

Funding for wildfire research and outreach helps save lives

...while protecting forests, agriculture, food and other vital resources



Every year, thousands of wildfires burn millions of acres of forest and rangelands in the western United States. These wildfires not only devastate the West, they have a far-reaching and highly damaging impact on the entire country. And wildfire devastation runs far deeper than monetary costs — it extends to vegetation, agriculture, food, property and human lives.

Increased funding to the Western Land-Grant Universities is needed to mitigate the devastating consequences of wildfires.

Fire suppression activities alone cost the federal government nearly \$2 billion in 2013

- In addition to fire suppression, ongoing funding is needed for other wildfire consequences, such as impacts to watersheds, ecosystems, infrastructure, businesses, individuals and the local and national economy
- Other costs of wildfires include property losses, air and water quality damage, healthcare, injuries, fatalities and lost revenue



With adequate funding, the Western Land-Grant Universities are uniquely positioned to:

- Develop new strategies to address more effective fuel management practices to help reduce the occurrence of wildfires
- Effectively use fire as a tool for managing ecosystems and mitigating the intensity of wildfires
- Provide innovative ways to stabilize and reclaim the rangeland and natural resources following such ecosystem disturbances

The Western Perspective
of the Land-Grant Universities

WAAESD
Western Association of Agricultural
Experiment Station Directors
<http://www.waesd.org>

WEDA
Western Extension
Directors Association
<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/weda>

The Western Perspective & The Western Agenda

What is the Western Perspective & Agenda?

The Western U.S. is facing unprecedented challenges maintaining sustainable urban communities and agricultural and natural resource economies. The Western Perspective & Western Agenda serves to inform policy responses and actions and demonstrates how Land-Grant Universities, Agricultural Experiment Stations, and Cooperative Extension support all Western Region communities sustained by agricultural and natural resources economies.

What are the unique challenges and characteristics of the West?

Every state in the Western Region has densely populated urban areas juxtaposed with large expanses of sparsely populated rural areas. This creates pressure on natural resource and agriculture industries while increasing population brings new demands on local and regional economies—largely dependent on watersheds, ecosystems, infrastructure and federal lands.

The public owns 47% of the land in the West. The majority of Western Region agriculture depends on public lands for livestock and forestry production, and on strong partnerships with federal organizations to sustain the health of ecosystems, agriculture and communities.

Fire, water, climate change, population growth, and invasive pests and diseases are the primary threats to agriculture and communities in the Western Region.

Synergy Between Units

Land-Grant Universities, the Cooperative Extension Service, and Agricultural Experiment Stations have a federal and state obligation to conduct research and outreach, and lead educational programs that address the greatest agricultural and natural challenges of their home state and region.

The collaborative nature between these entities in the Western Region ensure the programs, people and places of the Western Region are able to sustain and thrive with respect to their individual state needs and united regional challenges.

This collaboration is unique and powerful! No other institutions have the scope, resources or capacity to anticipate and respond to the current and future challenges facing the Western Region. The interaction between each entity produces timely information and research from experts at each institution. The depth and breadth of these programs reaches everyone, from the most vulnerable to the most prosperous.

Agenda Priorities

- Sustainable Production Systems: Food Production, Food Safety, Food Security, Forestry and Horticulture
- Natural Resources: Water, Wildlife, Wildfire, Invasive Species, Ecosystem Services and Economic Opportunities
- Energy
- Community and Economic Development
- Youth Development: Agriculture, Nutrition and Natural Resources Science Literacy
- Nutrition and Health: Innovation in Foods for Health

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