

2020 COLORADO FIRE COMMISSION ANNUAL
REPORT



Letter from Commission Chair

The creation of the Colorado Fire Commission is an acknowledgment of the need for structural changes in how Colorado addresses fire and its consequences. To effectively address these issues, input from a broad range of stakeholders is necessary and consensus is critical. The Commission was formed with the recognition that any approach to these issues requires input from an array of public and private interests. Because of this, the Commission consists of representative stakeholder groups with wide and varied backgrounds.

The challenges facing Colorado's fire service are not unique. The costs and impacts of wildland fires continue to increase, many volunteer fire departments are facing a shortage of volunteers, and fire department budgets are being cut. All of this is occurring while fire departments are being asked to take on increasing responsibilities in their communities.

The inaugural year of the Colorado Fire Commission ended with five approved recommendations to address the issues of mutual aid, fire funding, and fire data collection and use. As you will see in this report, stakeholders spent many hours crafting these recommendations, all while being sensitive to their financial impact. These recommendations are consensus-driven and will hopefully be useful in crafting future policy to address the fire problem in Colorado.

The Colorado Fire Commission thanks the Colorado General Assembly for recognizing the need for the Commission and for authorizing its creation through House Bill 19-040. In addition, the Commission would not have achieved its first-year accomplishments without the dedication of the Commission and subcommittee members, as well as the work of the Commission staff. The citizens of Colorado owe a deep measure of thanks to all of the committed individuals who have contributed to the initial success of the Commission.

While the challenges facing the Commission are significant, a spirit of collaboration and cooperation among diverse stakeholders has been established, which is critical to the Commission's success. It is my honor to work with those committed to ensuring the success of the Colorado Fire Commission and improving how Colorado manages fire issues for years to come.

Stan Hilkey
Colorado Fire Commission Chair
Executive Director, Colorado Department of Public Safety

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Commission Members

Voting Members

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Executive Director
Colorado Department of Public Safety

Sean Jewell
Captain, West Metro Fire Rescue
Statewide Organization Representing Professional Firefighters

Mike Morgan, Vice Chair
Division Director
Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control

Bryce Boyer
Captain, City of Pueblo Fire Department
Statewide Organization Representing Professional Firefighters

Vaughn Jones
Wildland Fire Management Section Chief
Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control

Paul Acosta
Vice President, Colorado Firefighters Association
Statewide Organization Representing Volunteer Firefighters

Kevin Klein
Division Director
Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

Brita Horn
Chief, Rock Creek Fire
Statewide Organization Representing Volunteer Firefighters

Mike Lester
Director/State Forester
Colorado State Forest Service

Doug Hall
Chief, Westminster Fire
Statewide Organization Representing Municipalities

Dan Gibbs
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Colorado Department of Natural Resources

Ken Watkins
Chief, Grand Junction Fire
Statewide Organization Representing Municipalities

Bob Baker
Chief, South Metro Fire
Statewide Organization Representing Fire Chiefs—
East Slope

Lesley Dahlkemper
Commissioner, Jefferson County
Statewide Organization Representing Counties—
East Slope

Mark Novak
Chief, Vail Fire and Emergency Services
Statewide Organization Representing Fire Chiefs—
West Slope

Ben Tisdell
Commissioner, Ouray County
Statewide Organization Representing Counties—
West Slope

Brett Powell
Sheriff, Logan County
Statewide Organization Representing County
Sheriffs—East Slope

Pam Feely
Board Member, West Metro Fire Rescue
Statewide Organization Representing Special
Districts

Sean Smith
Sheriff, La Plata County
Statewide Organization Representing County
Sheriffs—West Slope

Kevin Whelan
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Districts

Joe Pelle
Sheriff, Boulder County
Statewide Organization Representing County
Sheriffs

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Statewide Organization Representing Emergency
Managers

KC Hume
Sheriff, Moffat County
Statewide Organization Representing County
Sheriffs

Monica Million
Executive Director, Colorado 911 Resource Center
911 Advisory Task Force Member established by the
Public Utilities Commission

Ex-Officio (Non-Voting) Members

Bob Sullivan
Southwest Regional Director, National Fire
Protection Association
Representing Nonprofit Organization with
Expertise in Nationally Recognized Safety
Standards

Scott Sugg
Assistant Director Cooperative Fire, U.S. Forest
Service

Zane Kessler
Director of Government Relations, Colorado River
District
Representing Water Providers—West Slope

Brain Achziger
State Fire Management Officer, Bureau of Land
Management

Eric Howell
Forest Program Manager, Colorado Springs Utilities
Representing Water Providers—West Slope

Jay Lusher
Regional Fire Management Officer, National Park
Service

Carole Walker
Executive Director, Rocky Mountain Insurance
Information Association
Representing the Insurance Industry

Sarah Thorsteinson
Executive Director, Summit County Association of
Realtors
Representing Realtors



Firefighters on the Pine Gulch Fire burning in Mesa and Garfield Counties in August 2020.

Colorado Fire Commission Staff

Lisa Pine
Fire Commission Administrator
Division of Fire Prevention and Control

Heather Bergman
Peak Facilitation Group

Sam Haas
Peak Facilitation Group

Executive Summary

When bringing diverse stakeholders together to improve how Colorado addresses fire and its consequences, there is no greater measure of success than having actionable recommendations and Commission members that feel that participation has been a valuable use of their time. By that measure, the inaugural year of the Colorado Fire Commission has been a huge success.

Senate Bill 19-040, signed into law by the Governor Polis on June 3, 2019, established Colorado's first ever commission to address fire issues in Colorado. The purpose of the Colorado Fire Commission (Commission) is to allow the state to more proactively address fire issues by developing long-term strategies and recommendations on complex fire issues. In order to do that, the makeup of the Commission should reflect not only the geographic diversity in Colorado but the range of interests with expertise in or impacted by fire and its management. Bringing together this network of 32 stakeholders allows the Commission to develop consensus-driven solutions that will have the greatest impact on how Colorado addresses fire and its consequences.

The top priorities the Commission addressed in year one were: (1) regional and statewide coordination of mutual aid, (2) large fire funding mechanisms, and (3) understanding Colorado's true fire problem through data. The Commission met four times between October 2019 and July 2020. In addition, there were 13 subcommittee meetings and 3 task force meetings. The result of these meetings was five approved and actionable recommendations to present to the legislature.

"I realized this was a very special opportunity to make a lasting impact on the Colorado Fire Service. All the essential stakeholders are active participants. I have not been disappointed. Very strong leadership of the whole Commission, the committees, and sub-committees. Very proud to be a part of this effort." —Doug Hall, Westminster Fire Chief and Fire Commission Member

Regional and Statewide Coordination of Mutual Aid

The Colorado fire service is the year-round initial response resource for the state. In the context of the wildland fire problem, a robust mutual aid system reduces the chance of fires becoming large-scale, long duration events that impart significant damage on our communities. In addition to improving initial attack efforts, a statewide mutual aid plan provides a mechanism to facilitate repositioning of resources and backfill for regions experiencing drawdown.

Recommendation 20-01: Implement the Colorado Coordinated Regional Mutual Aid System: The Colorado Coordinated Regional Mutual Aid System (CCRMAS) is an effort to better coordinate initial attack response to emerging incidents. This system links existing mutual aid plans and agreements to create a web of redundancy in mutual aid and dedicates personnel to coordinating mutual aid in Colorado.

Recommendation 20-02: Updates to Mutual Aid Statutes to Support the Colorado Coordinated Regional Mutual Aid System: In order to implement CCRMAS successfully, the subcommittee recommends updating language in Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) 29-5-105, 29-5-107, and 29-5-108. These updates will clarify how liability is addressed in a mutual aid scenario, allowing an easier flow of mutual aid resources.

Large Fire Funding

There are two key components to the fire funding issue: (1) Financial and management responsibility for large State Responsibility Fires (SRF) transferred to the Division of Fire Prevention and Control (DFPC) once they exceed local and county capability; and (2) State fire assistance provided to local agencies and counties

before fires become SRFs. These recommendations address both components and work to fix challenges with the existing system.

Recommendation 20-03: Establish a State Responsibility and Large Wildland Fire Fund within DFPC: This recommendation creates a new fund to manage wildfires that exceed county capability and qualify as an SRF and also requests additional funding for forest and vegetative management programs under the Colorado State Forest Service.

Recommendation 20-04: Implement an Enhanced State Assistance Program: To facilitate early detection and rapid action, this recommendation proposes to convert the EFF from a large fire fund into a fund to support a new Enhanced State Assistance (ESA) program. By transitioning the EFF program dollars to a new ESA program, DFPC would be able to provide additional resources before and during the initial stages of an incident to reduce rapid fire spread and limit the number of fires exceeding the capacity of the local agencies. Transitioning the EFF program and using that \$1 million per year to support early intervention would save significant dollars on the back end. This new ESA program would also help provide sustainable funding for Wildfire Emergency Response Fund (WERF) requests.

Fire Data

Accurate fire data is critical to understanding Colorado's true fire problem. The lack of consistent reporting and incomplete fire data are challenges to understanding the full picture of fire in Colorado.

Recommendation 20-05: Implement a Comprehensive Fire Data Collection and Dissemination Program: This recommendation provides both short-term and long-term strategies to improve fire data in Colorado including: (1) accurately determine how many fire departments in Colorado consistently report their data; (2) conducting an inventory of every database used by different segments of the fire service in Colorado; (3) consulting with law enforcement agencies, other types of organizations, and other states to learn more about their data reporting criteria and data collection best practices; (4) improving the accuracy of the data reported by providing more training, and by evaluating the reporting methods for different types of reports; and (5) developing an organized system to publish data.

Conclusion

These recommendations are interrelated in the overall goal of addressing fire in Colorado and its consequences. Mutual aid is critical during initial attack when state assistance is utilized, so Recommendations 20-01 and 20-04 complement each other. Recommendations 20-03 and 20-04 look at the two sides of a wildfire incident, the initial attack phase when the fire is small and the State Responsibility phase when a large fire has exceeded local capabilities. Although we anticipate these will be evaluated individually, the ability to move forward on the entire package of recommendations will have the greatest positive impact on Colorado.

"I believe we made some positive steps in the right direction, but there is more work to be done. There is not a one size fits all when it comes to fires/fire fighting in the state. Not all of Colorado is covered in trees." —
**Logan County Sheriff Brett Powell
and Fire Commission Member**

CFC's first year resulted in actionable recommendations for improving planning, coordination, response, funding, and data reporting to better understand and reduce the impact of fires in Colorado.

