



Addressing Wildfire Risk And Related Issues Together

August 14th, 2025

Statement from Wildfire Alliance Co-Founder

As a co-founder of the Wildfire Alliance, I've seen firsthand the growing urgency for local governments to have a unified voice in shaping federal wildfire policy. Wildfires are no longer rare or seasonal events—they are increasingly frequent, destructive, and devastating to communities, economies, and ecosystems. Too often, local leaders are left to navigate complex and fragmented federal systems, with wildfire-related responsibilities spread across multiple agencies. This makes it harder to secure the resources, coordination, and long-term strategies we need. By banding together, we can ensure that the voices of the communities most affected are heard clearly in Washington, DC, and that policies reflect the realities on the ground.

The Wildfire Alliance was created to address some of the most pressing challenges our communities face—challenges that can't be solved by any single jurisdiction acting alone. We are advancing solutions to improve wildfire risk insurance, strengthen disaster response, enhance forest management and risk reduction strategies, and protect critical water quality in wildfire-impacted areas. Our mission is to bridge the gap between local needs and federal action, fostering collaboration that delivers real, lasting impact. By uniting local governments, we're not just responding to wildfires—we're working to shape a more resilient future for every community in the path of these growing threats. We invite cities, counties, and local leaders from across the nation to join our Alliance—because together, our collective voice is stronger, and our shared commitment can help build a safer, more prepared future.

Ryan Leavitt
Wildfire Alliance Co-Founder

Alliance Focus Areas

Reviewing our Priorities: Disaster Response and Recovery

Wildfires damage property and local ecosystems, leaving communities with a difficult road to recovery. Long-term recovery extends beyond extinguishing fires – it involves restoring homes, rebuilding essential services, and helping residents reclaim their livelihoods. **According to the US Congress Joint Economic Committee**, the cost of wildfires is estimated to be between \$400 billion and \$900 billion annually. Effective disaster recovery and response requires coordination from federal, state, and local agencies, as well as community organizations. The Wildfire Alliance works to bring organized efforts in front of Congress to advocate for wildfire relief and supplemental funding. This is especially important as disaster survivors face increasing challenges related to recovery, something we get to in our newsletter below.



Latest on Capitol Hill

Administration's Proposed Wildfire Reorganization Receives Pushback from Former Forest Chiefs, Firefighters

In our last newsletter we discussed how Congress tapped the breaks on the Administration's proposed federal wildfire services reorganization plan by not appropriating the funds into a single new agency. Several lawmakers cited

concerns and questions they had, and they aren't alone. This week, several former firefighters and U.S. Forest Service Chiefs **wrote a letter to Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins** advocating for reforms but opposing the idea of a new federal fire agency. The writers claim that the new agency would be inefficient and costly, and that the integrated approach needed for fire suppression and land management would be lost. Instead of staffing two different agencies for fire and land management, they instead advocated for a list of reforms, including investing in "Firewise" programs, thinning vegetation fuel near WUI areas, streamlining cooperation, and other aspects related to **President Trump's executive order**.

Media Coverage



The Hot Topics

Homeowners Face Double-Whammy in Foreclosures Following Wildfires, Other Disasters

After a wildfire or other natural disaster, aid, service, and support pour in. But when the dust settles communities are still left cleaning up, and some aren't able to rebuild at all as they face increasing barriers. After losing everything to wildfires, residents in Maui, LA, and others from across the country face potential foreclosure as they exit mortgage forbearance and grapple with high rebuilding costs. These come in addition to inadequate insurance payouts,

aggressive interest from investors seeking to acquire land - especially in Hawaii and California - and tight regulations.

Hitting the 2nd Anniversary of the Maui, Lahaina wildfires that claimed 100+ lives and over \$5 billion in damages, we are reminded of the long-term impact these disasters can have. A **study from UC Davis of the LA fire survivors** found that mental health was one of the most prominent and persistent concerns across several groups.

Media Coverage



Wildfire in the Data

Potential Monopoly on Wildfire Retardant? Some Public Investigators Think So.

A **New York Times investigation** alleges that **Perimeter Solutions, the sole U.S. supplier of aerial fire retardant**, has maintained a long-standing monopoly through price hikes, aggressive lobbying, and tactics that undermined potential competitors, notably California-based **Fortress Fire Retardant Systems**. Since a 2021 acquisition by investors including Nicholas Howley, the company has doubled profits, raised prices for federal and state firefighting agencies far above inflation, and leveraged its control over manufacturing, air base operations, and regulatory processes to block rivals. Nicholas Howley is best known for founding TransDigm, a utility aircraft parts

producers that utilized what they called, "value-based pricing". Because the basic parts manufacturer was one of the only ones, a **DoD inspector general found** that the company's 'value-based pricing' was "an industrial code word for unfettered price gouging." Testifying before Congress, Mr. Howley defended their practices, but ultimately agreed to repay the government ~\$16 million.

Internal Agriculture Department memos warned that relying on one supplier for a critical wildfire tool posed a "massive risk," but efforts to introduce competition were stymied after **Perimeter challenged Fortress's safety through a website**, funded aligned trade groups, and pursued legal protests. By early 2025, Fortress had shut down, restoring Perimeter's unchallenged dominance in a market where government demand — and taxpayer spending — continues to grow.



This is not the first case of a consolidated marketplace accusation for emergency response equipment and infrastructure. **Just a few months ago the American Economic Liberties Project and the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) sent a joint letter to the Department of Justice and Federal Trade Commission** urging them to investigate private equity-driven consolidation in fire truck and emergency vehicle manufacturing. With belts tightened due to rising costs and increased wildfires, transparency in the marketplace and government procurements is critical to protecting people and taxpayers.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Wildland Urban Interface Summit - Prescott, AZ | Oct. 28-30**
- **Southern Blueridge TREX - Blueridge NC & SC | Nov. 3-15**

Wildfire in the News

- **CBS News** - Lee Fire now fifth-largest single wildfire in Colorado history. These are the other four.
- **New York Times** - What to Know as Canada's Wildfires Hit Eastern Provinces
- **KSL** - Wildfire burning in High Uintas could be a 'long-duration' event, Forest Service says
- **ABC** - Evacuation orders lifted as firefighters gain upper hand in California's Canyon Fire

About Us

Wildfire Alliance is a coalition of local governments and state entities working with Congress and federal agencies to address the rising threat of wildfires.



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If you have other agencies or organizations interested in becoming a member, please let us know or share our contact information:



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