and Regional Objectives

Human populations and infrastructure can withstand a wildfire without loss of life and property

2.1 Fire authorities, local governments, and community members negotiate/accept risk and the range of actions taken to mitigate risk.

2.2 Reduce Wildfire Hazards.

2.3 Reduce unwanted human ignitions in and near communities.

2.4 Address conflicts/barriers to fire-adaptation in local land use planning, building ordinances, and building codes.

2.6 Develop agreements and memorandum of understanding (MOUs) that ease jurisdictional barriers.



Goals and Regional Objectives

All jurisdictions participate in making and implementing safe, effective and efficient risk-based wildfire management decisions

- 3.1. Provide for firefighter and public safety.
- 3.2. Ensure that wildfire response reflects the broader wildland fire management strategy.
- 3.3. Maintain the capacity to suppress unwanted fires.
- 3.4. Improve organizational efficiencies and wildfire response effectiveness.



Goals and Regional Objectives

All jurisdictions participate in making and implementing safe, effective and efficient risk-based wildfire management decisions

- 3.5. Coordinate planning, training, detection and response activities for efficiencies.
- 3.6. Improve and maintain infrastructure (airports, roads and bridges, etc.) that affect wildfire response.
- 3.7. Address capacity issues related to all-hazard response.
- 3.8. Provide access and reporting standards to all wildfire response agencies and organizations.



Areas to explore for reducing risk

Invest to prevent human caused ignitions

1. Double the investment in prevention.
2. Maintain current investment in prevention.
3. Reduce prevention investment to zero.
4. Invest in local ordinances that reduce unwanted ignitions from debris burning, etc. (seasonally, all seasons, etc.).



Areas to explore for reducing risk

Invest in fuels treatments

1. Redirect investments to increase investment in fuels treatments.
2. Reduce investments in fuels treatments by 50 percent.
3. Increase investments in fuels treatments by 100 percent.
4. Invest only in treating around communities in fire risk landscapes.
5. Invest only in treating wind/storm/pest/ drought fuels.



Areas to explore for reducing risk

Invest to build capacity in wildfire response

1. Shift all fuels investments to building capacity.
2. Integrate wildfire response within a state/compact.
3. Evaluate integration of all initial attack agencies to determine if it increases capacity or efficiency.
4. Invest in water scooping aircraft assets in states that need more air support.
5. Eliminate barriers to all cost sharing and cross billing.



Areas to explore for reducing risk

Invest to protect values exposed to risk

1. Treat landscapes with prescribed fire in fire dependent ecosystems.
2. Use funding to address broader landscape issues- landscape protection not structure protection.
3. Invest in influencing developers, code, planning, permitting – modification in role of structure protection.
4. Shift cost burden to the home owners in fire prone areas that are benefitting from living in the wildland urban interface (WUI)



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QUESTIONS?