



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rocky Mountain Research Station

CoMFRT at a glance

A research-management partnership identifying strategies to address cross-boundary fire risk.

What is CoMFRT?

The Co-Management of Fire Risk Transmission research-management partnership, or CoMFRT, engages with communities and fire managers to identify and improve pertinent fire-adaptation strategies that facilitate cross-boundary activities to address wildfire risk in fire-prone areas. CoMFRT includes a diverse group of researchers, field fire managers, local community professionals and national and state policymakers.

The CoMFRT Approach

CoMFRT weaves social science with wildfire practice in a coordinated and integrated approach to explore what people and organizations in fire-prone places can do and have done collectively to mitigate wildfire risk across land ownerships and jurisdictions. From these investigations, strategic and actionable recommendations are co-produced with communities, fire managers, and other stakeholders in support of the Wildfire Crisis Strategy.

What has CoMFRT learned?

- Agencies need better ways to understand and map the social diversity that exists within and across fire-prone landscapes and communities and understand how this diversity relates to reaching desired conditions.
- Collaborating with local organizations is essential to identifying appropriate pathways to improve fire adaptation and resilience suited to the particular social conditions of fire-prone landscapes.
- Cross-boundary or cross-jurisdictional fire risk mitigation requires the cultivation of interpersonal relationships, trust, and a sense of shared fate.
- Building context specific, case-based knowledge and expertise provides a foundation for helping local fire mitigation professionals play their critical role. Local efforts benefit from regional and national organizations providing information, training, and data gathering on the effectiveness of many locally directed efforts that then can be used to adjust and improve practice in an ongoing learning process.
- A mismatch exists between expertise needed to build fire adapted communities and current professional staff in many state and federal agencies involved in fire risk mitigation.

There is great variability in social communities. Fire-adaptation strategies that build cross-boundary wildfire preparedness must be customized to reflect key community characteristics.

“Successfully living in fire-prone landscapes is only possible when the various locally situated organizations and agencies that deal with wildfire risk can work collaboratively across boundaries.”

—National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy

CoMFRT Recommendations

- Invest in relationships and connections
- Focus more resources on underserved communities
- Prioritize cross-boundary engagement within and between agencies and others at all scales, from the local to the national
- Build a workforce that reflects the social nature of the problem

CoMFRT takes a place-based approach

Research coupled with decades of learning provide CoMFRT team members with the expertise to inform strategies and programs to address cross-boundary wildfire risk and preparedness to support the vision of the Wildfire Crisis Strategy, National Cohesive Strategy, and Shared Stewardship.

“There is no one-size-fits-all solution to reducing wildfire risk. Solutions must be tailored to landscapes and communities.”

—National Wildfire Cohesive Strategy

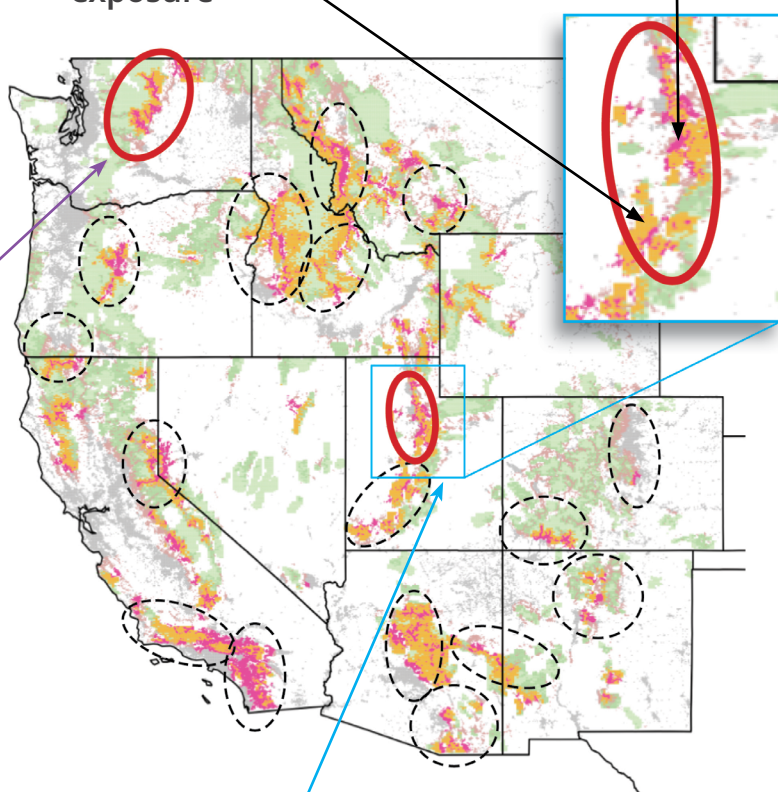
CASE STUDIES: What we are learning from our community, place-based approach

Case studies reveal important differences in capacity and approach to addressing the risk of living in fire-prone landscapes.



■ **National Forest**
source of community
exposure

■ **Community**
areas of exposure



In Northern Utah, the Utah Department of Natural Resources served as an important bridging organization within management networks, whereas in the Wenatchee case the most prominent boundary spanners were associated with non-governmental organizations. In Utah much of the translation of federal policies and programs runs through state agencies.

In North Central Washington past wildfires seems to have galvanized more non-governmental efforts to mitigate future risk.

CoMFRT can help improve access for fire mitigation by all communities

CoMFRT is dedicated to a comprehensive and systematic approach to advancing fire mitigation in an equitable and just way, especially among those underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality. We emphasize embedding fairness in decision-making processes, programs and strategies. Ultimately, more inclusive activities and processes can help build an approach to wildfire risk that is more likely to enable wildfire to play its inevitable and necessary cultural and ecological role by explicitly accounting for the complexity of the problem, acknowledging the essential nature of fire, and responding to the diverse ways wildfire manifests in contemporary society.

To Learn More:

Visit [CoMFRT](https://www.fs.usda.gov/rmrs/groups/comfirt) online.



<https://www.fs.usda.gov/rmrs/groups/comfirt>

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