



NWWSA

The National Wildfire Suppression Association
preserving and protecting our environment

THE ROLE OF NWSA IN WILDLAND FIRE/ALL HAZARD RESPONSE SUPPORT



The National Wildfire Suppression Association (NWSA) represents over 250 Professional Private wildland fire/All Hazard Response services who operate on an as-needed basis to provide federal/state and local agencies with a variety of resources for Wildland Fire and other All Hazard incidents. Resources include twenty-person firefighting crews, timber faller modules, engines, tenders, dozers and other specialized equipment as well as a full complement of fire/emergency incident camp services.

NWSA provides training certification, advocacy and support to help its member companies field experienced, highly trained, safety-focused resources that meet or exceed all federal standards, including all requirements of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG).

When lives are on the line, the agencies must have confidence in any resources that are a part of the fire community. Since 1991, the mission of NWSA is to ensure that its members earn that confidence. Because safety and skill is paramount, certifying instructors is a vital part of NWSA services to its member companies. In 2017, over 100 NWSA certified instructors trained 8,000 firefighters.

NWSA's annual national conference, newsletters and website promote professionalism and excellent performance through the exchange of information about issues related to the industry.

NWSA advocacy includes working as a cooperator in the wildland fire services to build positive relationships with agencies and to advocate for programs like Best Value Contracting that provide agencies with professional private resources.



WHY THE NEED FOR PRIVATE RESOURCES?



The relationship between federal and state fire organizations and the private wildland firefighter contract industry began in the early 1980's—an era of shrinking agency budgets and a growing incidence of wildland fires. Prior to that, almost 30 years of the wettest and coolest period in the last 100 years led the U.S. Forest Service to reduce its firefighting capacity from 1,200 to 500 crews.

However, since 1980, drought, altered fuel complexes, and the expansion of the urban wildland interface have dramatically affected fire frequency, size and intensity. The fires of 2006, for example, burned over 10 million acres, consuming nearly 80 percent of federal suppression expenditures and 41 percent of the Forest Service budget for that year. This situation is further exacerbated by a budget-driven reduction in agency forces over the last 18 years. By the end of the 1990's, these events led to the first crew agreement between private wildland fire services and the agencies.

The emergence of private contract resources--national and regional 20-person firefighting crews, engines, dozers, tenders and other specialized equipment, and support services such as caterers and shower/handwashing units--gives agencies the flexibility they need to increase or decrease support with the most cost effective solution. Training, insurance costs, benefits, gear and transportation are all borne by the contractor.

Today, approximately 40 percent of the resources across the United States are provided by private wildland fire services. NWSA represents more than 250 Professional Private Wildland Fire/All Hazard companies in 27 states that can field a work force of around 10,000 during the height of fire season.

NWSA Board President Rick Dice emphasizes that the role of the private sector is to complement, rather than compete with existing agency resources when fire activity and other emergency incidents, such as Hurricane Katrina and



QUALITY RESOURCES THROUGH RIGOROUS TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION



Wildfire destroys everything in its path. With a mere shift of the wind, it can become a monster endangering those who don't understand its nature. Federal, state and local government firefighter skills are honed by arduous and constant training required to fight wildland fires and survive. Anyone who doesn't have that level of training jeopardizes everyone on the fireline.

The National Wildfire Suppression Association (NWSA) is recognized by federal/state and local agencies for the quality of our instructor certification programs. They are designed to provide resources that meet or exceed all training, safety, experience, and physical fitness standards identified in the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualifications System Guide (PMS 310-1). More than 8000 private wildland firefighters received training by NWSA certified instructors in 2017.

NWSA was the first to hold a Memorandum of Understanding with the Agencies to certify instructors to train private sector, agencies and interested parties.

NWSA has a nationally recognized database for tracking all training by NWSA Certified Instructors and is open to other users by affiliation. The system tracks training, can be utilized to track event history for firefighters as well as producing a recognized Incident Qualification Card and photo ID. The system is designed to safeguard all information.



NWSA Annual Instructor Session

GOOD CAUSE FOR CONFIDENCE

- Nationally recognized database to track all training
- Over 100 NWSA certified instructors/trainers with over a combined 800 years fire experience.
- NWSA Code of Ethics and monitoring program govern instructors
- Annual Training Sessions update NWSA instructors on changes/requirements
- NWSA standards set by the NWSA training committee based on the 310-1NWCG Training Guide.