Introduction

Report to the House Rural Affairs and Agriculture Committee and the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee and the Wildfire Matters Review Interim Committee pursuant to Colo. Rev. Stat. § 24-33.5-1233

This report provides an overview of the first year of activities of the Colorado Fire Commission (Commission). The mission of the Commission is to enhance public safety in Colorado through an integrated statewide process focused on the Fire Service’s capacity to conduct fire management and use, preparedness, prevention, and response activities to safeguard lives, property—including utility and communications infrastructure—and natural resources and increase the resiliency of local and regional communities.

The membership of the Commission was determined through an application process based on interest, expertise, and geographic representation. The emphasis on expertise and geographic representation acknowledges that fire in Colorado affects a wide range of interests and that fire is managed differently throughout the state. Commission Chair Stan Hilkey formally appointed the Commission members on August 5, 2020, with input from the stakeholder organizations identified in the legislation.

COVID-19

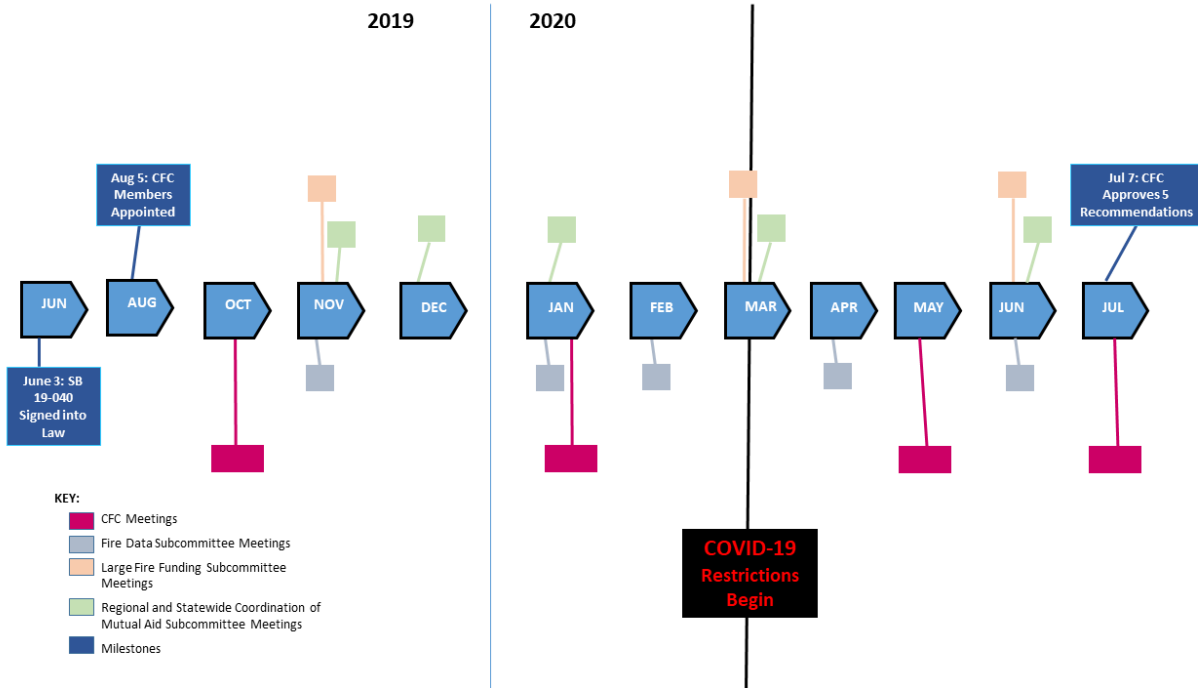
Governor Polis issued a stay-at-home order to combat the COVID-19 virus effective March 26, 2020. As a result, the Commission suspended all in-person meetings and transitioned to virtual meeting platforms. Would these platforms be adequate for the important conversations necessary to reach consensus on recommendations? It took a change in process and mindset, yet—through the dedication of the members and skilled facilitation—the dialogue continued culminating in approved recommendations. A group created to find innovative solutions to Colorado’s fire problems first had to find innovative solutions to manage the new normal necessitated by COVID-19.

The Commission met four times between October 2019 and July 2020. The meetings occurred on October 9, 2019, in Glenwood Springs; January 7, 2020, in Colorado Springs; May 27, 2020, via virtual meeting; and July 7, 2020, via virtual meeting. In addition, there were thirteen subcommittee meetings and three task force meetings. All of the meeting documents and summaries can be found on the Commission [website](http://www.colorado.gov/dfpc). (www.colorado.gov/dfpc).

Commission Chair Stan Hilkey welcoming the Commission members to the inaugural meeting October 9, 2019.



2020 ANNUAL REPORT: COLORADO FIRE COMMISSION



The Commission approved the following principles to guide the Commission’s decision-making:

- Public safety is always paramount in our thoughts.
- We are inclusive of all represented perspectives and areas of expertise, and we commit to nonpartisanship.
- We question our assumptions, maintain respect for differences, and work toward common goals that meet the Commission’s mandate.
- We seek outside help with areas in which we are lacking knowledge.
- We strive to be innovative in our approaches to complex fire issues.
- We carefully consider the perspectives of the various regions and diverse populations across the state.
- To the best of our ability, our decisions are straightforward and timely.
- Our decisions are guided by science and data when it is available and are aimed at improving fire programs in the state.



Legislative Intent

Senate Bill 19-040, signed into law by Governor Polis on June 3, 2019, established Colorado’s first ever commission to address fire issues in Colorado. The legislative declaration began by acknowledging that the Division of Fire Prevention and Control (DFPC) had conducted a “...two-year stakeholder-driven strategic planning effort to evaluate fire programs throughout the state and identify areas in which the state can better support its partners.” The establishment of the Commission provided the appropriate framework to “...ensure accountability and create an efficient and streamlined statewide process for issuing recommendations, driving implementation of specific actions and policies, and reporting on progress and lessons learned.” The work of the Colorado Fire Commission will allow the state to more proactively address fire issues by developing a comprehensive approach that embraces mitigation, prevention, preparedness, and suppression, as well as developing long-term strategies and recommendations on complex fire issues. See Appendix A for a copy of Senate Bill 19-040.



House Bill 19-040 signing ceremony with Governor Polis and members of the Colorado Fire Service

The 2019 legislation identified 24 voting members—18 of whom are appointed representatives of specific stakeholder groups and 6 of whom were identified to serve based on their official position in state government. In addition, there are 8 ex-officio (non-voting) members, bringing the total membership on the Commission to 32. Appointments are for 4-year terms, except for 10 appointments that are for 2-year terms

during the first 2 years following the establishment of the Commission. The legislation requires the Commission to meet at least every 3 months, or more as determined by the Chair of the Commission.

The legislation directs the Commission to "...enhance public safety in Colorado through an integrated statewide process..." The legislation identified ten specific issues for the Commission to consider:

1. Evaluating funding mechanisms for effective response to large fires, with consideration given to appropriate cost-share agreements, financial contributions, mitigation and preparedness, mutual aid participation, and local actions and plans;
2. Strengthening regional and statewide coordination of mutual aid resources and initial attack capabilities for fire and other hazards;
3. Developing methodical approaches to and recommendations on Colorado's fire service concerns and issues;
4. Developing an accurate understanding of Colorado's fire problems, including the number of injuries and fatalities, overall fire losses, and the causes and origins of structural and wildland fires;
5. Assessing the capacity of the state to provide emergency fire support and technical expertise to local communities;
6. Developing best proactive recommendations related to high-risk occupancies for consideration by local jurisdictions and communities, including recommendations related to minimum cooperative agreements and mutual aid resources;
7. Developing performance measures of overall response effectiveness and identifying recommended improvement areas;
8. Forecasting upcoming funding and resource challenges and trends that affect fire services and the ability of the state and of local jurisdictions to respond to fire and mitigate hazards in the short and long term;
9. In cooperation with the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) and other affected stakeholders, developing and publishing an assessment of fire treatment costs and cost distribution, including the costs of mitigation under emergent and non-emergent circumstances, retreatment costs, and post-recovery costs; and
10. Reviewing the current Emergency Fire Fund program and providing recommendations to make it more inclusive of counties throughout the state.

The legislation requires the Commission to submit a written report to the House Rural Affairs and Agriculture Committee, the Senate Agriculture and National Resources Committee, and the Wildfire Matters Review Interim Committee on or before August 31 of each year. All interim committees were canceled in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions. The Commission hopes to be able to make a formal presentation of the Commission's recommendations to the Legislature in future years.

Activities of the Fire Commission

Pre-Work and Commission Meetings

Work prior to the first meeting of the Commission was focused on setting up the framework for the Commission by developing draft bylaws, processes, and protocols and creating a roadmap for the inaugural year. Based on the comments heard from the Commission members during the one-on-one meetings, an ambitious schedule was drafted to meet the objective of having approved actionable recommendations by July 7, 2020.

During the first meeting of the Commission in October 2019, the members reviewed the Commission’s statutory charge and approved the bylaws and structure for meetings. They prioritized the ten legislative focus areas and identified three top priorities for year one: (1) regional and statewide coordination of mutual aid (Item 2 in the Legislative Intent section), (2) large fire funding mechanisms (Items 1 and 10), and (3) understanding Colorado’s true fire problem through data (Item 4). Members established three subcommittees to draft recommendations related to these initial focus areas.

Setting the Commission up for Success

When bringing together different stakeholders to address complex problems, it is important to establish common ground. To lay the groundwork for the difficult conversations ahead, the Fire Commission Administrator met with each member individually to identify what success looks like for the Commission. The overwhelming response was having actionable recommendations to present, rather than just meeting without outcomes. The second step to developing the working relationships was a dinner the night before the first meeting. It was an opportunity for everyone to meet on neutral ground in a relaxed setting before the official work began the next day. Success has as much to do with the preparation work as with the meetings themselves.

2019-2020 Meeting Road Map



The rest of the meetings focused on reports from the subcommittees and allowed members to provide input and vote on proposed recommendations. The COVID-19 pandemic and associated public health orders prevented the third and fourth meetings from being held in person, but the Commission members did not want to lose momentum, so they met via videoconference.

Commission Outreach

In addition to the formal meetings of the Colorado Fire Commission, the members and staff participated in outreach to affiliated groups and responded to media requests. To ensure that the work of the Commission complemented and did not duplicate other efforts, Commission members met with the Forest Health Advisory Council (FHAC), which focuses more on forest health and mitigation than fire specifically, and the Homeland Security Advisory Council (HSAC), which has a subcommittee focused on resource mobilization for a wider variety of disciplines.

