



The Wildfire Resilience Coalition (WRC) believes that the growing threat of wildfire to communities in the United States requires an integrated approach—one that unites mitigation, response, and recovery within a cohesive wildfire management system. As we explore opportunities to improve how wildfire is managed at the federal level, we must ensure that any changes are rooted in proven principles, informed by those who are working on the ground, and focused on outcomes that build long-term resilience – both for the workforce and in the forests. Much of the foundation for successful improvements in our approach to wildfire has already been laid out in the bi-partisan recommendations of the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission.

Wildfire mitigation activities like hazardous fuels reduction, prescribed burning, forest restoration, and home hardening must be fully supported and coordinated with wildfire response and post-fire recovery. Wildfire is a natural and necessary process, and our response to it must reflect this complexity. We cannot afford to treat suppression in isolation. True wildfire resilience begins long before a spark ignites and extends well beyond the moment a fire is contained.

We must also ensure that fire continues to be used as a beneficial tool. Prescribed fire, cultural burning, and the strategic use of managed wildfire reduce the risk of catastrophic fire while restoring forest health and supporting ecosystem function. These practices are essential—not optional—and must be expanded and integrated fully in Federal wildfire systems approaches.

Our fire and land management workforce is the heart of the solution. To build a system that lasts, **we need to recruit, train, and retain a diverse, well-compensated workforce that includes firefighters and land stewards.** That means supporting not just federal staff, but also the Tribal, local, state, and nonprofit professionals who make up the broader fire community.

Wildfire preparation, response, and recovery must happen across boundaries. Wildfire does not respect jurisdictional lines, and neither should our strategies. Strong interagency coordination, shared stewardship agreements, and place-based collaboration have already

shown what's possible. Now is the time to strengthen and scale partnerships —not to fragment or separate them.

We also recognize that innovation must be part of the solution. **Access to real-time data, improved fire modeling, centralized intelligence, and performance tracking are essential tools for success.** These resources should be used to guide strategic action and ensure accountability.

Fire and land management must remain tightly linked. Fire affects forest structure, wildlife habitat, water systems, outdoor recreation, and cultural resources. If fire management is separated from land stewardship, we lose the ability to make informed, effective, and ecologically sound decisions. Disconnecting these systems would undermine decades of progress.

Finally, **wildfire resilience requires sustained investment.** Programs like Community Wildfire Defense Grants, Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program, and Shared Stewardship are making a difference. These initiatives must be expanded and given long-term support so that communities and landscapes can adapt and thrive.

The path forward is clear: we need a wildfire management system that values collaboration, integrates all phases of fire, and invests in building resilience in communities and forests.

We stand ready to work with leaders across agencies, sectors, and regions to build a future where wildfire is managed wisely, communities are prepared, and landscapes are healthy and resilient.

The following organizations endorse these principles. Other participants in the Wildfire Resilience Coalition contributed to the discussion but are not able to sign on to this statement at this time.

American Forests
Climate and Wildfire Institute
Environmental Defense Fund
Federation of American Scientists
Firefighters United for Safety, Ethics and Ecology
Forest Stewards Guild
ForEverGreen Forestry
Grassroot Wildland Firefighters
Megafire Action
Mt. Adams Resource Stewards

National Association of Forest Service Retirees
Outdoor Alliance
Public lands Foundation
Silvix Resources
Southern Willamette Forest
Collaborative
The Nature Conservancy
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Trout Unlimited
Wild Montana