

Wildland Fire Leadership Council & Western Governors' Association

July 14, 2020, 9:00 AM MDT

Interagency Wildfire Disaster Response ~ Mitigating Post-Fire Impacts Webinar

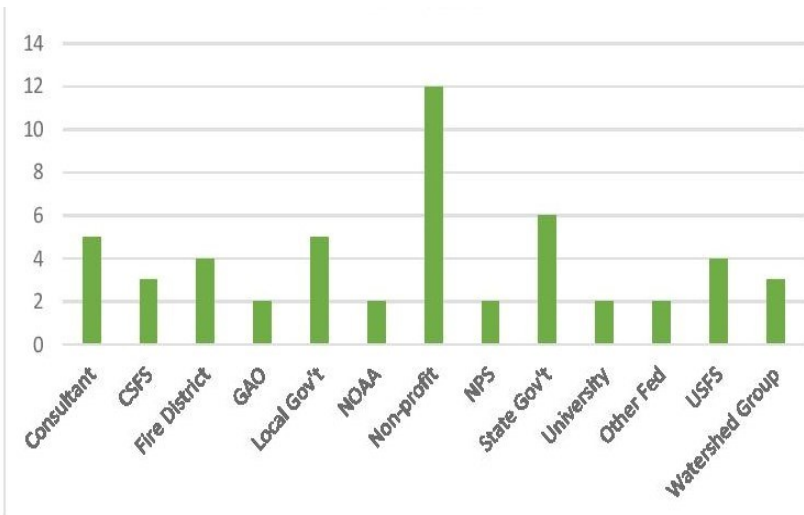


Participants represented a wide range of agencies, specialties and work location.

Research/Education
State Agency
Consultant
NGO
Federal Agency
County/Local

Southwest
Colorado
Nevada
West
Oregon
Washington
Hawaii
Arizona
Maryland
California
New_Mexico

Social_Science
Earth_Science
Ecology_Forestry
Planning
Emergency_Mgmt



Recovery Panel -

Carlene Anders, Mayor of Pateros, Washington. Carlene led the recovery efforts for the Okanogan Complex Fire, the largest in Washington State History.

Jeff Sickles, PE, CFM, Enginuity Engineering Solutions. Jeff ran the Colorado EWP program from 2015 to 2018 for flood recovery, and the EWP for the Spring Creek Fire in Huerfano County.

Bill Short, Forest and Watershed Geology Program, CA Geological Survey. Bill is focused on the immediate post-fire hazard response; particularly rapid evaluations of post-fire hazards.

What were the most successful components of your recovery interactions with federal and state agencies?

- Changes in the state and Federal response from 2014 to 2015. More time was taken in assessments, agencies worked with the locals, and there was continuity in the rotation of state teams (rather than state, fed, state, fed).
- Communications between agencies, including dedicated staff at higher levels for communications, and coordinators who can host collaboration between state and federal agencies. Silver Jackets have been excellent at facilitation for interagency collaboration.
- Establishing a centralized program allowed recovery work to be done on a watershed scale, spending time and forethought to establish watershed recovery plans to make projects work together.
- Coordination with watershed coalitions as a model for stakeholder engagement.

Where could the federal and state agency response be improved?

- Transition of response to relief, relief to recovery.
- Dedicated coordination staff within agencies, better understanding all roles and responsibilities.
- Under a traditional EWP, actions are very reactionary. Implementation needs to be on a watershed scale, not individual property scale.
- Though federal agencies are great on the technical side of recovery, they're not great with coordination. We need someone to coordinate between agencies. Because of lack of coordination there are technical inconsistencies and we end up with a lot of different evaluations. There is an opportunity for us to put someone at the top to provide overall quality assurance.