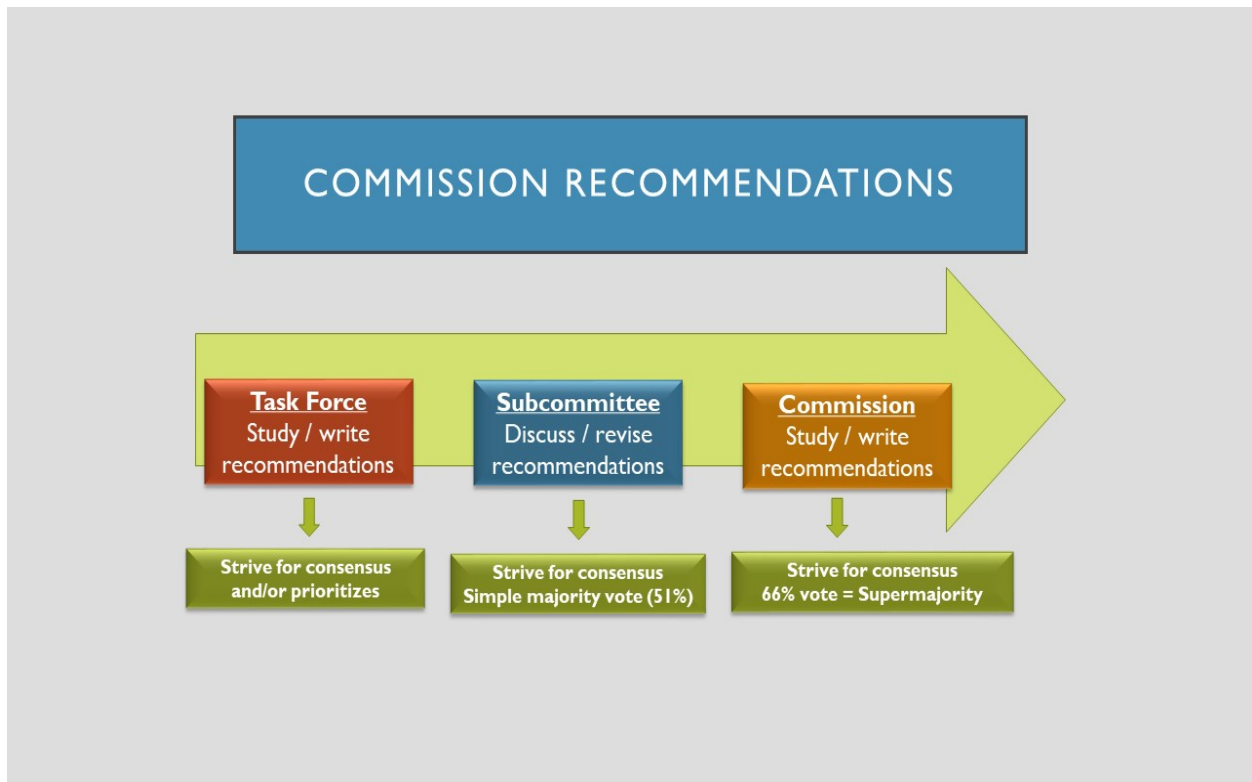
In an effort to maintain open communication with other groups not represented on the Commission and with the public, members met with the Colorado Rural Electric Association and participated in interviews with Colorado Public Radio and Colorado Community Media, as well as provided updates through DFPC social media. The members of the Commission ensured that they informed the organizations they represent of Commission activities by holding information sessions, updating members via email, and writing articles for organization newsletters.



La Plata County Sheriff Sean Smith providing an update on Large Fire Funding Subcommittee recommendations at the January 6, 2020 Commission meeting in Colorado Springs.

Commission Subcommittees and Task Forces

Subcommittees and task forces allow smaller groups to work on innovative solutions to the issues prioritized by the Commission. Subcommittees and task forces include both Commission members and other subject matter experts that can provide insight and context on these issues. To focus the efforts further, subcommittees can create smaller task forces to work on one specific aspect of the subcommittee's overall work. See Appendix B for a list of subcommittee and task force members.



I. Statewide and Regional Coordination of Mutual Aid Subcommittee

The focus of the Statewide and Regional Coordination of Mutual Aid Subcommittee is to strengthen regional and statewide coordination of mutual aid resources and initial attack capabilities for fire and other hazards.

A. Background

The Colorado Fire Service is involved in the initial response to nearly all natural and man-made disasters that impact our state. Regardless of the size of the community, there is the potential for rapidly expanding incidents to overwhelm the resources of the local fire department and the surrounding agencies. The resiliency of our communities is directly linked to the ability to rapidly mobilize resources in the form of mutual aid. During rapidly expanding incidents, it is not possible to decrease travel time of responding resources; what *is* possible is to decrease activation and reflex time through a well-planned and coordinated regional and statewide mutual aid system. Proper planning prior to an emergency helps ensure that the coordination of mutual aid resources is already in place and does not become an additional task for those busy managing the response.

Historically, the State of Colorado has had a rather hands-off approach to supporting local response to fires and disasters until an incident has reached state responsibility. In nearly all circumstances, the longer the duration of an incident, the greater the negative impact to citizens and state and local governments. DFPC has begun a more robust approach to provide state assistance (see Recommendation 20-04 below) rather than adhering to the traditional approach of waiting for an incident to reach a complexity and cost that requires state and federal financial assistance. This approach has proven to be effective and there is a need for additional support in the form of assisting and supporting the coordination and implementation of a regional and statewide mutual aid system.

Recent International Association of Fire Chiefs' data reflects that somewhere between 85% and 95% of mutual aid requests are for fire agency service delivery in the areas of fire (wildfire and structural), technical rescue, and emergency medical services incidents. Although there are various mutual aid plans within specific counties, and in some cases within regions, there is no statewide mechanism to activate mutual aid resources between counties and regions in Colorado. Local 911 dispatch centers currently play the primary role in mutual aid activation, but become overwhelmed early during a rapidly expanding incident and are therefore unable to activate and coordinate expanded mutual aid over large geographical areas. With the exception of a few counties, fire service mutual aid is coordinated between fire chiefs or their designee, who have limited time to coordinate mutual aid on a regional or statewide basis. The expanded systems—such as emergency managers and Emergency Operations Centers—play a role in resource mobilization when an incident continues into multiple days or operational periods, but are limited in rapid resource movement due to the time required to activate and staff the various positions. Additionally, Interagency Dispatch Centers are focused on wildland fire, are not staffed on a 24/7/365 basis, and are not equipped to support all of the incident types that

Colorado's fire service is faced with on a daily basis. Since none of the current systems is dedicated to coordinating regional and statewide mutual aid, the result is often delayed response time for critical resources. In most rapidly expanding incidents, major damage and disruption will occur prior to these mechanisms becoming fully functional, thus compounding the overall impacts of the disaster.

The Colorado fire service is the year-round initial response resource for the state. Although many incidents will require the response of other disciplines, the fire service is the common denominator in regard to incident stabilization for almost all hazards. Ideally, mutual aid encompasses all disciplines; however, the first and most important step in achieving this end-state is a functional fire service mutual aid system to respond to incidents like wildland fire, structure fire, HAZMAT, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and technical rescue.

In the context of the wildland fire problem, a robust mutual aid system reduces the chance of fires becoming large-scale, long-duration events that impart significant damage to our communities. In addition to improving initial attack efforts, a statewide mutual aid plan is value added since it provides a mechanism to facilitate pre-positioning of resources and backfill for regions experiencing drawdown.

The driving assumptions behind this work include:

- Rapidly expanding incidents can overwhelm the resources of the local fire department and surrounding agencies.
- Local mutual aid plans exist, but there is limited coordination across regions to activate additional resources quickly during rapidly expanding incidents.
- Decreasing activation time can help minimize the impacts of an incident.
- During the initial stages of an incident, dispatch centers and local first responders will be focused on their primary response duties and unable to assist with coordinating rapid mutual aid mobilization. Emergency managers and emergency operations centers will be in the process of being activated in support of extended response, should it become necessary, and in preparation for consequence management of subsequent impacts of the emergency response.

This subcommittee met five times between November 2019 and June 2020. They developed two recommendations aimed at improving mutual aid across Colorado.

B. Recommendations

Recommendation 20-01: Implement the Colorado Coordinated Regional Mutual Aid System

The basic framework for mutual aid is established by the Colorado Coordinated Regional Mutual Aid System (CCRMAS). Developed by the Colorado State Fire Chiefs (CSFC) and refined by this subcommittee, CCRMAS is an effort to better coordinate initial attack response to emerging incidents. This system links existing mutual aid plans and agreements to create a web of redundancy in mutual

aid. Implementing the system in a manner in which there is sufficient redundancy so that there is not a single point of failure will require dedicated personnel whose primary function is mutual aid coordination, as outlined below.

Resources Required:

- 1) Seven new full-time employees (FTE) in DFPC
 - a) State Coordination Center (2 FTE): Hire two new FTE with the primary role of overall state coordination.
 - b) Regional Mutual Aid Coordinators (5 FTE): Hire four FTE to ensure that competent mutual aid plans exist in each DFPC District, serve as the point of contact within the district, and coordinate mutual aid requests. Hire one FTE for management and oversight of the program.

- 2) Estimated Program Costs
 - a) Start-Up (Year 1) Costs: \$1,193,695
 - i) Personal Services for New FTE (\$734,485)
 - ii) Operating Expenses and Start-Up Costs (\$359,210)
 - iii) Mutual Aid Coordination Software (\$100,000)
 - b) Ongoing (Year 2+) Costs: \$1,093,885
 - i) Personal Services (\$734,485)
 - ii) Operating Expenses (\$259,400)
 - iii) Mutual Aid Coordination Software (\$100,000)

Next Steps:

Temporary Action Plan: The subcommittee proposes a temporary action plan to proceed with implementation prior to new funding. The temporary action plan is to make a formal recommendation to CSFC to implement CCRMAS. Members from CSFC will initially fill coordination roles. DFPC Battalion Chiefs will act as a contingency resource to assist as backup to CSFC regional coordinators when the regional coordinators are unavailable. Because Colorado fire chiefs and DFPC Battalion Chiefs already have full-time jobs and extensive duties, this temporary plan does not provide the dedicated resources required to implement this system effectively. For this reason, this is not a viable long-term solution for facilitating robust mutual aid coordination in Colorado. Next steps for this temporary action plan are as follows:

- Identify willingness of CSFC and individual fire chiefs to implement the temporary action plan while the Commission pursues funding to fully implement CCRMAS
- Designate regional coordinators and alternates
- Identify the mechanism by which a fire department can activate regional or statewide mutual aid

Full Implementation of CCRMAS: To make CCRMAS efficient and sustainable, DFPC would need additional resources. Full implementation of CCRMAS would require the legislature to authorize additional funding and resources to DFPC as outlined above. Next steps for full implementation are as follows:

- Conduct a stakeholder outreach process to refine recommendation and identify and resolve any questions or concerns
- Identify legislative sponsors for this recommendation
- Determine if a new statute establishing CCRMAS would need to be added to the *Colorado Revised Statutes*
- Identify and purchase appropriate mutual aid coordination software

The Commission approved Recommendation 20-01 by a vote of 18 to 1. See Appendix D for how the members of the Commission voted.

