



Wyoming Partners Adopt a Statewide Prescribed Fire Council

In December of 2018, representatives from county, state, federal and nonprofit natural resource management groups met to establish the Wyoming Prescribed Fire Council (WY-PFC) as a statewide, nonprofit prescribed fire organization. The mission of the council is to protect and support the use of prescribed fire as a land management tool in Wyoming.

The WY-PFC gathered at The Nature Conservancy's Red Canyon Ranch in Lander, WY to formally expound upon the council. The team voted on bylaws, established committees, appointed committee leadership, and identified a program of work to address prescribed fire topics including policy, outreach and education, agency and landowner cooperation, and partnerships. The council's intention is to support and protect the use of prescribed fire in the following ways:

- Establish a strong network to better utilize and leverage resources across the great state of Wyoming to implement more prescribed fire.
- Present a consistent public message supporting prescribed fire for agencies in the state.
- Serve as a credible interdisciplinary and interagency platform for educating the public on the safe and effective use of prescribed fire.
- Support fire adapted communities throughout Wyoming.

Throughout many ecosystems, prescribed fire is an important land management tool for achieving ecological diversity, increasing agricultural land production, and promoting wildfire habitat protection, while sustaining environmental quality. Prescribed fire is also helpful in supporting fire preparedness and fuels mitigation efforts in private communities, otherwise known as fire adapted communities. Currently in Wyoming, prescribed fire is used by government agencies, non-profit organizations, for-profit businesses, and private landowners to achieve these objectives.

In the past, different entities and individuals were not formally working together to promote safe and effective use of prescribed fire. The WY-PFC was formed to meet this need and help formulate the use of prescribed fire within the state for safer and more effective practices, while providing consistent education through supported scientific efforts. These practices should be recognized by all practitioners using fire as a management tool.

Nationally, there are 38 prescribed fire councils in 32 states. The new WY-PFC will lead the way for the remaining five western states, which are home to many of the unwanted wildfire acres burned each year. The WY-PFC contributing partners include Wyoming State Forestry Division; Wyoming Game and Fish Department; University of Wyoming; Wyoming Conservation Districts; The Nature Conservancy; Wyoming Stock Growers Association; Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Park Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; USDA's Forest Service, Sweetwater County Commission, Fremont County Fuels Program, Northern Rockies Fire Science Consortium, Great Plains Fire Science Network, Southern Rockies Fire Science Network, Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation, and Muley Fanatics.

If you are interested in supporting this council as a member or just want more information please contact WYprescribedfire@gmail.com or visit our website <https://wyoextension.org/wyprescribedfire/>

