

18 SEPTEMBER 2025



WILDFIRE WEEKLY

at the intersection of wildfire and policy

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NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Welcoming Larimer County, CO



The Wildfire Alliance is happy to welcome **Larimer County, Colorado** as its newest member. Located in Northern Colorado along the Colorado-Wyoming border, Larimer is

home to 359,066 people, including the cities of Fort Collins and Loveland. Larimer has experienced numerous wildfire events, including the destructive Cameron Peak fire in late 2020, which burned over 200,000 acres and destroyed hundreds of buildings. The Wildfire Alliance looks forward to working with Larimer County to support its existing wildfire strategies and access

necessary resources.



UPDATES FROM CAPITOL HILL

WEPA text available, Fire Ready Nation Act passes Senate

Last week, we highlighted a **hearing by the U.S. Senate Committee on the Environment and Public Works** discussing proposed changes to the Clean Air Act contained in the Wildfire Emissions Prevention Act (WEPA). WEPA aims to clarify the qualification of so-called "**exceptional events**" in which air quality data collected during a defined time frame is not considered when determining a state's compliance with the **National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)**. At the time of publication last week, we did not have access to the WEPA draft language, but **now do**. Further updates regarding WEPA will be included in future newsletters.

The bipartisan **Fire Ready Nation Act** was **passed by the Senate** on September 10, and now awaits action in the House of Representatives. Introduced by Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) with four Republican and four Democratic co-sponsors, the bill seeks to provide the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) with targeted funding to create improved wildfire-related weather models, clearly define NOAA's responsibility to provide wildfire-related services, and modernize NOAA's existing wildfire services, including updating technology.



HOT TOPICS

New U.S. Wildland Fire Service to focus on consolidation, streamlining response efforts

On Monday, September 15, the **U.S. Department of the Interior and the U.S. Department of Agriculture jointly announced the creation of the U.S. Wildland Fire Service (USWFS)** in an effort to modernize current federal wildfire efforts. The USWFS, per Interior Secretary Doug Burgum's **Order 3443**, will:

- Address systemic inefficiencies and modernize aviation and coordination systems
- Strengthen interagency wildfire coordination and response
- Improve federal partnerships and reduce administrative burden
- Ensure wildfire research, technology, and IT investments are mission-ready
- Integrate pre- and post-fire activities into a complete wildfire strategy

"Ineffective coordination has been a longstanding barrier to rapid, scalable wildfire response," said Wildfire Alliance co-founder Ryan Leavitt.

"Commonsense reforms like this have the potential to unify what is currently a patchwork regulatory and policy environment. The Wildfire Alliance looks forward to engaging with the new Wildland Fire Service on behalf of its members to adopt comprehensive wildfire policy and ensure that necessary resources are allocated quickly in times of need."

The scope of the USWFS's impact will likely take some time to assess. Secretary Burgum's order directs the new office to be established by January of 2026, but stipulates that "'unification' shall not be considered synonymous with 'consolidation'; rather, 'unification' shall mean the strategic alignment of resources." This distinction suggests that the USWFS's impact will be procedural rather than structural, intending to streamline how local and state partners access wildfire-related federal resources without significant staffing or resource changes across the Interior and Agriculture Departments.

The Wildfire Alliance will continue to assess the impact of this and other

changes on the wildfire regulatory and policy landscape. In future newsletters, we'll bring you expert analysis and updates about the Wildland Fire Service, including any notable regulatory or procedural changes.



IN THE KNOW

RELEVANT NEWS

- **Los Alamos Daily Post - [Luján, Cantwell Bill To Strengthen Federal Wildfire Forecasting And Firefighting Tools Unanimously Passes Senate](#)**
- **Fox Milwaukee - [Wisconsin deaths linked to wildfire smoke, new study says](#)**
- **NBC Montana - [Federal government announces launch of U.S. Wildland Fire Service](#)**
- **City of Boulder - [Boulder is Proud to Partner in the Release of Wildfire Planning and Recovery Playbook](#)**

UPCOMING EVENTS

[Wildland Urban Interface Summit](#) - Prescott, AZ | Oct. 28-30

[Southern Blue Ridge TREC](#) - Blue Ridge NC and SC | Nov. 3-14

WILDFIRE GRANTS

Due September 18, 2025 - [BLM Joint Fire Science Program](#)

Due September 21, 2025 - [Colorado Plateau CESU Cooperative Agreement \(CESU members only\)](#)

Due February 10, 2026 - [Fire Science Innovations Through Research and Education](#)

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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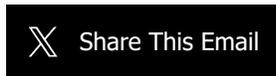


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