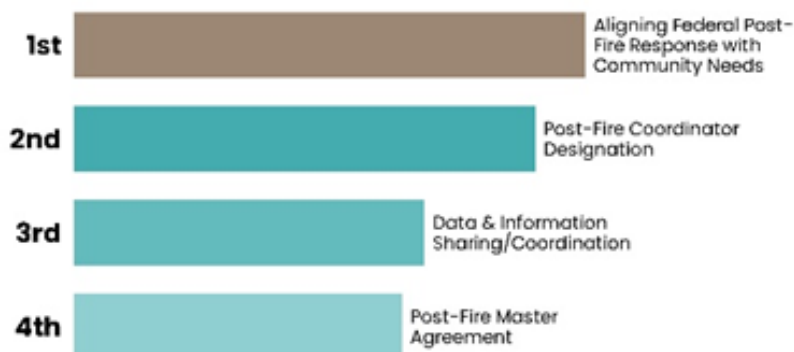
Examples of where policy changes could have improved your recovery.

- Give more time for assessments to be completed. The biggest change that needs to be made is the amount of time for policies to be implemented; recovery takes place years after a fire and policies need to reflect that.
- More formalized and expansive multi-agency coordination and training.
- The state as coordinator; working with the agencies, providing oversight, consistency and quality assurance.
- Shared funding, with organizations and state agencies providing match for federal funding.

Top policy gaps identified by the session participants generally include:

- BAER policies and process, limitations on working outside the federal boundary, and communication.
- Communication with communities and application of the National Cohesive Strategy.
- Pre-fire planning resources and community interest.
- Funding!

The WFLC-WGA partnership has been examining disaster response programs to provide a framework to improve coordination for post-fire response and restoration. The working group raised policy considerations to inform this process. The top four policies, ranked by the session participants are:



Presenting:

Troy Timmons, Director of Strategic Initiatives, Western Governors' Association

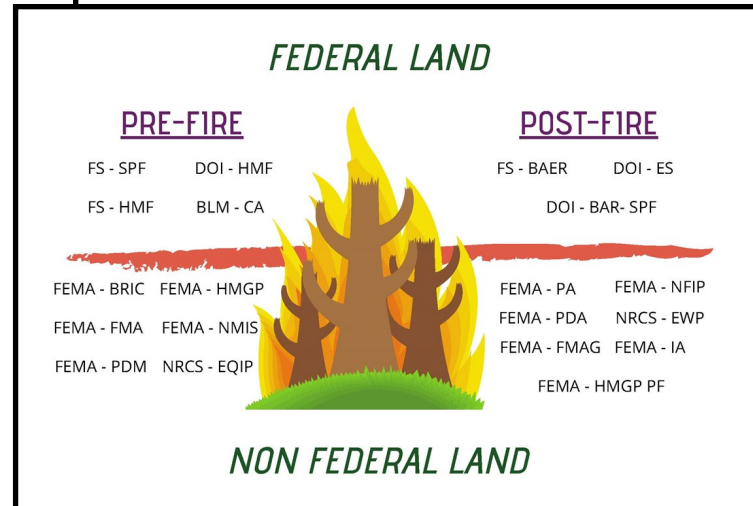
Mike Zupko, Executive Director, Wildland Fire Leadership Council

Post-Fire Impact Roadmap Goals

- Provide communities with a roadmap of available financial and technical assistance.
- Increase collaboration between federal, state, local governments, and communities.
- Rollout short version/emergency kit roadmap this year.