Recommendation 20-02: Update Mutual Aid Statutes to Support the Colorado Coordinated Regional Mutual Aid System

In order to implement CCRMAS successfully, the subcommittee recommends updating language in Colo. Rev. Stat. § 29-5-105, § 29-5-107, and § 29-5-108. Currently, when City Fire Department requests mutual aid from Town Fire Department, City Fire Department is liable for any actions taken by firefighters from Town Fire Department. The concern regarding mutual aid is determining which agency is liable for actions taken by the agency's personnel providing mutual aid. Currently, Colo. Rev. Stat. § 29-5-105 and § 29-5-107 place all resources from an assisting agency under the control of the requesting agency, and Colo. Rev. Stat. § 29-5-108 places all liability with the requesting agency. By implementing the changes requested, the assisting agency—working under the direction of the Incident Commander—would retain operational control of its resources and therefore retain liability for the actions of its crews. The changes also add public EMS agencies to the *Colorado Revised Statutes* to allow for better coordination of EMS mutual aid resources.

The changes proposed only affect fire and EMS agencies and do not change the language in Colo. Rev. Stat. § 29-5-108 related to law enforcement agencies since the activities of law enforcement are outside the scope of this subcommittee. Nor do the changes impact liability related to bringing out-of-state resources into Colorado as other agreements govern these relationships.

Resources Required: No additional resources are required to implement Recommendation 20-02.

Next Steps:

- Conduct a stakeholder outreach process and coordinate with EMS agencies to refine recommendation and identify and resolve any questions or concerns

- Work with appropriate stakeholders to verify that proposed language changes are properly written
- Identify legislative sponsors for this recommendation

The Commission approved Recommendation 20-02 by a vote of 20 to 0.

II. Large Fire Funding Subcommittee

The focus of the Large Fire Funding Subcommittee is to address how Colorado can create a stable funding mechanism for suppression costs of large wildland fires and how to update or reform the Emergency Fire Fund (EFF). To make the most effective use of the limited funds available, this subcommittee looked at both the front end (i.e., when fires are small) and the back end (i.e., when fires exceed local capacity and become a State Responsibility Fire [SRF]).

A. *Background*

There are two key components to the fire funding issue: (1) financial and management responsibility for large SRFs transferred to DFPC once they exceed local and county capacity; and (2) state fire assistance provided to local agencies and counties before fires become SRFs.

Large Fire Funding

In 1967, a group of counties established EFF to pool funds to pay for large wildland fires that exceed a single county's financial capacity. EFF was codified in statute under Colo. Rev. Stat. § 24-33.5-1220. Participation in the program is voluntary, with member counties entering into an EFF agreement with DFPC. An oversight board (made up of DFPC, Sheriffs, County Commissioners, and Fire Chiefs) establishes rules and processes for the program, with the DFPC Director appointed as the steward and administrator of program funds for qualifying fires. EFF generates funds through an annual assessment based on participating counties' taxed valuation and forested acres. Currently, these annual assessments generate approximately \$1 million per year, with individual county assessments ranging from several hundred dollars to over \$100,000. See Appendix E for current EFF assessment by county.

As evidenced by the tables below, there were very few SRFs in the first few decades of EFF. In the last decade, however, the number of SRFs and associated costs have grown significantly.



Table 1: State Responsibility Wildland Fire Incidents, 1967–2019

Years	State Responsibility Fires (SRFs)	SRF Average/Year	Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Incidents*	FEMA Average/Year
1967–1969	0	0	0	0
1970–1979	1	0.1	1	0.1
1980–1989	8	0.8	1	0.1
1990–1999	15	1.5	4	0.4
2000–2009	65	6.5	32	3.2
2010–2019	74	7.4	20	2.0
Total	163		58	

*A subset of SRFs eligible for reimbursement of some of the state’s suppression costs through FEMA’s Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG).

Table 2: Colorado’s Share of Suppression Costs for Wildland Fires, 2010–2019

Year	State Responsibility Fire Cost*
2010	\$7,878,000
2011	\$7,175,000
2012	\$15,876,000
2013	\$12,975,000
2014	\$244,000
2015	\$0
2016	\$15,025,000
2017	\$6,453,000
2018	\$40,079,000
2019	\$0

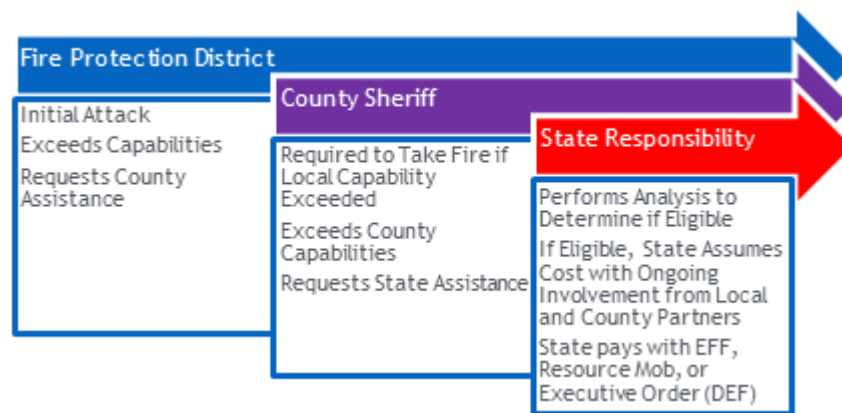
*Costs shown here are incident estimates

As evidenced in the tables above, the number and cost of SRFs have increased significantly since the creation of the EFF program in 1967.

Key issues and challenges are:

- EFF generates \$1 million per year in assessments. In 2018 alone, the State’s share of suppression costs exceeded \$40 million dollars.
- \$1 million can be spent in a single day of a large fire. In 2018, EFF was exhausted on April 17.
- Once EFF funds are exhausted, DFPC has to ask the Governor’s Office to declare a disaster and request funding out of the Disaster Emergency Fund (DEF).
- Not all counties are members of EFF. This creates inconsistencies and inequities in funding contributions and funding received. For example, on an SRF a participating EFF county and a non-participating EFF county will receive funding based on the same criteria. In the case of a non-participating EFF county, the funding comes from the DEF.
- Fire management is a partnership between the local fire agencies, the counties, the state, and federal land management agencies. The current fire funding system needs to be updated and improved. A key part of the solution should include an assessment of methods for counties and local agencies to maintain ownership of and contribute to wildfire management (e.g., through contributions toward preparedness activities, initial attack capabilities, mitigation activities).

The figure below documents the process of transferring a growing wildland fire from the local fire department’s jurisdictions to the county and the state.



State Assistance

Prior to a fire becoming an SRF, DFPC provides multiple forms of assistance to local agencies. The intent of these programs is to encourage early detection and rapid initial attack while fires are small, thereby limiting financial and other impacts to local, county, and state agencies.

Funding for state assistance comes from the Wildfire Emergency Response Fund (WERF), the Colorado Firefighting Air Corps (CFAC), and other DFPC base operating budgets. Assistance provided includes, but is not limited to, firefighting aircraft—both for fire detection and mapping and for fire suppression—handcrews, and other ground resources (i.e., overhead, engines, modules). In 2020,

Governor Polis authorized additional WERF funding to pilot both an additional early fire detection program and a severity program for pre-positioning of local agency, county, and/or DFPC resources around the state during periods of high fire occurrence or under high fire danger.



"19, July 2020, we worked to control a 2000-acre grass fire that resulted in the loss of only a single structure. ..our fire pushed at a high rate of spread, scorching 2003 acres, with only 1 structure loss, pushing a total of 5 miles in length; Had we not had air resources provided by DFPC, this fire had potential to exceed 10k acres, many more homes lost as well as many oil tank facilities at high risk. These air resources were able to make a stop for us, minimizing further impact. I am grateful for the resources and the willingness of DFPC to provide these critical resources." —Hudson Fire Protection District Battalion Chief Cody Peterson

*"Sheriff Bill Masters and I would like to thank you for the vision, leadership, and drive to provide state resources to local and regional fire incidents. The true success of your program and those you lead are **no injuries and no homes lost**. The program works! The relationship we have all worked hard to solidify over the years is a testament to how well the fire went and the positive outcomes associated."* —Telluride Fire Chief John Bennett, Green Meadows Subdivision Fire

Key issues and challenges for state assistance are:

- State assistance is provided by multiple programs through various funding sources, which can complicate understanding by external end users and internal tracking and accounting;
- The WERF program does not have a regular, ongoing appropriation – DFPC must monitor the account and request additional funds from the Legislature and/or Governor prior to the fund being depleted;
- Expenses for aviation assistance beyond WERF are funded by CFAC, which is also used to fund DFPC’s base aviation operations. Requests for aviation assistance funded by CFAC operate on a closest available resource concept, so the base budgets pay for both state and federal aviation expenses responding to local incidents. The concern is that heavy use of these resources early in a fiscal year will limit or prevent those resources being available or responding later in the same fiscal year. In some fiscal years, DFPC has had to utilize reserve agency funding.
- Expenses for DFPC resources (personnel overtime and other expenses) also come from base operating budgets not originally designed to cover response costs. These costs have increased each year, especially in smaller, rural counties, as DFPC resources have been utilized more frequently on local incidents.
- Currently there is no dedicated, consistent funding source for state suppression costs on SRFs. DFPC relies on the Emergency Fire Fund, if funds are still available, or on an Executive Order to utilize Disaster Emergency Funding (DEF) to cover the costs for suppression of large fires. There is no guarantee that DEF funds will be available when large SRFs occur.

The driving assumptions behind this work include:

- Colorado will continue to face large wildfires that exceed local and county capacity and require state funding;
- The existing EFF generates approximately \$1 million per year from county assessments, which is used once a fire reaches state responsibility. Once a wildfire exceeds local capacity and becomes a state responsibility fire, \$1 million does not have a significant impact on covering the cost of suppression efforts.
- Wildfires are easier to manage when they are small. Early detection and rapid, effective initial attack can reduce final fire size, costs, duration, impacts to communities and infrastructure, and exposure to firefighters and citizens.
- The current initial attack and state assistance programs are partially funded by DFPC base budgets. Base budgets are not a sustainable funding source because in a bad fire year, DFPC leadership could be forced to make the difficult choice of funding base operations or providing state assistance to local jurisdictions.
- Transitioning the EFF program dollars from large fire funding to an Enhanced State Assistance (ESA) fund would support early intervention and would save significant dollars on the back end by

preventing some fires from becoming SRFs. It is in the best interest of the state to support these efforts and partner with local agencies to reduce impacts of wildfire as well as costs of large wildfires.

