



Cohesive Strategy Questions and Answers

What is the Cohesive Strategy?

The Cohesive Strategy (CS) is an ongoing effort by Federal, Tribal, state and local governments and non-government organizations to address growing wildfire challenges in the United States. For more information, visit <http://www.forestsandrangelands.gov/>.

Wildland fire is more than a fire management, fire operations, or Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) challenge. Wildland fire is a complex land management and societal issue. The vision of the Cohesive Strategy is to: *safely and effectively extinguish fire when needed; use fire where allowable; manage our natural resources; and as a nation, live with wildland fire.*

Why is it important?

The CS provides participants at all levels of government and non-governmental organizations a framework to engage in partnerships to address wildland fire management decisions.

Who oversees and implements the CS?

- Congress and the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior have established two governing boards.
- Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC), provides oversight of the Cohesive Strategy effort.
- Wildland Fire Executive Council (WFEC), makes recommendations to the WFLC on the development and implementation of the CS.
- Representatives include: Federal, state, Tribal, local governments, agencies, nonprofits as well as other key stakeholders.

How is the CS different than other strategies?

- More stakeholders are engaged now than in previous initiatives.
- Working together, the CS will be implemented by the collaborators. The CS has established systems for collaborative solutions to the problems.
- Research scientists are directly involved.

What is the CS vision?

- Safely and effectively extinguish fire when needed.
- Use fire only when allowable.
- Manage our natural resources.
- Live with wildland fire.

What are the guiding principles for the CS?

- Reducing risk to the public and firefighters is the first priority in every wildland fire management activity.
- Risk management is the foundation for all management activities.
- Wildland fire prevention programs are supported across all jurisdictions.
- Wildland fire, as an essential ecological process and natural change agent, may be incorporated into the planning process and wildfire response.
- Decisions are based on the best available science combined with experience to evaluate risk versus gain.
- Federal, state, local and Tribal governments actively engage in collaborative planning and the decision making process, recognizing the independence and statutory responsibilities among jurisdictions

What are the three goals of the CS?

- Restore and maintain resilient landscapes—recognize and address the lack of ecosystem health within many of our forests and rangelands across the country.
- Create fire adapted communities—develop options and opportunities to engage communities at the lowest level to help them become more resistant to wildfire threat.
- Effectively respond to wildfire—ensure all levels of government—local, state, Tribal, and Federal—work together when wildland fire happens.

What is the current status of Cohesive Strategy?

- Phase I: Development of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy—Completed.
- Phase II: Development of Regional Strategies and Assessments—Completed.
- Phase III: Implementation—In progress. This will not just be done by Federal agencies, it will also be implemented by Firesafe councils, groups working on restoring ecosystems, fire adapted communities, ranchers and many other stakeholders: All-hands, All-lands.

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