

# Alaska Division of Forestry

## State & Federal Partnerships

**Partnerships between the Alaska Division of Forestry and other state and federal agencies are crucial for healthy forest management nationwide through shared funding sources, legislative processes, and policy direction.**

Alaska partners with other states through the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) and the Council of Western State Foresters (CWSF), and participates in policy leadership and advocacy at the national level.

Additional partnerships are in place with the federal government. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) State & Private Forestry (S&PF) programs leverage the capacity of state agencies, such as DOF, to provide vital technical and financial assistance to forest landowners and resource managers to help maintain and improve forests via community forestry, stewardship forestry, forest health, and wildland fire protection. The CWSF is active in the direction and implementation of these federal programs through a formalized partnership with the Western USFS Regions and Stations, called the Western Forestry Leadership Coalition.

Partnership examples include:

- Alaska's Community Forestry Program- offers grants to local governments and nonprofits to assess, inventory, and manage public trees and forests in communities.
- Alaska's Forest Stewardship Program- assists non-industrial private landowners with forest planning and work to keep forested lands productive for present and future owners, and to increase economic and environmental benefits.

Congress has provided funding assistance for wildland fire to states through the S&PF since 2001. The focus of the funding is to mitigate risk from fire in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), in keeping with the National Fire Plan (NFP). The NFP is a long-term strategy for reducing the effects of catastrophic wildfires throughout the nation. In Alaska, NFP is implemented within the DOF Fire & Aviation Program through the existing USFS S&PF and State Fire Assistance (SFA) programs. In the west, a portion of the NFP SFA is available and awarded through the Western WUI Competitive Grant process with an emphasis on hazardous fuel reduction, information and education, and community

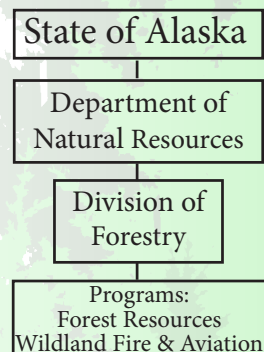
homeowner action. Based on projects identified in local Community Wildfire Protection Plans, Alaska has successfully competed for Western WUI grant funding. An estimated \$800,000 to \$1.2 million a year has been awarded to Alaska implementation for WUI projects for large-scale hazard fuel reduction work and to encourage the public to take efforts in being Firewise.

Volunteer Fire Assistance, provided through S&PF, is used to improve the firefighting capabilities of the rural fire departments and enhance protection in the urban interface by providing funding for training, equipment, and prevention activities on a cost share basis.

In Alaska, DOF has worked to establish Forest Inventory Analysis (FIA), in partnership with NASF, in a greater effort nationwide to create permanent inventory plots. The FIA effort is informally called the "nation's tree census." Alaska is one of the last states without a fully-implemented FIA program, due to funding allocation. The strategically-scaled forest plots provide the ability to establish long-term growth and yield data to measure sustainability and to provide reports on trends. Determining growth and yield in both Southeast and, in the most current effort, within the Interior will provide more information about Alaska's forests and will help managers understand the potential for biomass utilization.

**The various partnerships encourage holistic, landscape-scale management in order to care for and provide benefit from our forests for present and future generations.**

### Did you know?



*State Foresters are state government employees that oversee and manage a forestry agency, department, or division in their state. In Alaska, the Division of Forestry is part of the State of Alaska's*



*Department of Natural Resources. The structure for forest and wildfire management is under the Division leadership of the State Forester.*



## National Association of State Foresters

<http://www.stateforesters.org/>

**Mission:** To represent State and Territorial Forester interests by influencing forest policy and leading efforts to promote healthy and sustainable trees and forests.

» Established in 1920, NASF is a non-profit organization comprised of the directors of forestry agencies in the U.S. states, territories and the District of Columbia.

» State Foresters manage and protect state and private forests which encompass two-thirds of the nation's forests.

» In Oct. 2013, Alaska State Forester Chris Maisch started his year-long term as President. The Executive Committee provides strategic direction, management oversight, and policy leadership. The structure enables State Foresters to serve as subject-matter experts that influence NASF policies and partnerships, assist in the organizational process, and serve as liaisons to other agencies and partners.

» Though primarily responsible for forests on state and privately owned lands, State Foresters work closely with federal, state, tribal, local government, and private forestry interests entities. NASF is recognized as a leading authority on forest policy and advocates legislation and policies that promote the role of trees, forests, and the professionals that manage them.

## NASF - a partnership between:



**Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters**

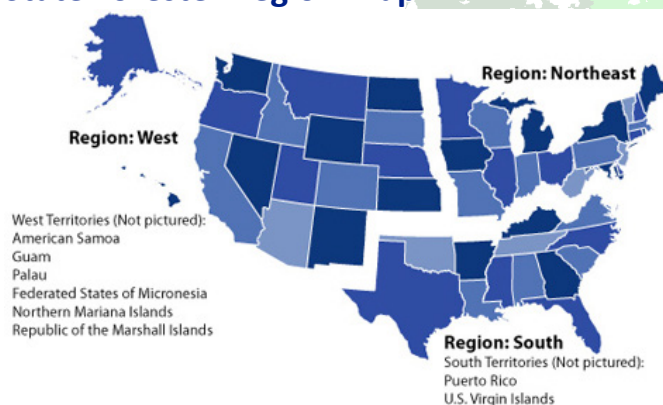


**Southern Group of State Foresters**



**Council of Western State Foresters**

## State Forester Region Map



## Council of Western State Foresters

<http://www.westernstateforesters.org/>

**Mission:** To promote science-based forest management that serves the values of society and ensures the health and sustainability of western forests.