- DFPC will continue to receive its baseline annual appropriation to maintain the current level of service provided by DFPC fire management programs and resources.

This subcommittee met five times between November 2019 and June 2020. They developed two recommendations aimed at improving the EFF and large fire funding.

B. Recommendations

Recommendation 20-03: Establish a State Responsibility and Large Wildland Fire Fund Within DFPC

This recommendation would create a base budget to manage wildfires that exceed county capability and qualify as an SRF. The budget would be based on a 5-year rolling average of the state share of fire suppression costs on SRFs. In addition, the recommendation acknowledges that mitigation is a critical piece of a comprehensive fire management program and requests an additional amount of at least 10% to fund forest and vegetative mitigation programs under the management of CSFS.

Any unused funds would roll over from year to year, with an upper level cap equal to 3 years' worth of funding. If funds were to accumulate above the cap, the "excess" funds would be allocated to other fire-related programs.

Resources Required:

Set up a new continuously appropriated fund with an annual appropriation equal to a 5-year rolling average of the state share of fire suppression costs on SRFs. The appropriation for FY20/21 would add approximately \$12,311,400 to the new fund. The Commission identified future growth in the Insurance Premium Tax (IPT) fund as a potential source for this new appropriation. See Final Thoughts at the end of this report for more details on the IPT discussion.

Next Steps:

- Conduct a stakeholder outreach process to refine recommendation and identify and resolve any questions or concerns;
- Evaluate and recommend an oversight structure and process for utilization of excess funds above the cap;
- Evaluate and verify necessary modifications and updates to current interagency fire agreements, state statute, etc.;
- Evaluate changes to eligible expenses under this program;

- Evaluate options through statutory language or other mechanisms to sustain the funds collected for this proposed recommendation; and
- Identify legislative sponsors for this recommendation.

The Commission approved Recommendation 20-03 by a vote of 20 to 0.

Recommendation 20-04: Implement an Enhanced State Assistance Program

Large wildland fires will continue to occur in Colorado and the state needs the ability to detect wildland fires early and to take rapid action to limit unwanted wildfires and protect values at risk. To facilitate early detection and rapid action, this recommendation proposes to convert the EFF from a large fire fund into a fund to support a new ESA program.

By transitioning the EFF program dollars to a new ESA program, DFPC would be able to provide additional resources before and during the initial stages of an incident to reduce rapid fire spread and limit the number of fires exceeding the capacity of the local agencies. Transitioning the EFF program and using that \$1 million per year to support early intervention would save significant dollars on the back end. This new ESA program would also help provide sustainable funding for WERF requests.

The cost of the new program would be \$2,800,000 per year with approximately \$1 million coming from county assessments (with contributions from all 64 counties) and \$1.8 million from new state funding to DFPC. This annually appropriated baseline level of funding would provide sustainable and enhanced State Assistance to local jurisdictions during the early stages of an incident.

Any unused funds would rollover from year to year, with an upper level cap equal to 3 years' worth of funding



“The purpose of this letter is to convey, in the strongest possible terms, Douglas County’s support for the Division of Fire Prevention and Control’s Strategy for aggressive Initial Attack on wildland fires. We know this philosophy works and we applaud efforts to continue to sustain this strategy. Our partnership with DFPC for an aggressive initial attack on several fires provided crucial resources and coordination. ...an aggressive initial attack is a successful strategy that saves homes and perhaps lives.”—Douglas County Sheriff Tony Spurlock, Chatridge 2 Fire

(\$8,400,000). If funds accumulate above the cap, the recommendation proposes that the “excess” amount funds other fire-related programs.

Resources Required:

An annual appropriation into the ESA program (formerly EFF) of \$1,800,000 would be required. The Commission identified future growth in the IPT fund as a potential source for this new appropriation. See Final Thoughts at the end of this report for more details on the IPT discussion.

Next Steps:

- Phase I: Transition EFF from a large fire funding mechanism to an ESA funding mechanism
 - Meet with the EFF Committee in Fall 2020 to present this recommendation and request input;
 - Conduct a stakeholder outreach process lead by the EFF Committee in partnership with the Commission’s Large Fire Funding Subcommittee to gather input on new assessment formula to add additional counties, on language changes required in Memorandums of Understanding between counties and DFPC, and on defining resources available under this new ESA program;
 - Assess existing statutory language for EFF, WERF, and other relevant wildfire items and develop proposed changes and revisions related to this proposed recommendation;
 - Meet with the EFF Committee in Spring 2021 to provide stakeholder input, draft agreement language, and request final decision on moving forward; and
 - EFF Committee approves new Memorandum of Understanding and funding formula.
- Phase II: Acquire additional funding to fully build out the ESA program documented in Recommendation 20-04
 - Evaluate and recommend an oversight structure and process for utilization of excess funds above the cap.
- Identify and resolve any additional stakeholder questions or concerns with this recommendation.

“On behalf of the Las Animas County Commissioners and the County Sheriff, I would like to express our sincere gratitude for DFPC RFMO Joseph LoBiondo and the rest of the crew for their hard work and dedication to Las Animas County during our recent string of wildland fires. (The crew) arrived in Las Animas County very quickly before the fires had a chance to get out of control. We appreciate very much their immediate availability and flexibility.”—Las Animas County Emergency Manager Kim Chavez

The Commission approved Recommendation 20-04 by a vote of 20 to 0.



III. Fire Data Subcommittee

The focus of the Fire Data Subcommittee is to address how to more effectively collect and use data to develop an accurate understanding of Colorado's fire problems, including, but not limited to, the number of injuries and fatalities, overall fire losses, and the causes and origins of structure and wildland fires.

A. *Background*

Accurate fire data is critical to understanding Colorado's true fire problem. Providing better data management for the fire service in Colorado begins by investing time and analysis in how fire departments collect data statewide, what data are gathered, and how the data are used to identify and respond to ongoing fire problems and trends in Colorado. These efforts are key to understanding existing needs to enhance data collection efforts, inform the public, and determine where the fire service is going in the future and how to get there. This work includes both short-term and long-term strategies.

The Fire Data Subcommittee conducted a survey of fire departments in Colorado to learn more about the current status of fire data collection within the state. The survey findings provided some helpful insights regarding the percentage of fire departments that do/do not currently report their data and some of the possible reasons. The findings also showed a strong interest in additional training on data collection and reporting. The Fire Data Subcommittee also determined that reaching out to other states and organizations to learn about their best practices for data collection will help our efforts in Colorado. All of this information went into developing some initial, short-term recommendations to the Commission regarding methods for improving fire data collection and the use of this data.

Data is a critical element that agencies, from the local to the federal level, use to make a case for more resources, whether in the form of funding, personnel, training, or equipment. In these days of limited funding, being able to document the need for more resources is very important.

Data regarding fire is held in multiple databases; there are federal databases, the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS), law enforcement databases that house arson and fire investigation information, and EMS databases that house medical call information, just to name a few. Since the data is housed in multiple databases, it is difficult to collate it to prepare a comprehensive overview of fire in Colorado.

National Fire Incident Reporting System

The main database for collecting national fire data is the National Fire Incident Reporting System. NFIRS tracks fire metrics through a set of codes. These codes try to document many of the situations

firefighters encounter on calls. The large number of available codes leads to interpretation errors and subjective use. For example, two people can code the same incident differently based on their personal interpretation of a code. Training is a key component of standardizing the use of specific codes when documenting a call for service.

NFIRS collects fire data to help tell the true story of fire in the United States. Fire departments, Sheriff's offices, local officials, state agencies and lawmakers, national policy makers, media, and the public use the data to make decisions on funding and resources. In addition, the Consumer Product Safety Commission uses the data to identify potential hazards in the community and issue recalls. The U.S. Fire Administration, the National Fire Protection Association, and others use the data to provide an annual summary of fire department activities, including total fire responses, types of responses (fire, EMS, hazardous materials, etc.), injuries and fatalities, cause and origin of fires, call response times, as well as a number of other metrics based on this data. For more information on NFIRS, go to <https://www.nfirs.fema.gov/>.

Each state has a database that feeds into NFIRS; Colorado's is the Colorado Fire Incident Report System (CFIRS), which DFPC manages. Although this is a national system, and the data attempts to show the full picture of fire in the United States, it is not a perfect representation of the issues. The limitations of NFIRS include:

- Reporting is voluntary. In Colorado, approximately 69% of fire departments report into CFIRS. As a result, Colorado is missing a large amount of data for the state, typically from the smaller rural volunteer departments. However, reporting into NFIRS is required if a department is applying for federal grants or some state grants.
- Data entered is only for incidents on state and private lands. As a result, Colorado is missing data on incidents that take place on federal lands, which is approximately 40% of the land in Colorado.
- Training on NFIRS is inconsistent, leading to unreliable data. The state offers training on NFIRS, but many departments do their own training in-house or just provide training as needed (e.g., when a new officer is promoted or a new administrative person is hired). This leads to inconsistent coding.
- Turnover can be high in smaller fire departments, leading to reduced consistency in reporting information due to data-entry variation between personnel.
- NFIRS collects data on fire cause and origin. Often this information is initially listed as "under investigation" and may not be updated once the investigation is complete. This can be a memory, software, or timing issue. The Fire Data Subcommittee created a Fire Investigation task force to determine the scope of this issue. The task force's work is ongoing.

This subcommittee met three times between November 2019 and June 2020. They developed one preliminary recommendation aimed at improving fire data collection and use.

B. Recommendations

Recommendation 20-05: Implement a Comprehensive Fire Data Collection and Dissemination Program

When the Fire Data Subcommittee began to evaluate how data is captured and used in Colorado, it quickly became apparent that data collection is a more complicated issue than it first appeared. As a result, the initial work of this subcommittee is to determine the current status of data collection and help inform long-term, sustainable solutions. This information will help develop short- and long-term programs to improve the ability of the fire service in Colorado to collect, analyze, and effectively use this data. Therefore, this recommendation is more a collection of the following broad goals, for which the subcommittee will develop specific steps over the next few months.