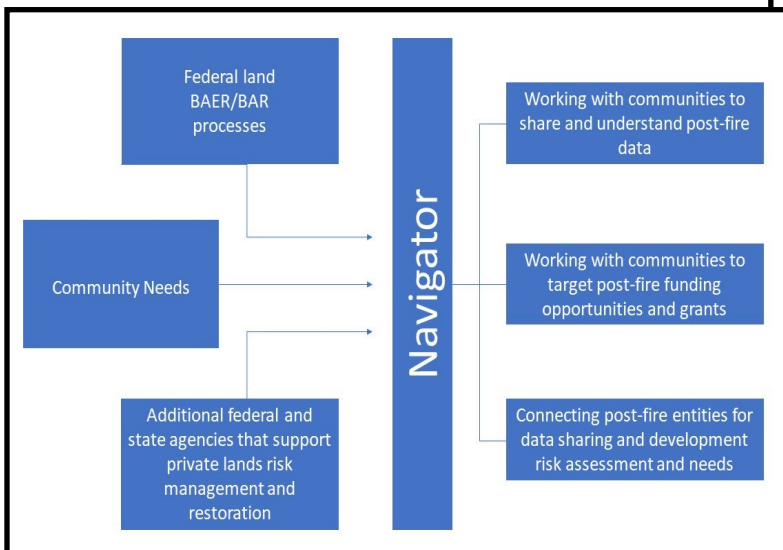
Roadmap Vision

- Post-fire programs described in one place: what the program does, how it links to other programs, application deadlines, the amount of time, the matching requirements, contact information, and a link to the application.
- How different programs link together to address specific community needs; users can identify which programs will help with their specific needs.
- Funding programs as well as technical assistance programs.
- Link data and science available to the programs available for planning.
- Present a map with consistent terminology consistent for all programs, to cut down the search for the right program.



Navigator Development

- Subject matter experts on risk management and restoration.
- Assist communities and local governments with assessments, project development, funding sources, and processes.
- Liaison between communities federal, state, and local governments.
- Long-term goal: have trained navigators positioned to respond to post-fire needs in every state.



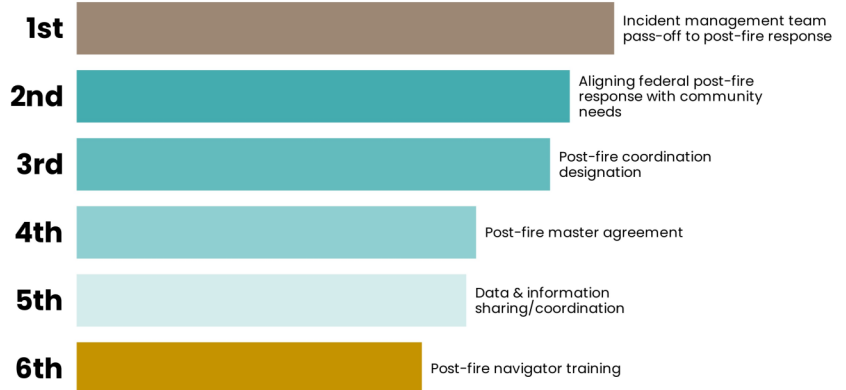
Policy Ranking

Ranking of policies by webinar attendees from the [Policy Considerations](#) document that resulted from working group of federal, state, and local government representatives, along with a variety of private stakeholders and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), discussion of post-fire impacts and intergovernmental coordination on post-fire assistance.

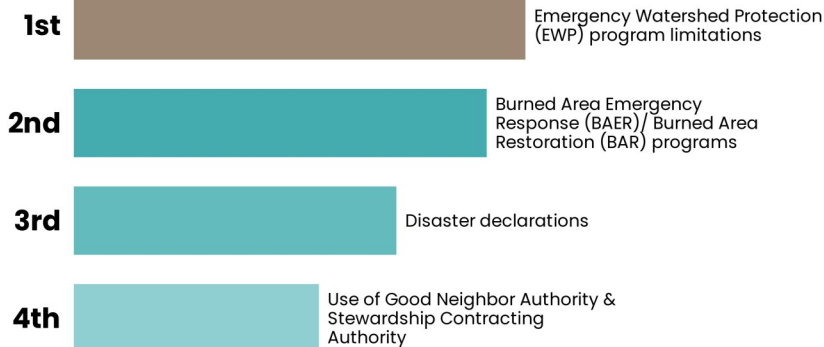
Policy, Procedure, Regulatory Issues

Policy and procedure items should not require a formal rulemaking but would require changes to internal agency processes.

Regulatory issues would require an agency rulemaking process to effect a change.



Statutory Concerns



Statutory concerns would require legislation to affect a current legal requirement.

Agency culture challenges indicate issues that do not have associated legal requirements, but that would involve changes to how agency line employees conduct their work.

Agency Culture Challenges