NWSA Memorandum of Understanding for Training, Record Inspections and Equipment Inspections

NWSA holds several Memorandums of Understanding for Training, Record Inspections and Equipment Inspections

The National Wildfire Suppression Association (NWSA) holds various Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) that recognize our ability to provide quality training and to date we have over 100 instructors that have trained 8,000 wildland firefighters in 2017.

We also hold Memorandums of Understanding to perform record inspections for many regions for the private industry to ensure they meet all required training that is equal to or greater than agency standards. To date we have inspected over 7000 firefighters records. This is done by independent third party inspectors that we have under contract to perform these services.

We also hold an MOU in Region 6 to perform equipment inspections on contracted resources for response to wildfires. We utilize independent third party inspectors that meet all requirements and have the knowledge to help ensure that the equipment meets all contract requirement to ensure safety on the line.



RAPID RESPONSE WITH QUALITY SUPPORT



Braving the smoke, heat and danger of wildland fires or the aftermath of disasters and emergency incidents is an “army” of federal/state and local agency responders battling to contain the crisis. When the magnitude of the event exceeds agency resources, these agencies can call in reinforcements from professional wildland fire contractors: 20-person firefighting crews, timber faller modules, engines, tenders and other specialized equipment.

Pre-existing agreements and contracts with the agencies allow National Wildfire Suppression Association (NWSA) member and associate member companies to dispatch these resources immediately. More than 130 contract crews and over 400 fire engines and tenders of all types are available from NWSA member companies for dispatch across the U.S.

Because of budget cutbacks and increased fire activity, agencies are increasingly calling on these private resources on an as-needed basis. They are paid only for time worked on the line. The contractor bears all costs of training, equipment, travel, and insurance costs.

After a 12-14 hour shift on the line, agency and private contractor crews need a place to eat, sleep, shower and revitalize. In addition to providing crews, engines, tenders and other specialized equipment for the front lines, contractors can send resources to set up a totally operational camp: shower, laundry, lavatory, and housing units, as well as catering operations that can feed thousands of firefighters or emergency responders.

SUPPORT RESOURCES

- Self Staining Type 2 Initial Attack Crews
- Type 2 Hand Crews
- Waterhandling Equipment
- Potable Water Units
- Gray Water Units
- Heavy Equipment
- Handwashing/Shower Units
- Overhead Personnel
- Camp Support
- Transport Vehicles
- Timber Faller Modules
- Specialized Equipment





ALL RISK SERVICES

ORGANIZED AND EFFICIENT RESOURCES WHEN THEY ARE NEEDED

National Wildfire Suppression Association members can provide professional, highly trained All Hazard Response resources to all sizes and types of incidents within the continental United States and beyond. These resources are available on an as needed basis.

Some resources available from NWSA members are:

- Qualified Overhead Personnel in the ICSSystem
- Base Camp Support
- Generator Power & Lighting Systems
- Security Services on Emergency Situation
- A Variety of Medical Resources
- Heavy Equipment/manpower for recovery efforts
- Potable/Gray Water Services
- Handwashing/Shower Units

Our member companies have devoted thousands of personnel hours to support emergency services throughout the United States during times of crisis.

We have responded to many of the following:

- Challenger Shuttle Recovery
- Hurricane Katrina
- Our resources have been used by: FEMA, GSA, USDA, USDI, BIA, NASA
Department of Homeland Security and a multitude of State agencies.





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CHAPTERS

Region 6 Chapter
Great Basin Chapter
Region 5 Chapter
Region 8 Chapter
Region 9 Chapter
Northern Rockies Chapter
National Contract Resource Chapter

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Western Forest Fire Services Assn.

EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS

Three Sisters Wildfire Training
Association
Umpqua Community College
Linn Benton Community College
Clackamas Community College

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STATES REPRESENTED

Arizona	North Carolina
California	Oklahoma
Colorado	Oregon
Georgia	Utah
Idaho	Tennessee
Michigan	Texas
Minnesota	Washington
Missouri	Wisconsin
Montana	Wyoming
Nevada	Vermont
Alaska	Florida
	New Mexico
	Mexico

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