- Accurately determine more clearly how many fire departments in Colorado consistently report their data. It appears that a large percentage of fire departments in the state, perhaps as high as about 30%, do not report their data at all, and that an even larger percentage, perhaps as high as 50%–60%, do not report their data in a consistent manner. Contact fire departments that do not consistently report to determine why they do not report data and identify solutions for improving data reporting. Clearly identify the barriers to reporting and further refine short-term recommendations based on findings.
- Conduct an inventory of every database used by different segments of the fire service in Colorado. This will include different data systems used by individuals, local fire departments, and those used by larger agencies, such as state and federal agencies involved with wildland firefighting. Evaluate the similarities and differences among the various databases and the types of data collected. Develop plans to access the needed data from the different databases and develop uniform methods to compare and consolidate the data for use and analysis.
- Consult with law enforcement agencies, other types of organizations, and other states to learn more about their data reporting criteria and data collection best practices. Evaluate any regulations in place for collection and submittal of data, including methods that may exist to improve the consistency of data reporting, such as reporting requirements tied to eligibility for funding through various grant programs. Use this feedback to further inform efforts in Colorado to develop best practices for data collection and reporting.
- Improve the accuracy of the data reported by providing more training, and by evaluating the reporting methods for different types of reports. For example, EMS reports often receive more oversight and review compared to fire reports. Identify the different types of data that are actually needed by the fire service in Colorado, evaluate the various methods and practices used to collect those different types of data from different types of reports, and develop reporting methods and training programs that address those needs and help to improve data reporting. For example, creating a mentoring program in which fire departments more proficient with data reporting assist

departments that are not as proficient. Include suppression support agencies that assist jurisdictional authorities and data collected from fire origin and cause investigations.

- Develop an organized system to publish data. This will include starting with data currently collected based on the findings from the recommendations above, as well as data collected in the future based on the improvements outlined in this document. Use the data to develop data tables, compare Colorado data to other state and national trends, and provide methods to use the data for analysis and decision-making. Communicate annual data results statewide to deepen understanding about fire trends, challenges, and potential solutions. Key to this effort is creating a comprehensive communications plan that identifies target audiences, key messages, communications tools, and dissemination strategies. The overall objective is to tell the story of the fire problem in Colorado to various audiences in easily understood formats.

Resources Required: No additional resources are required at this time to implement Recommendation 20-05.

Next Steps:

- These recommendations are high-level concepts that need additional specifics on how they will be accomplished. The next step is to develop specific action plans on how to meet the goals outlined in the recommendation.
- Identify and resolve any stakeholder questions or concerns about this recommendation.

The Commission approved Recommendation 20-05 by a vote of 20 to 0.



Buffalo Mountain Fire, Summit County June 2018

IV. Final Thoughts

These subcommittees were developed to address specific issues. However, the issues are all interrelated in the overall goal of addressing fire in Colorado and its consequences. As a result, overlaps exist between the recommendations created by each subcommittee as well as across the different subcommittees. Mutual aid is critical during initial attack when state assistance is utilized, so Recommendations 20-01 and 20-04 complement each other. Recommendations 20-03 and 20-04 look at the two sides of a wildfire incident, the initial attack phase when the fire is small and the State Responsibility phase when a large fire has exceeded local capabilities. Although we anticipate that these recommendations will be evaluated individually, moving forward on the entire package of recommendations will have the greatest positive impact on Colorado.

Recommendations 20-01, 20-03, and 20-04 include requests for additional funding. The subcommittees evaluated various funding streams to support these recommendations. The Large Fire Funding Subcommittee initially identified the Insurance Premium Tax funds as a potential vehicle for funding. Specifically, the subcommittee evaluated three options, which included (1) requesting a new appropriation from the existing fund, (2) requesting an increase in the IPT of 0.25% to fund these recommendations, and (3) requesting a portion of the annual growth expected in the fund. The Large Fire Funding Subcommittee established an Insurance Premium Tax task force to evaluate options for using IPT funds. Based on the work of the task force and the subcommittee, the final proposed option to fund these three recommendations is to request an appropriation from the annual growth in the IPT so that this program is not removing existing funding from other programs or raising tax rates.

Subcommittee Recommendations and Votes Summary

On July 7, 2020, the Commission met to vote on the five recommendations developed by the subcommittees. Per the Commission's Processes and Protocols, a final vote on recommendations requires a supermajority vote of 66%—or 16 of the 24 voting members—for approval. All five recommendations passed and are outlined below. The full text of each recommendation can be found in Appendix C and Appendix D outlines how Commission members voted on each recommendation.

Recommendation Number	Title	Votes*	Pass/Fail	Legislative Action or Additional Funding Required
20-01	Implement the Colorado Coordinated Regional Mutual Aid System	18 in support; 1 opposed	Pass	Yes, both legislative action and funding are required. Includes a short-term interim plan that can proceed without legislative action or funding.
20-02	Update Mutual Aid Statutes to Support the Colorado Coordinated Regional Mutual Aid System	20 in support; None opposed	Pass	Legislative action required, but not additional funding.
20-03	Establish a State Responsibility and Large Fire Fund Within DFPC	20 in support; None opposed	Pass	Yes, both legislative action and funding required.
20-04	Implement an Enhanced State Assistance Program	20 in support; None opposed	Pass	Partial; Phase I does not require legislative action or funding. Phase II requires both.
20-05	Implement a Comprehensive Fire Data Collection and Dissemination Program	20 in support; None opposed	Pass	No; at this time, the recommendation is conceptual and more details will be required before legislative action is required.

*Only 20 of the 24 voting members attended the July 7, 2020, meeting and one member had to step away during the 20-01 vote. Ex-officio (non-voting) members attended, but their votes were not recorded. See Appendix D for how each member of the Commission voted.

Next Steps

In addition to the next steps identified for each recommendation above, the Commission plans to pursue the following actions in the upcoming year:

August/September 2020:

- Subcommittees meet to refine recommendations and respond to stakeholder questions or concerns
- Fire Commission Administrator will survey Commission members to identify areas of improvement for future Commission meetings and actions
- August 31, 2020: Annual Report due to legislature

October 2020:

- Colorado Fire Commission Meeting (October 19; Keystone, CO)
 - Evaluate areas of improvement
 - Identify a path forward and new areas of focus for 2020/2021
 - Create new subcommittees, if necessary
 - Establish Legislative Subcommittee

November/December 2020:

- Conduct subcommittee meetings to begin work on 2021 areas of focus

January 2021

- Colorado Fire Commission Meeting (January 5; Colorado Springs, CO)
 - Track progress on recommendations
 - Updates from subcommittees

February/March 2021

- Conduct subcommittee meetings to work on recommendation development

April 2021

- Colorado Fire Commission Meeting (April 13; Windsor, CO)
 - Track progress on recommendations
 - Updates from subcommittees
 - Present on draft recommendations for August 2021 Annual Report

May/June 2021

- Conduct subcommittee meetings to work on recommendation development
- Reach out to member organizations for input on draft recommendations
- Address comments and prepare recommendations for discussion and final vote at July 2021 meeting

July/August 2021

- Colorado Fire Commission Meeting (July 13; Grand Junction, CO)
 - Vote on recommendation
- August 31, 2021: Annual Report due to legislature

Note: COVID-19 continues to impact the Commission's ability to meet in person. Future meetings may be via video conference. The Colorado Fire Commission will continue to adapt and push forward bold, stakeholder-driven recommendations.



Grizzly Creek Fire, Garfield County August 2020

Appendix A: Senate Bill 19-040



SENATE BILL 19-040

BY SENATOR(S) Hisey and Fields, Bridges, Coram, Crowder, Danielson, Donovan, Gardner, Ginal, Gonzales, Lundeen, Marble, Pettersen, Rankin, Story, Tate, Todd, Williams A., Winter, Woodward, Garcia;
also REPRESENTATIVE(S) Carver and Roberts, Arndt, Bird, Buckner, Buentello, Cutter, Duran, Esgar, Exum, Galindo, Geitner, Gray, Herod, Hooton, Kipp, Kraft-Tharp, Larson, Lontine, McCluskie, McLachlan, Michaelson Jenet, Singer, Sirota, Snyder, Titone, Valdez A., Valdez D., Will.

CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COLORADO FIRE COMMISSION,
AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add 24-33.5-1233** as follows:

24-33.5-1233. Colorado fire commission - creation - powers and duties - report - legislative declaration - repeal. (1) **Legislative declaration.** (a) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HEREBY FINDS THAT:

(I) THE DIVISION HAS ENGAGED IN A TWO-YEAR,

Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material added to existing law; dashes through words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law and such material is not part of the act.

STAKEHOLDER-DRIVEN STRATEGIC PLANNING EFFORT TO EVALUATE FIRE PROGRAMS THROUGHOUT THE STATE AND IDENTIFY AREAS IN WHICH THE STATE CAN BETTER SUPPORT ITS PARTNERS;

(II) A COMMISSION STRUCTURE WILL ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY AND CREATE AN EFFICIENT AND STREAMLINED STATEWIDE PROCESS FOR ISSUING RECOMMENDATIONS, DRIVING IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIFIC ACTIONS AND POLICIES, AND REPORTING ON PROGRESS AND LESSONS LEARNED;

(III) A COMMISSION WILL ALSO HELP THE STATE TO BE PROACTIVE ON WILDFIRE ISSUES, AND TO DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH THAT EMBRACES MITIGATION, PREVENTION, AND PREPAREDNESS; AND

(IV) ESTABLISHING A FIRE COMMISSION WILL ALLOW THE STATE TO CONTINUE TO DEVELOP LONG-TERM STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON COMPLEX FIRE ISSUES.

(b) THEREFORE, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY DECLARES THAT ESTABLISHING A COLORADO FIRE COMMISSION SERVES THE INTERESTS OF THE STATE AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR FIRE PREVENTION, MITIGATION, PREPAREDNESS, AND SUPPRESSION.

(2) **Commission created.** THERE IS HEREBY CREATED IN THE DIVISION THE COLORADO FIRE COMMISSION, REFERRED TO IN THIS SECTION AS THE "COMMISSION".