» Established in 1967, the nonpartisan organization consists of state, territorial, and commonwealth foresters from the Western U.S. (including Alaska) and the Pacific Islands.

» State Foresters responsibilities vary across the west and include providing forest management assistance to landowners, managing state lands, and supplying wildfire and forest health protection services.

» CWSF partners with other agencies, non-profit organizations, and landowners to best ensure the sustainability and health of western forests in meeting current needs and those of future generations.

» One such partnership is with the USDA Forest Service; CWSF works closely with their federal counterparts, via the Western Forestry Leadership Coalition, who manage federal lands and administer S&PF programs.



**WESTERN FORESTRY LEADERSHIP COALITION**

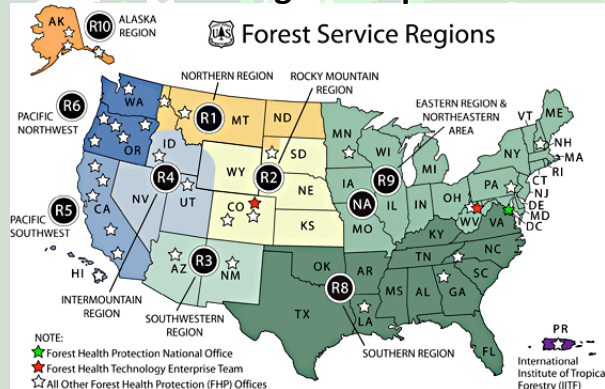


## Western Forestry Leadership Coalition a partnership between:

**Council of Western State Foresters**  
17 State (includes ALASKA)  
6 Territorial or Commonwealth (Western U.S. & Pacific Islands) Foresters

**U.S. Forest Service**  
7 Regional Foresters  
3 Western Research Station Director  
1 Forest Products Lab Director

## Forest Service Region Map



## Forest Action Plans & Alaska

<http://www.forestactionplans.org/states/alaska>  
or <http://forestry.alaska.gov> (see Assessment & Strategy)

## Conserve - Protect - Enhance

The Forest Action Plans collectively represent the first-ever strategic plan for the nation's forests. The impetus for the effort stemmed from landmark changes in the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (the 2008 Farm Bill), when Congress tasked the states and territories to craft assessments of the forests within their boundaries and develop strategies to address threats and improve health.

The FAPs were submitted to and approved by the USFS, on behalf of the secretary of the USDA, in June 2010. Analysis of the western plans showed that, as diverse as the west is, there are foundational issues held in common across forest types and ownerships including: Forest Health and Invasive Species; Wildland Fire and the Wildland-Urban Interface; Sustainable Communities and Economies; Climate Change, Carbon Sequestration, and Biomass Energy; and Water Quality/Quantity.

The resulting Statewide **Forest Resource Assessments** and **Strategies**, or **Forest Action Plans**, provide an analysis of forest conditions and trends and delineate priority forest landscape areas. They offer practical, long-term plans for investing state, federal, and other resources where they can be most effective in achieving state and national forest management goals.

The Western Forestry Leadership Coalition's **Six-Point Plan** emerges from the 23 state and Pacific Island Forest Action Plans and defines the way forward. It includes:

1. *Actively manage all forestlands*
2. *Build adequate and flexible capacity and funding*
3. *Capitalize on "co-benefits"*
4. *Strengthen partnerships and collaborative approaches*
5. *Support research to inform science-based decision making*
6. *Gain support through effective engagement*

## The National Cohesive Strategy

<http://www.forestsandrangelands.gov/strategy/>



In response to requirements of the Federal Land Assistance, Management, and Enhancement (FLAME) Act of 2009, the Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC, same acronym but different from Western Forestry Leadership Coalition)

directed the development of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy (Cohesive Strategy).

The Cohesive Strategy provides vision to safely and effectively extinguish fire when needed, use fire where allowable, manage our natural resources, and live as a nation with wildland fire.

Representatives from NASF played a key role in the crafting of the Cohesive Strategy. State Foresters also contributed to the release of the FLAME Act of 2009 Report to Congress.

Together, these documents address elements requested by Congress after the passage of the FLAME Act and represent the next stage in an evolving world of wildland fire management with the goal of achieving safer, more efficient, cost-effective public and resource protection goals and more resilient landscapes.

## Western Governors' Association

<http://www.westgov.org/about>

Established in 1984, the WGA is an independent, non-partisan organization of Governors from 19 Western states, two Pacific-flag territories and one commonwealth. It was formed to provide strong multi-state leadership in the many vital issues and opportunities that cross state lines. The WGA addresses key policy and governance issues in natural resources, the environment, human services, economic development, international relations, transportation and public management. Governors use the WGA to develop and advocate policies that reflect regional interests and relationships in debates at the national and state levels.

The WGA has six basic objectives:

1. *Develop and communicate regional policy*
2. *Serve as a leadership forum*
3. *Build regional capacity*
4. *Conduct Research and disseminate findings*
5. *Form coalitions and partnerships to advance regional interests*
6. *Build public understanding and support for regional issues and policy positions*

In Alaska, direction to the organization may stem from WGA priorities.