



Partnership Announces 2016 Wildfire Mitigation Awardees

Individuals and Organizations Honored for Exemplary Commitment to Community Fire Protection

WASHINGTON (January 22, 2016)—The Wildfire Mitigation Awards Committee has announced the 2016 Wildfire Mitigation Award winners. Established in 2014, the awards are the highest commendation for the innovation and leadership displayed by individuals and organizations committed to wildfire preparedness and mitigation.

The Wildfire Mitigation Awards are jointly sponsored by the [National Association of State Foresters](#) (NASF), the [International Association of Fire Chiefs](#) (IAFC), the [National Fire Protection Association](#) (NFPA), and the [USDA Forest Service](#) (USFS). The three categories for the awards are Fire Adapted Communities Fire Service Leadership, Wildfire Mitigation Innovation and the Community Wildfire Preparedness Pioneer.

Recognizing the comprehensive challenge posed by wildfires, these awards commend the outstanding dedication to wildfire preparedness and safety across a broad spectrum of activities and among a variety of individuals and organizations. By honoring their achievements, the award sponsors also seek to increase public recognition and awareness of the value of wildfire mitigation efforts.

The winners of the 2016 Wildfire Mitigation Awards are:

Community Wildfire Preparedness Pioneer Awardees:

- Peggy Beach, Volunteer for Firewise of Southwest Colorado (Colorado)
- Les Kole, Firewise Ambassador (Colorado)
- Rich Martinson & the Conover/Land O'Lakes Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) Committee (Wisconsin)

Fire Service Leadership Awardees:

- Fire Chief Mark Shadowens, Northstar Fire Department/Northstar Community Services District (California)
- City of Austin Fire Department Wildfire Division (Texas)
- Tom Austin, Log Hill Mesa Fire Protection District (Colorado)
- Florida Forest Service Prescribed Fire Program (Florida)

Wildfire Mitigation Innovation Awardees:

- Lake Travis Fire Rescue (Texas)
- Jonathan Bruno, Coalition for the Upper South Platte (Colorado)
- Elk Springs and Elk Stream Ranch Neighborhood Ambassadors (Colorado)
- Deer Springs Fire Safe Council (California)
- Summit County Government (Colorado)

“State Foresters are proud to honor the efforts of citizens working on the ground to mitigate the threat of wildfire. These outstanding mitigation efforts are helping keep America’s communities safe. In 2015 more than 10 million acres of land were burned by wildfire. As more people build homes and recreate in

forested areas, State Foresters partner with agencies, communities, and homeowners to create fire adaptive communities that are better able to withstand this increasing threat,” said Paul DeLong, Wisconsin State Forester and President of the National Association of State Foresters.

“Wildland fire continues to be a major threat to communities and fire departments across the U.S.,” said Chief Rhoda Mae Kerr, IAFC president and chair of the board. “The IAFC commends the 2016 Wildfire Mitigation Award winners for everything they have done to mitigate wildland fire in their communities and inspire others to do the same.”

“NFPA is pleased to recognize the significant impact these individuals and groups have made in wildfire preparedness and mitigation,” says Michele Steinberg, manager of NFPA’s Wildland Fire Operations Division. “Damaging wildfire seasons remind us of the need to increase awareness of the value of wildfire mitigation efforts. The awards are a great way to honor the positive work being done in communities to keep residents safer from fire.”

“The USDA Forest Service promotes individual and community level fire adaptation, like forming local all-hands coalitions, supporting fire departments, reducing hazardous fuels, hardening structures, and smart development, as the best ways to prepare for wildfire. These awards recognize and encourage that very important wildfire risk reduction work,” said Pam Leschak, USDA Forest Service National WUI/Fire Adapted Communities Program Manager.

Awards will be presented at the IAFC [Wildland-Urban Interface Conference \(WUI\)](#) in Reno, Nevada on March 9, 2016.

Media Contact: Amanda Cooke, National Association of State Foresters, at acooke@stateforesters.org or 202-624-5417

The National Association of State Foresters 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/mitigation.

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