

# International Symposium on Wildfire Management

Westgate Hotel- Park City Utah, United States of America

12-13 September 2016





## Background

Representatives from Australia and New Zealand visited Canada, USA, and Mexico during September 2016 as part of the North American Fire Management Study Tour. The study tour is a bi-annual event, alternating between North America and Australia/New Zealand, coordinated by the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Coordinating Council, Forest Fire Management Group (FFMG) in cooperation with the North American Forestry Commission, Fire Management Working Group (FMWG). Several experts and thought leaders were invited to address the Study Tour group for 2 days in Park City, Utah at the 2016 International Symposium on Wildfire Management.

## Purpose

The purpose of the Symposium was to:

- Share the current state of knowledge regarding the key topics, both operationally and scientifically;
- Identify emerging and prospective priority issues related to the key topics that can be shared amongst the broader community of wildfire management;
- Further develop fire management networking amongst the countries involved and;
- Identify possible areas for future improvement in fire management, specific to the key topics chosen.

## Delegates

Delegates from Australia, New Zealand, Mexico, Korea, and United States of America attended the Symposium.

## Official Opening

US Forest Service Branch Chief Gordon Sachs and Department of Interior, Office of Wildland Fire Director Bryan Rice welcomed delegates on behalf of the US Government and officially opened the Symposium with a challenge to make progress on recurring issues from previous events, with a focus on the key topics set to be discussed.

## Agenda

The Symposium agenda focused on three key topic areas:

- Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Fire Management
- Wildland Urban Interface and Fire Adapted Communities
- Risk Characterization and Management

A copy of the Agenda forms APPENDIX A.

## Outcomes

A group facilitator initiated each session of the symposium, providing an introduction for the researchers and experts gather to present on the key topics. Presentations were grouped together on the agenda concurrent with the key topics, with all delegates present for each session. Before changing to the next topic the facilitator lead the group in a discussion on the subject matter covered and the ways to move forward with implementation of ideas, through collaboration with our colleagues.

A set of priority actions were developed by the forum. These actions are intended to be areas that the attendees could champion, and areas of focus as the topics for the next International Symposium on Wildfire Management are developed. These actions are:

1. Bridge the gap between research, traditional ecological knowledge, indigenous community knowledge, and practitioners of fire management.
2. How do we exchange information on community engagement between North American wildfire organizations and Australian/New Zealand wildfire organizations?
3. Share information on prescribed fire and managed wildfire practices.
4. What are the information technology tools and applications in use by practitioners today?
5. We will identify where our practices regarding standards can work together.

## Acknowledgements

The contribution of display materials and visitor information by the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest fire staff, in particular the efforts of Christine Brown and Brook Chadwick, is gratefully acknowledged. Their support was critical to the delivery of this Symposium. Support by Forest Service International Programs through Ashlee Jackson is appreciatively acknowledged, as are the untiring efforts of Mike Cherry and Mike Mattfeldt (US Forest Service) for ensuring that local arrangements ran as smoothly as possible.

### APPENDIX A

# North American Fire Study Tour 2016: International Symposium on Wildfire

**Monday, September 12**

## Introduction

- 08:00 Opening Remarks & Introductions Gordy Sachs- USFS; Brian Rice- DOI
- 08:30 Joint Fire Science Program Ed Brunson
- 09:00 Fire Research in the U.S. Forest Service Don Long
- 09:30 Australian perspectives Rich Thornton
- 10:00 **Break**

### Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Fire Management

- 10:30 Using traditional knowledge and western scientific knowledge in forest and fuels management and restoration Alan Watson
- 11:00 Using traditional ecological knowledge in fire and land management Frank Lake
- 11:30 **Lunch**
- 13:00 Discussion- Fire and Ecological Issues Jason Steinmetz (facilitate); All
- 14:30 **Break**

### Wildland Urban Interface/ Fire Adapted Communities

- 15:00 The Forest Service Fire adapted communities concept Pam Leschak
- 15:30 National FS Community Mitigation Assistance Team Pilot Pam Leschak
- 16:00 Discussion - Wrap-up Jason Steinmetz (facilitate); All
- 17:00 **Conclude for the day**

[Additional Symposium Resources](#)

[Speaker Bios](#)

## Tuesday, September 13

### Wildland Urban Interface/ Fire Adapted Communities (Continued)

- 08:00 Welcome/ Check-in All
- 08:15 Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network Michele Medley-Daniels/Lynn Decker
- 08:45 FAC Self-Assessment Tool Michele Medley-Daniels/Lynn Decker
- 09:15 Discussion - Fire Adapted Communities/ WUI Jason Steinmetz (facilitate); All
- 10:30 **Break**

### Risk Characterization and Management

- 11:00 Improved guidelines for safety zones and escape routes Dan Jimenez
- 11:30 **Lunch**
- 13:00 Geospatial Data for wildland fire decision support Donald Long
- 13:30 Wildland fire management and risk- Hard truths Mark Finney
- 14:00 **Break**
- 14:30 Wildland fire risk management: from concept to application Matt Thompson
- 15:00 Discussion - Risk Jason Steinmetz (facilitate); All
- 16:30 Wrap-up and Action items Jason Steinmetz (facilitate); All
- 17:00 **Conclude**