(3) **Membership.** (a) THE COMMISSION CONSISTS OF TWENTY-FOUR VOTING MEMBERS AS FOLLOWS:

(I) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESIGNEE;

(II) THE DIRECTOR, OR THE DIRECTOR'S DESIGNEE;

(III) THE CHIEF OF THE WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT SECTION IN THE DIVISION, OR THE CHIEF'S DESIGNEE;

(IV) THE STATE FORESTER, OR THE STATE FORESTER'S DESIGNEE, TO INCLUDE RELEVANT INFORMATION PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-31-316;

(V) THE DIRECTOR OF THE DIVISION OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, OR THE DIRECTOR'S DESIGNEE;

(VI) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, OR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESIGNEE; AND

(VII) EIGHTEEN MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AS FOLLOWS:

(A) TWO MEMBERS APPOINTED FROM NOMINEES SUBMITTED BY A STATEWIDE ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING FIRE CHIEFS, WITH ONE SUCH MEMBER REPRESENTING THE WESTERN SLOPE AND ONE SUCH MEMBER REPRESENTING THE EASTERN PART OF THE STATE;

(B) TWO MEMBERS APPOINTED FROM NOMINEES SUBMITTED BY A STATEWIDE ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING PROFESSIONAL FIREFIGHTERS;

(C) TWO MEMBERS APPOINTED FROM NOMINEES SUBMITTED BY A STATEWIDE ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS;

(D) FOUR MEMBERS APPOINTED FROM NOMINEES SUBMITTED BY A STATEWIDE ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING COUNTY SHERIFFS, WITH AT LEAST ONE SUCH MEMBER REPRESENTING THE WESTERN SLOPE AND AT LEAST ONE SUCH MEMBER REPRESENTING THE EASTERN PART OF THE STATE;

(E) TWO MEMBERS APPOINTED FROM NOMINEES SUBMITTED BY A STATEWIDE ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING COUNTIES, WITH ONE SUCH MEMBER REPRESENTING THE WESTERN SLOPE AND ONE SUCH MEMBER REPRESENTING THE EASTERN PART OF THE STATE;

(F) TWO MEMBERS APPOINTED FROM NOMINEES SUBMITTED BY A STATEWIDE ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING MUNICIPALITIES;

(G) TWO MEMBERS APPOINTED FROM NOMINEES SUBMITTED BY A STATEWIDE ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING SPECIAL DISTRICTS;

(H) ONE MEMBER APPOINTED FROM NOMINEES SUBMITTED BY A STATEWIDE ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING EMERGENCY MANAGERS; AND

(I) ONE MEMBER OF THE 9-1-1 ADVISORY TASK FORCE ESTABLISHED

BY THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION.

(b) (I) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SHALL APPOINT ONE NONVOTING EX OFFICIO MEMBER WHO REPRESENTS A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION WITH EXPERTISE IN NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED SAFETY STANDARDS.

(II) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SHALL APPOINT TWO NONVOTING EX OFFICIO MEMBERS WHO REPRESENT WATER PROVIDERS, WITH ONE SUCH MEMBER REPRESENTING THE WESTERN SLOPE AND ONE SUCH MEMBER REPRESENTING THE EASTERN PART OF THE STATE.

(III) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SHALL APPOINT ONE NONVOTING EX OFFICIO MEMBER WHO REPRESENTS THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY.

(IV) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MAY, IN THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DISCRETION, APPOINT ADDITIONAL NONVOTING EX OFFICIO MEMBERS WITH EXPERTISE IN THE COMMISSION'S AREAS OF STUDY TO AID THE COMMISSION IN FULFILLING ITS DUTIES.

(c) THE COMMISSION INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING NONVOTING EX OFFICIO MEMBERS:

(I) ONE REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE;

(II) ONE REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT; AND

(III) ONE REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE.

(d) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SHALL MAKE INITIAL APPOINTMENTS NO LATER THAN AUGUST 5, 2019. THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SHALL CONSIDER GEOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION IN APPOINTING MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION. THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SHALL ENSURE, TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, THAT THE APPOINTED MEMBERS REPRESENT A BALANCE OF EXPERTISE IN THE AREAS OF FIRE MITIGATION, PREVENTION, PREPAREDNESS, LOCAL COMMUNITY RESILIENCY, AND SUPPRESSION.

(e) THE TERM OF APPOINTMENTS IS FOUR YEARS; EXCEPT THAT THE TERM OF EACH MEMBER INITIALLY APPOINTED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTIONS

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(3)(a)(VII)(C) TO (3)(a)(VII)(F) OF THIS SECTION IS TWO YEARS. A MEMBER MAY BE REAPPOINTED FOR ADDITIONAL TERMS. THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SHALL FILL ANY VACANCY BY APPOINTMENT FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE UNEXPIRED TERM. AN APPOINTMENT TO FILL A VACANCY IS SUBJECT TO THE REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH FOR THE VACANT POSITION IN SUBSECTION (3)(a)(VII) OR (3)(b) OF THIS SECTION, AS APPLICABLE.

(f) EACH MEMBER OF THE COMMISSION SERVES WITHOUT COMPENSATION, BUT EACH VOTING MEMBER AND EACH EX OFFICIO MEMBER APPOINTED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (3)(b) OF THIS SECTION IS ENTITLED TO REIMBURSEMENT FOR ACTUAL AND NECESSARY TRAVEL EXPENSES INCURRED IN THE PERFORMANCE OF HIS OR HER DUTIES AS A MEMBER OF THE COMMISSION.

(g) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OR HIS OR HER DESIGNEE IS THE CHAIR OF THE COMMISSION.

(h) THE COMMISSION SHALL MEET AT LEAST ONCE EVERY THREE MONTHS. THE CHAIR MAY CALL SUCH ADDITIONAL MEETINGS AS ARE NECESSARY FOR THE COMMISSION TO COMPLETE ITS DUTIES.

(4) **Powers and duties.** (a) THE MISSION OF THE COMMISSION IS TO ENHANCE PUBLIC SAFETY IN COLORADO THROUGH AN INTEGRATED STATEWIDE PROCESS FOCUSED ON THE FIRE SERVICE'S CAPACITY TO CONDUCT FIRE MANAGEMENT AND USE, PREPAREDNESS, PREVENTION, AND RESPONSE ACTIVITIES TO SAFEGUARD LIVES, PROPERTY, INCLUDING UTILITY AND COMMUNICATION INFRASTRUCTURE, AND NATURAL RESOURCES, AND INCREASE THE RESILIENCY OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL COMMUNITIES.

(b) IN FURTHERANCE OF ITS MISSION, THE COMMISSION SHALL CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING ISSUES:

(I) DEVELOPING AN ACCURATE UNDERSTANDING OF COLORADO'S FIRE PROBLEMS, INCLUDING THE NUMBER OF INJURIES AND FATALITIES, OVERALL FIRE LOSSES, AND THE CAUSES AND ORIGINS OF STRUCTURAL AND WILDLAND FIRES;

(II) REVIEWING THE CURRENT EMERGENCY FIRE FUND PROGRAM AND PROVIDING RECOMMENDATIONS TO MAKE IT MORE INCLUSIVE OF COUNTIES THROUGHOUT THE STATE;

(III) EVALUATING FUNDING MECHANISMS FOR EFFECTIVE RESPONSE TO LARGE FIRES, WITH CONSIDERATION GIVEN TO APPROPRIATE COST-SHARE AGREEMENTS, FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS, MITIGATION AND PREPAREDNESS, MUTUAL AID PARTICIPATION, AND LOCAL ACTIONS AND PLANS;

(IV) ASSESSING THE CAPACITY OF THE STATE TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY FIRE SUPPORT AND TECHNICAL EXPERTISE TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES;

(V) DEVELOPING PERFORMANCE MEASURES OF OVERALL RESPONSE EFFECTIVENESS AND IDENTIFYING RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENT AREAS;

(VI) STRENGTHENING REGIONAL AND STATEWIDE COORDINATION OF MUTUAL AID RESOURCES AND INITIAL ATTACK CAPABILITIES FOR FIRES AND OTHER HAZARDS;

(VII) DEVELOPING BEST PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO HIGH-RISK OCCUPANCIES FOR CONSIDERATION BY LOCAL JURISDICTIONS AND COMMUNITIES, INCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO MINIMUM COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS AND MUTUAL AID RESOURCES;

(VIII) IN COOPERATION WITH THE COLORADO STATE FOREST SERVICE AND OTHER AFFECTED STAKEHOLDERS, DEVELOPING AND PUBLISHING AN ASSESSMENT OF FIRE TREATMENT COSTS AND COST DISTRIBUTION, INCLUDING THE COSTS OF MITIGATION UNDER EMERGENCY AND NONEMERGENCY CIRCUMSTANCES, RETREATMENT COSTS, AND POST-RECOVERY COSTS;

(IX) DEVELOPING METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON COLORADO'S FIRE SERVICE CONCERNS AND ISSUES; AND

(X) FORECASTING UPCOMING FUNDING AND RESOURCE CHALLENGES AND TRENDS THAT AFFECT FIRE SERVICES AND THE ABILITY OF THE STATE AND OF LOCAL JURISDICTIONS TO RESPOND TO FIRE AND MITIGATE HAZARDS IN THE SHORT AND LONG TERM.

(c) (I) THE COMMISSION MAY ESTABLISH TASK FORCES TO STUDY AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMISSION ON SPECIFIC SUBJECT MATTER AREAS WITHIN THE COMMISSION'S AREA OF STUDY.

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(II) WHEN ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE, THE COMMISSION SHALL SET FORTH THE PURPOSE OF THE TASK FORCE AND ITS MEMBERSHIP, AREA OF STUDY, DUTIES, AND DURATION.

(III) THE CHAIR SHALL APPOINT THE MEMBERS OF A TASK FORCE, WITH THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE COMMISSION. THE CHAIR MAY APPOINT INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION TO SERVE ON A TASK FORCE. MEMBERS OF A TASK FORCE SERVE FOR THE DURATION OF THE TASK FORCE. MEMBERS OF A TASK FORCE WHO ARE NOT VOTING MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION OR EX OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION APPOINTED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (3)(b) OF THIS SECTION SERVE WITHOUT COMPENSATION AND WITHOUT REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENSES.

(5) **Staff support.** THE DIVISION SHALL PROVIDE OFFICE SPACE, EQUIPMENT, AND STAFF SERVICES AS MAY BE NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THIS SECTION.

(6) **Reports.** (a) ON OR BEFORE AUGUST 31, 2020, AND ON OR BEFORE AUGUST 31 EACH YEAR THEREAFTER, THE COMMISSION SHALL SUBMIT A WRITTEN REPORT TO THE RURAL AFFAIRS AND AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND THE AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE, OR ANY SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES. NOTWITHSTANDING THE REQUIREMENT IN SECTION 24-1-136 (11)(a)(I), THE REQUIREMENT TO SUBMIT THE REPORT REQUIRED IN THIS SUBSECTION (6)(a) CONTINUES UNTIL THE COMMISSION IS REPEALED.

(b) ON OR BEFORE AUGUST 31, 2020, AND ON OR BEFORE AUGUST 31 EACH YEAR THEREAFTER, THE COMMISSION SHALL REPORT TO THE WILDFIRE MATTERS REVIEW COMMITTEE ON ITS ACTIVITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

(7) **Repeal.** THIS SECTION IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2024. BEFORE ITS REPEAL, THIS SECTION IS SCHEDULED FOR REVIEW IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 2-3-1203.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 2-3-1203, add (15)(a)(IX) as follows:

2-3-1203. Sunset review of advisory committees - legislative declaration - definition - repeal. (15) (a) The following statutory

authorizations for the designated advisory committees are scheduled for repeal on September 1, 2024:

(IX) THE COLORADO FIRE COMMISSION CREATED IN SECTION 24-33.5-1233.

