

Support State Fire Assistance and Volunteer Fire Assistance Programs



ABOUT NASF

The National Association of State Foresters (NASF) is comprised of the directors of state and territorial forestry agencies and the District of Columbia.

NASF represents state and territorial forester interests by influencing forest policy and leading efforts to optimize social, economic, and environmental benefits of trees and forests.

Learn more at www.stateforesters.org

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Provide crucial financial and technical assistance to states and local fire departments for wildland fire prevention, detection, and suppression. In addition to helping ensure that the nation's first responders are prepared, the programs provide funding to complete hazardous fuels treatments designed to protect local communities from wildland fire and reduce the risk of future fires. **State Foresters are responsible for wildfire protection on two thirds of America's forested lands.**

Specifically, this program also provides critically important and swift response capability on fires on federal lands. State Fire Assistance and Volunteer Fire Assistance (SFA/VFA) programs support the training and preparedness for several resource—including engines, crews, and training—to be available for surge capacity when needed on a national and local level. **In 2015 this funding trained almost 150,000 firefighters and provided over 15 million dollars in new or upgraded equipment. The program engages more than 15,000 communities to develop and implement community wildfire protection plans.**

In 2015, 68,151 wildfires burned more than a record-breaking 10 million acres. **Eighty percent of the total number of fires were where state and local departments had primary jurisdiction. Twenty-seven percent of the total acres burned were on state and private lands.**

That same year, **85 percent of all local and state crews and engine dispatched outside of their geographic area were responding to federal fires.** These numbers do not include numerous mobilizations and assistance provided by the states and local government within their geographic areas. These resources were trained and qualified to respond nationally thanks to the support of SFA and VFA.

NASF FY17 and FY18 Recommendations: \$87 million (SFA)/\$15 million (VFA)

Reflects budget increase in suppression funding on federal lands.

- In Alaska, strong and stable VFA and SFA programs are essential to increasing the capability of the Division of Forestry and of its 251 volunteer fire departments to ensure the protection of life and property of the citizens of Alaska. In 2015 these funds enabled the Division of Forestry to maintain a standard of keeping 90 percent of fires at 10 acres or less in critical/full protection options, cooperatively managing 766 fires with 5.145 million acres burned including 350 human-caused fires. These funds also enabled the agency to complete more than 3,000 individual home assessments
- In Florida, the SFA program is helping the Florida Forest Service achieve goals outlined in its Forest Action Plan. In 2014 the Florida Forest Service protected 2.5 million acres of public and private forestland through prescribed fires. 214,000 acres of state lands were treated with prescribed fire, the second highest acreage in Florida Forest Service history.
- In Wisconsin, SFA funds are helping five state and provincial agencies in the great lakes region manage an ember awareness campaign focused on educating the public about fire prevention. TV advertisements, restaurant placemats, flyers, display banners, newspaper ads, and a video were distributed during peak fire season in 2014. In 2015, the effort focused on the protection from embers and targeted seasonal homeowners located in fire prone areas.
- In Nevada, SFA funds are used to create a fire service networks across the state and with adjacent states that enhance levels of training, communication, coordination, planning, and fire suppression operations. These networks rely on the SFA funding to be bolstered to increase tangible results in the form of firefighter safety and suppression successes.
- In Kansas, VFA funds have helped recipient departments to purchase much needed safety, communication, and suppression equipment. Of the 138 applicants, 99 rural and volunteer fire departments received all or partial funding. All funds go to Kansas departments. While not a requirement, departments are encouraged to make purchases from Kansas companies, on average adding \$500,000 to the Kansas economy.