

FACING THE CHALLENGES, BUILDING ON OUR SUCCESSES

Washington State communities are growing into the wildland urban interface (WUI) more each year. The increasing number of lives and structures at risk during the ever-expanding wildfire season drives action by community leaders and others working toward fire adaptation. Last year, WAFAC members shared their successes and challenges and developed new and interesting ways to work together to improve their community's wildfire resiliency. In the coming year, as communities invest time and funding into developing and implementing their work, the WAFAC will continue to be a place of insight, lessons learned, and a sounding board for expanding our practices and bringing communities together in shared purpose.

—Keegan Fengler, WAFAC Program Manager

WE CONNECT HARD-WORKING COMMUNITIES

SEEKING A BETTER FIRE FUTURE

The Washington Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network (WAFAC) is a peer learning network that supports local action, connects people to resources, facilitates results, and informs on-the-ground projects to help Washington better adapt to wildfire. Our members are leading the way to better prepare our communities before, during, and after fires by engaging local organizations and agencies to develop and act on place-based strategies and priorities.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHTS

ASOTIN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Asotin County, WA

The Asotin County Conservation District (ACCD) is pioneering a Forestland Stewardship Program to source local, high-quality woody materials for in-stream fish habitat enhancement projects. Reducing fuel loading through thinning and pruning increases fire-resiliency in the upland forests and improves the health of the watersheds below. ACCD then uses the harvested woody materials to construct in-stream habitat enhancement structures in project areas around Asotin County. Innovative programs like this support healthy forests, water, and improved resilience to wildfire. To learn more, visit:

asotincd.org

LAKE WENATCHEE FIRE + RESCUE

Chelan County, WA

In the heart of the Cascade Mountains, near Leavenworth, Washington, Lake Wenatchee Fire & Rescue (LWFR) is leading efforts to better protect residents and property from potential impacts from wildfire. They are coordinating and implementing a wildfire risk home assessment program, and removing and chipping vegetation. In cooperation with UCSD and Localtel, LWFR has installed two live wildfire detection cameras to facilitate monitoring and early detection to support suppression efforts and earlier community notification. The cameras are the first in Washington and utilize AI to detect smoke columns and thermal signatures. To learn more, visit: lwfr.org

2023 AT A GLANCE

83

ACRES OF FUEL
REDUCTION

1

COMMUNITY WILDFIRE
PROTECTION PLAN

46

COMMUNITIES
ASSISTED IN WA

19

PUBLIC EDUCATION
EVENTS

MEMBER CONNECTIONS

NEW MENTORSHIP INITIATIVE LAUNCHED IN 2023

Community fire adaptation can be challenging and rewarding. There's no greater way to support the journey to stronger and more resilient communities than through mentorship. Sharing approaches to community fire adaptation is a powerful tool that can help others get started, facilitate the efficient adoption of practices, and refine and improve existing strategies.



WAFAC's Member Connections program is designed to foster growth and pave the way for new, creative ventures for community fire adaptation leaders. Each mentorship group develops a unique working relationship as they discuss and decide what topics they want to delve into to learn about and then share with with FAC practitioners from around the state.

In 2023, Member Connections led to robust mix of online presentations, discussions, and resources. In total, 24 new FAC resources were developed!

Resource Topics:

- Integrating Wildfire into Climate Resilience Plans
- Air Quality and Smoke Ready Communities
- Learning Across Boundaries with FAC Groups
- Volunteer and Neighborhood Coordination
- Accessibility and Equity in FAC Programs
- Prescribed Fire: Learning to Burn Together
- Post-fire Recovery

Links to all these resources can be found in the FACNET blog post: [Climate Resilience, Mentorship, and Community Engagement: A Resource Roundup from WAFAC.](#)

WAFAC ANNUAL WORKSHOP

OCTOBER 17-19, 2023 WENATCHEE, WA

62 local, state, and federal community fire adaptation practitioners gathered for three days to share best practices, receive training, and identify strategies for improving fire outcomes.

At the workshop, WAFAC members

- defined their community and what it means to work in service;
- highlighted ways to build community engagement and address environmental justice from a wildfire perspective; and
- dug into the root causes and key issues hindering progress in local community fire adaptation work, the first steps to removing these barriers, and potential solution pathways that best suit their unique communities.

The workshop concluded with field visits to learn about community and landscape fire recovery, cross-boundary fuel mitigation, and youth forestry education.



"It is truly inspiring to see so many talented people trying to make the world a better place."

WITH GRATITUDE & APPRECIATION, WAFAC IS SUPPORTED BY:



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