



**Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy**  
**National Goals; Collective Solutions**

*Response to Wildfire*  
*Fire Adapted Communities*  
*Resilient Landscapes*  
*Supported by Science*



# **Southeast Regional Assessment**



## **Process Overview**

- RSC & WG included representation from a diverse range of county, state, and federal agencies, NGOs, and entities active in the Southeastern fire management community: BIA, Choctaw Nation, FWS, NPS, SGSF, TFS, USFS, USGS
- RSC chartered WG during spring 2011 meeting
- WG held weekly conference calls and met in July and August
- RSC held bimonthly conference calls
- RSC met to review WG's work in September, providing guidance for revising and expansion of regional report



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## Process Overview

- Phase II Southeastern Cohesive Strategy effort based on foundational documents:
  - Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment
  - Southern Forest Futures Project
- Success in the Phase II effort was due in large part to close relationships between members of the Southeastern fire management community at all levels





## Process Overview

- Southeastern Phase II Outreach effort had four primary parts:
  - Document review of foundational documents of fire policy and science in the Southeast as well as Forest Resources Assessments for the 13 Southeastern states and Puerto Rico
  - Two focus groups held in Columbia, South Carolina and Pearl, Mississippi drew 80 participants
  - Online comment form sent to 1,400 Southeastern stakeholders and widely recirculated and posted online
  - Multiple conference calls and webinars to capture input from regional stakeholder groups



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## **Policies and Regulations**

Southeastern policies and regulations that create barriers to effective collaboration:

- Conflicts related to agency policy
- Nearly 80% of acreage in the Southeast is privately held
- Balancing widespread expectation for wildfire protection with the safety of firefighters and the public with available resources.
- Landscape fragmentation as a result of rural development



## **Values, Trends and Risks**

- Ecosystem – air, water, and other ecosystem components
- Infrastructure – human infrastructure, habitations, other structures and property
- Societal – human, social, and cultural values
- Economic – direct and indirect costs of wildland fires
- Fire Management – wildfire response capacity and capability



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## **Values, Trends and Risks**

- Population growth and rapid development of WUI
- Land fragmentation
- Smoke management



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## **Values, Trends and Risks**

- *Describe the trends with respect to values and risks that the region sees as current or future issues.*





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## Goals and Regional Objectives

Restore and Maintain Landscapes: Landscapes across all jurisdictions are resilient to fire-related disturbances in accordance with management objectives

- Objective 1.1 Build and maintain resiliency in Southeastern landscapes through strategic use of prescribed fire, mechanical treatments, grazing, etc., and manage wildfire where and when appropriate based on ownership and landscape context
- Objective 1.2 Promote strategic interagency policy development and planning across agencies, organizations and the public to more effectively integrate wildland fire planning into land-use planning and economic development



## Goals and Regional Objectives

Restore and Maintain Landscapes: Landscapes across all jurisdictions are resilient to fire-related disturbances in accordance with management objectives

- Objective 1.3 Develop and sustain capability and capacity required to plan and carry out landscape treatments, including prescribed fire
- Objective 1.4 Encourage increased public awareness to ensure public acceptance and active participation in achieving landscape objectives
- Objective 1.5 Mitigate environmental threats other than wildfire (i.e. storm damage, insects, ice storms, hurricanes, insects and disease) that reduce ecosystem vitality and increase susceptibility to wildfire



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## **Goals and Regional Objectives**

- Fire Adapted Communities: Human populations and infrastructure can withstand a wildfire without loss of life and property
- Objective 2.1 Support development of, and maintain engagement with communities by developing and leveraging partnerships through community wildfire planning for improved preparedness
  - Objective 2.2 Eliminate loss of life and minimize loss of structures
  - Objective 2.3 Coordinate public policy and shared responsibility across jurisdictions



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## **Goals and Regional Objectives**

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

- Objective 3.1 Increase firefighter safety by using risk management
- Objective 3.2 Increase and leverage resource capability and capacity. Streamline and support training across all areas to maximize effectiveness



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## **Alternatives to Achieve the Goals and Objectives**

*Four potential Management Scenarios were considered*

- Alternative A: Present Management Situation
- Alternative B: Increased Personal Responsibility and Action Through Outreach and Education
- Alternative C: Increased Firefighter Safety and Wildfire Response Through Enhanced Collaboration, Training, and Capacity
- Alternative D: Increase Proactive Fuels Mitigation Through All Management Techniques, Including Prescribed Burning



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## **Southeast Regional Strategy Committee**

- Mike Zupko – Chair, Southern Governors Association Representative (Executive Director, Southern Group of State Foresters)
- Kevin Fitzgerald – Vice Chair, Great Smoky Mountains National Park Deputy Superintendant, NPS (alternate: Liz Struhar – Fire Planner, NPS)
- Liz Agpaoa – Regional Forester, Southern Region, USFS (alternate: Dan Olsen – Director of Fire & Aviation Management, Southern Region, USFS)
- Tom Boggus – Texas State Forester, NASF
- Ed Brunson – BIA (alternate: Larry Mahler - Forester, BIA)
- Rob Doudrick – Station Director, USFS (alternate: Kier Klepzig – Assistant Director, SRS)
- Bob Eaton – Chief, Division of Fire Management, FWS
- Jim Ham – County Comm, GA
- Tom Lowry – Choctaw Nation
- Alexa McKerrow – Biologist, USGS
- Bruce Woods – Department Head, Mitigation and Prevention, Texas Forest Service, IAFC



## **Working Group Members**

- David Frederick – Chair, Fire Director, Southern Group of State Foresters
- Darryl Jones – Vice Chair, State Fire Chief, South Carolina Forestry Commission
- Tom Spencer – Vice Chair, Predictive Services Department Head, Texas Forest Service
- Forrest Blackbear – BIA
- Vince Carver – Regional Fire Ecologist, FWS Fire
- Margit Bucher – North Carolina Fire Manager, The Nature Conservancy
- Alexa McKerrow – Biologist, USGS
- Shardul Raval – Assistant Director, Fire & Aviation Management, Southern Region, USFS
- Rachel Smith – Natural Resource Specialist, Presidential Management Fellow, USFS
- Liz Struhar – Fire Planner, NPS



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## **Coordination and Logistical Support Team**

- Sandy Cantler – SE Coordination Lead, USFS
- Carol Deering – (on NEMAC SE site as member) USGS
- Jim Fox – Director, NEMAC, RENCI, UNC Asheville
- Jeff Hicks – Geospatial Software Engineer, NEMAC, UNC Asheville
- Matthew Hutchins – UNC Asheville
- Jim Karels – WFEC Liaison (FL State), Florida Forest Service
- Danny Lee – Director, Eastern Forest Environmental Threat Assessment Center, Southern Research Station, USFS
- Karin Lichtenstein – Project Manager/Research Scientist, NEMAC, UNC Asheville
- Tom Quigley, Contractor, National Science Team





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***QUESTIONS?***