

WILDLAND FIRE SCIENCE PARTNERSHIP

CHARTER

A UNIVERSITY- FOREST SERVICE PARTNERSHIP WORKING TOGETHER TO
IMPROVE THE MANAGEMENT OF WILDLAND FIRE BY INTEGRATING
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, EDUCATION, AND PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN RESEARCH STATION

Fire, Fuels & Smoke Science Program

Wildland Fire Management Research, Development & Application Program

THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

National Center for Landscape Fire Analysis and Wildland Fire Program

UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO

Fire Research and Management Exchange System and Wildland Fire Program



BACKGROUND

Today's fire managers must make complex decisions balancing fire costs and benefits with the need to protect people, property, and other resources. Accumulated fuels, climate change, and diversifying landscapes will lead to more and larger fires in the future, adding further management challenges. Effective education and new approaches are needed to develop new professionals skilled at managing landscapes for long-term ecological and social resilience. The fire management organization needs diverse yet complementary research entities working together to address issues such as restoration of damaged landscapes, the effects of climate change on fire, invasive species, and increased values at risk in the wildland-urban interface.

The **Wildland Fire Science Partnership** brings together scientific expertise, technological capability, education, and on-the-ground practical experience from the U.S. Forest Service's Rocky Mountain Research Station, The University of Montana, and the University of Idaho. With a common mission and goals, the partners can provide people within and outside the fire management community with new ideas, tools, and technology to address the complex issues of fire management today and in the future.

Rationale for Partnership

- The Forest Service's Rocky Mountain Research Station, The University of Montana, and the University of Idaho have demonstrated expertise and accomplishment in wildland fire research and application, both individually and together through cooperative work. The coordinated efforts of the Partnership will bring new synergy and efficiency to this productive legacy.
- Research scientists have met the challenges of fire and land management by developing knowledge, tools, and technologies. The Partnership leverages past and current investments in science by investigating how to speed delivery and providing mechanisms for managers to more easily access and use knowledge, tools, and technologies.
- Sustained purposeful interaction between the wildland fire research and management communities is critical to develop, deliver, and support the use and adoption of science and technologies. The Partnership will increase and improve these and other stakeholder interactions.
- Active involvement with the wildland fire community is a hallmark of the members of the Partnership. The Partnership will catalyze more involvement, especially with the next generation of fire professionals.
- The university partners engage a community of students, researchers and practitioners different than Forest Service Research and Development. This engagement enriches collaboration and multiplies outreach and delivery capacity. The two universities can identify new issues, opportunities, and agendas to complement the agency's strategic direction.

Wildland Fire Science Partnership Members

This charter establishes a *Wildland Fire Science Partnership* to accelerate the development and delivery of science-based information and tools, which enable wildland fire, fuels, and smoke managers, practitioners, and other natural resource professionals to more effectively manage people, places, and natural resources. The Partnership includes:

- The Rocky Mountain Research Station Wildland Fire Management Research Development and Application Program and the Fire, Fuels and Smoke Science Program;
- The University of Montana National Center for Landscape Fire Analysis and Wildland Fire Program;
- The University of Idaho Fire Research And Management Exchange System (FRAMES) and Wildland Fire Program.

MISSION AND GOALS OF WFSP

A University-Forest Service partnership working together to improve the management of wildland fire by integrating science, technology, education and practical experience

Through collaboration among users, investors, researchers, and developers, the Wildland Fire Science Partnership will:

- **Increase core fire and fuel science and measurement capabilities** to improve resource management and fire planning.
- **Produce timely, reliable, and consistent fire and fuel information** for scientists, resource managers, policymakers, and the public.
- **Increase access to critical data and applications** to support documentation, implementation, and review of decisions and accomplishments.
- **Develop the skills and capabilities of future fire managers** by providing experiential education, research opportunities, access to relevant science data and applications, and training.

PRINCIPLES OF OPERATION

Governance

The Wildland Fire Science Partnership is led by the Executive Board, the executive managers from the two universities and the Director of RMRS. The Executive Board approves the annual program of work, monitors and reviews performance, assembles funding for the Partnership, and guides the Program Leaders Team.

The Program Leaders Team (PLT) consists of the leaders of each of the member programs. The PLT develops and executes an annual program of work, manages their respective programs to efficiently produce the deliverables, and continually prepares for future needs, based on stakeholder interactions, demonstrated need, and research discovery.

A Partnership Coordinator provides support to the Executive Board and PLT. The Partnership Coordinator, with the guidance and support of the PLT, is responsible for scheduling and planning, task coordination, communication and marketing, facilitation, process monitoring, record keeping, and general business management.

The Executive Board and the Program Leaders Team must vote on any decisions to alter the funding structure of the Partnership, to amend the Charter, to add or remove partners, or to change mission and/or goals.

Program Development

The Program Leaders Team collaborates to develop an annual program of work that advances specific, innovative progress in the areas of fire science development and delivery, increased access to data and applications, and development a future workforce. The collaboration for this planning occurs at twice-yearly meetings, in conference calls, and correspondence, and through direct peer-to-peer working relationships among members of each partner's organization. The WFSP will nurture and advance

those peer-to-peer relationships among their organizations' scientists and practitioners and will help those peers develop projects and products that advance the larger strategic mission of the Partnership.

The Partners recognize that the Partners' annual accomplishments will include work produced by individual partners; work produced by a combination of multiple partners; and in the future will include innovative programmatic and strategic work that involves the entire partnership.

Each year the PLT produces: a report of accomplishments to submit to the Executive Board; a one-page briefing for the Executive Board to use in budgeting; a variety of outreach and communication materials to inform stakeholders of the Partnership; and various supporting documents as needed.

Strategic Direction

WFSP's priority is to improve the fire science supporting appropriate wildland fire management. WFSP addresses the fire science needs before, during and after a fire. Partners are nimble, creative, and entrepreneurial yet create durable, reliable products and services.

The Partnership exists to serve the needs of active and established wildland fire, fuels, and smoke managers; practitioners; other scientists; resource professionals; and the students, junior professionals, and technicians that will be the analysts, planners, and decision/policy makers of tomorrow.