



CWSF FOREST HEALTH COMMITTEE 2024 Annual Report and 2025 Work Plan

LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW

COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP

The Forest Health Committee (FHC) leadership team for 2024 included:

- Aly McAlexander (AZ), Chair
- Vacant, Vice Chair
- Harrison Brookes (WY), Secretary
- Vacant, Past Chair
- Marcus Warnke (SD), State Forester Advisor
- Kelsey Delaney, CWSF/WFLC Staff Liaison

The FHC leadership team for 2025 includes:

- Harrison Brookes (WY), Chair
- Jason Moan (AK), Vice Chair
- Anthony Seidl (SD), Secretary
- Aly McAlexander (AZ), Past Chair
- Marcus Warnke (SD), State Forester Advisor
- Kelsey Delaney, CWSF/WFLC Staff Liaison

MISSION STATEMENT AND PURPOSE

Mission: The FHC establishes a platform for communication and collaboration between western states, the USDA Forest Service (Forest Service), and forestry partners. The FHC creates opportunities to leverage and share resources, expand technology transfer, and cooperate on shared goals and initiatives, including multi-state competitive grant applications.

Purpose: The FHC was formed with the permission and support of the Council of Western State Foresters (CWSF) to serve as a forum to share information, cooperate on program delivery, and advance forest health in the western United States and U.S.-Affiliated Pacific Islands. It provides a structure for ongoing communication between western states and between states and partners. The FHC creates opportunities to leverage and share resources, expand technical transfer, and cooperate on common goals and other efforts, such as multi-state competitive grant applications.

The FHC is prepared to address emerging and ongoing forest health issues at the state, regional, and national levels and to serve as an expert resource for CWSF and the National Association of State Foresters (NASF). Bringing together western state forestry professionals' skills, talents, experience, and passion strengthens every state and helps them better serve the public.

2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM 2024

- The FHC completed its first year of virtual meetings, including three meetings with state-only members and three with state members and Forest Service partners.
- The FHC continued expanding its membership in western states and Forest Service regions.
- Utilizing the September 2023 membership survey, the FHC discussed the Forest Service Timber Transport Pilot, invasive species, federal reporting metrics, state and federal forest health funding, forest health projects in urban settings, and more.
- Coordinated with the Forest Service WO Forest Health Protection (FHP) Director regarding updates/details on new federal forest health reporting metrics and forest health implications from the Timber Transport Pilot.
- Timmons Group representatives coordinated with the FHC on their proof-of-concept forest health project, which seeks to assess the opportunities and challenges of incorporating spatial forest health data from forest health accomplishments and national performance measures into new dashboards. Several FHC members volunteered to share their spatial data to assist the Timmons Group.
- Developed two stories for the CWSF Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) [webpage](#).
- Hosted the first annual meeting in Phoenix, AZ, from October 1 - 3, 2024. Attendees included FHC representatives from 10 western states and Palau, the forest health committee chairs from the Northeast-Midwest State Foresters Alliance and Southern Group of State Foresters, three Forest Service FHP regional staff, the Forest Service WO FHP Director, and the NASF Forest Science & Health Committee (FS&H) staff member. Meeting topics included invasive species management, non-traditional funding sources for forest health projects, federal FHP reporting, regional and national FHP updates, and more. Completed a field tour to examine invasive species management and explore a local pollinator garden with native shrubs and trees.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION BY STATE FORESTERS

- Recommendation for State Foresters to approve the FHC 2025 Work Plan.

2025 WORK PLAN

MEETING(S) AND CALLS PLANNED FOR 2025

- Virtual meetings the second Tuesday of every other month at 3:30 p.m. MT in the following months: February, April, June, August, October, and December.
- In-person 2025 Annual Meeting, October 2025, in Wyoming.

KEY ACTIVITIES, DELIVERABLES, AND OUTCOMES PLANNED FOR 2025

- Examine forest health reporting metrics across western state forestry agencies and explore opportunities to standardize metrics and establish best practices.
- Participate in and provide western perspectives to the NASF FS&H Committee, Timmons Group, and Forest Service work group focused on forest health data accomplishment reporting.
- Provide input and recommendations to the Forest Service's FHP Program vision and communications strategy efforts, as these will impact state forestry agencies' forest health programs.
- Create a shared FHC resources library on the CWSF Google Drive (suggested items to start collecting: Emerald Ash Borer and invasive insect preparedness or responses plans, and state annual Forest Health Highlights).
- Develop two to three western state success stories for the CWSF FHC website and/or the BIL/IRA [webpage](#); explore video options and/or impact statements for storytelling on the website.
- Where opportunities arise, invite forest health subject matter experts from state forestry, Forest Service, tribes, state agriculture agencies, and other partners to FHC meetings.