SECTION 3. Appropriation. For the 2019-20 state fiscal year, \$174,183 is appropriated to the department of public safety for use by the division of fire prevention and control. This appropriation is from the general fund and is based on an assumption that the division will require an additional 0.8 FTE. To implement this act, the division may use this appropriation for wildland fire management services.

SECTION 4. Act subject to petition - effective date. This act takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August 2, 2019, if adjournment sine die is on May 3, 2019); except that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take effect unless

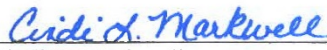
approved by the people at the general election to be held in November 2020 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.



Leroy M. Garcia
PRESIDENT OF
THE SENATE



KC Becker
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES

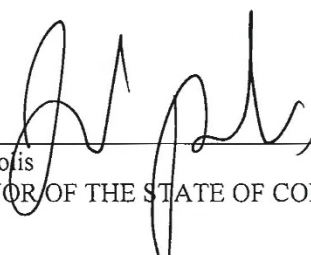


Cindi L. Markwell
SECRETARY OF
THE SENATE



Marilyn Eddins
CHIEF CLERK OF THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES

APPROVED June 3, 2019 at 2:40 p.m.
(Date and Time)



Jared S. Polis
GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF COLORADO

Appendix B: Subcommittee and Task Force Members

Regional and Statewide Coordination of Mutual Aid Subcommittee

Name	Affiliation
Chief Mark Novak	Vail Fire and Emergency Services, Commission Member, Subcommittee Chair
Vice President Paul Acosta	Colorado State Firefighters Association, Commission Member
Captain Bryce Boyer	City of Pueblo Fire Department, Commission Member
Emergency Manager Jerry Casebolt	Logan County
Chief Brian Caserta	Pueblo West Fire
Chief Doug Cupp	Greater Eagle Fire
Chief David DeVecchio	Canon City Fire
Chief Doug Fritz	Hotchkiss Fire
Emergency Manager Nate Fogg	Arapahoe County, Commission Member
Kevin Grant	Bureau of Land Management
Director Kevin Kline	DHSEM, Commission Member
Director Mike Morgan	DFPC, Commission Member
Sheriff Brett Powell	Logan County, Commission Member
Scott Sugg	US Forest Service, Commission Member
Chief Ken Watkins	Grand Junction Fire, Commission Member
Chief Skip Shirlaw	Inter-Canyon Fire
Chief Chris Truty	Tri-Lake Monument Fire
Deputy Chief Greg Ward	Loveland Fire
Chief Mike Weege	Evergreen Fire

Large Fire Funding Mechanisms Subcommittee

Name	Affiliation
Sheriff Sean Smith	La Plata County, Commission Member, Subcommittee Chair
Captain Paul Amundson	Evergreen Fire
Chief Bob Baker	South Metro Fire, Commission Member
Branch Chief of Incident Business Erin Claussen	DFPC
Pam Feely	West Metro Fire Rescue Board, Commission Member
Chief Brita Horn	Rock Creek Fire, Commission Member
Sheriff KC Hume	Moffett County, Commission Member
Wildland Fire Management Section Chief Vaughn Jones	DFPC, Commission Member
Director Mike Morgan	DFPC, Commission Member
Chief Jess Solze	Hugo Fire
Sarah Thorsteinson	Summit County Realtors, Commission Member
Commissioner Ben Tisdell	Ouray County, Commission Member
Carole Walker	Rocky Mountain Insurance Information Association, Commission Member
Rick Wetzel	Timberline Fire Board

Fire Data Subcommittee

Name	Affiliation
Bob Sullivan	NFPA, Commission Member, Subcommittee Chair
Marlinda Acevado	DFPC, State CFIRS/NFIRS Program Manager
Chief John Bennett	Telluride Fire
Sheriff Shannon Byerly	Custer County
Parker Coombs	DFPC/RMACC
Commissioner Leslie Dahlkemper	Jefferson County, Commission Member

Chief Doug Hall	Westminster Fire, Commission Member
Eric Howell	Colorado Springs Utilities, Commission Member
Captain Sean Jewell	West Metro Fire Rescue, Commission Member
State Forester / Director Mike Lester	Colorado State Forest Service, Commission Member
Owen McKeough	Brighton Fire
Robert McCarty	Yampa Valley Regional Airport and West Routt Fire
Director Mike Morgan	DFPC, Commission Member
Adam Trojanowski	DFPC Center of Excellence

Fire Investigation Task Force

Captain Sean Jewell	West Metro Fire Rescue, Commission Member
Lieutenant Brian Eberle	West Metro Fire Rescue
Lead Fire Investigator Dawn Tollis	DFPC
CFIRS/NFIRS Program Manager Marlinda Acevado	DFPC
Fire and Life Safety Section Chief Chris Brunette	DFPC

Insurance Premium Tax Use Task Force

Captain Paul Amundson	Evergreen Fire
Wildland Fire Management Section Chief Vaughn Jones	DFPC, Commission Member
Director Mike Morgan	DFPC, Commission Member
Sheriff Sean Smith	La Plata County, Commission Member
Commissioner Ben Tisdell	Ouray County, Commission Member
Carole Walker	Rocky Mountain Insurance Information Association, Commission Member

Appendix C: Text of Recommendations 20-01 through 20-05



Colorado Fire Commission

Recommendation 20-01

Implement the Colorado Coordinated Regional Mutual Aid System (CCRMAS)

Statutory Duties: Per 24-33.5-1233(4)(b)(VI) The Commission will strengthen regional and statewide coordination of mutual aid resources and initial attack capabilities for fires and other hazards.

Assumptions:

1. Rapidly expanding incidents can overwhelm the resources of the local fire department and surrounding agencies.
2. Local mutual aid plans exist but there is limited coordination across regions to activate additional resources quickly during rapidly expanding incidents.
3. Decreasing activation time can help minimize the impacts of an incident.
4. During the initial stages of an incident, dispatch centers, and local first responders will be focused on their primary response duties and unable to assist with coordinating rapid mutual aid mobilization. Emergency managers and emergency operations centers will be in the process of being stood up in support of extended response should it become necessary and in preparation for consequence management of subsequent impacts of the emergency response.
5. The statewide coordinated regional mutual aid system covers the time between the start of an incident and when adequate resources arrive for prolonged response through interagency systems and/or local and state Emergency Operations Centers.
6. The goal is to develop a unified approach to mobilizing fire and EMS resources, eliminate redundancy, and eliminate duplicate orders with the end goal of integration into the state response system.
7. A statewide coordinated regional mutual aid system, with dedicated resources for implementation, will help with the coordination and movement of mutual aid resources without impacting local dispatch centers which are busy managing 911 calls and resource response.
8. The Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control is the appropriate agency to implement the fire service response system, with the addition of resources to ensure there is dedicated staff to support the needs of the system.
9. Coordination with resource mobilization is critical to ensure the fire resources can be integrated into resource mobilization.

Details:

- I. The basic framework for mutual aid is established by the Colorado Coordinated Regional Mutual Aid System (CCRMAS) developed by the Colorado State Fire Chiefs in an effort to better coordinate initial attack response to emerging incidents. This system links existing mutual aid plans and agreements to create a web of redundancy in mutual aid. Implementing the system in

a manner in which there is sufficient redundancy so that there is not a single point of failure will require dedicated personnel whose primary function is mutual aid coordination.

- II. **Long Term Action Plan:** Establish State Coordination Center with Regional Mutual Aid Coordinators as described in both sections A and B below.
- A. State Coordination Center: Collocate 2 new DFPC employees in an existing facility, the primary role is overall state coordination of mutual aid and serving as central point of contact (1-800-easy).
Additional duties include:
- Maintaining statewide common operating picture
 - Bridging gap to interagency
 - Bridging gap to State EOC
 - Facilitating transition to appropriate funding sources in support of the response mission.
 - Provides backup to Regional Mutual Aid Coordinators
- B. Regional Mutual Aid Coordination: Collocate 4 employees in existing DFPC regional facilities with 1 additional employee to oversee the entire mutual aid program. The primary role is to ensure that competent mutual aid plans exist in their region, serve as the point of contact within the region, coordinate mutual aid requests
- Develop mutual aid plans where none exist
 - Ensure accurate inventory of agencies in region
 - Ensure participation of all agencies
 - Exercise existing and newly developed mutual aid plans
 - Activate mutual aid plans within region in response to requests
 - Serve as back up to adjacent region
 - May have additional collateral duties assigned by DFPC
- C. Costs -State Coordination Center and Regional Coordinators (2 FTE State Coordination Center, 1 FTE Mutual Aid System Supervisor, 4 FTE Regional Coordinators)
1. Startup Costs (supplies, facility costs, IT, etc.) \$99,810
 2. Annual Costs for 7 FTE and Software
 - a. Salary-\$541,860
 - b. Benefits- \$192,625
 - c. Logistics -\$259,400
 - d. Mutual Aid Coordination Software -\$100,000
 3. Year 1 = \$1,193,695 (Salaries+Benefits+Logistics+Software+Startup)
 4. Year 2+ = \$1,093,885 (Salaries+Benefits+Logistics+Software)

Next Steps:

1. **Temporary Action Plan:** This temporary action plan is developed in order to proceed with implementation prior to the new funding. However, adding additional duties to Colorado Fire Chiefs

and DFPC Battalion Chiefs does not provide the dedicated resources required to effectively implement this system, this is not a long term solution to the issue. The temporary action plan is to make formal recommendation to Colorado State Fire Chiefs (CSFC) to implement CCRMAS. "Volunteers" from the CSFC membership would initially fill coordination role. DFPC Battalion Chiefs will act as a contingency resource to assist as backup to CSFC regional coordinators when the regional coordinators are unavailable.

- A. Components that need to be determined:
 1. Designation of regional coordinators and alternates
 2. Single point of contact to make requests
2. **Request Additional Funding:** In order to make this efficient and sustainable, DFPC would need additional resources. Securing funding to support the additional resources will take at least one legislative cycle to secure.
3. Determine if a new statute would need to be added to the Colorado Revised Statutes establishing CCRMAS.



Colorado Fire Commission

Recommendation 20-02

Updates to Mutual Aid Statutes to Support the Colorado Coordinated Regional Mutual Aid System (CCRMAS)

Statutory Duties: Per 24-33.5-1233(4)(b)(VI) The Commission will strengthen regional and statewide coordination of mutual aid resources and initial attack capabilities for fires and other hazards.

Assumptions:

1. A concern for Fire Chiefs is the assumption of liability by the requesting agency for members of an agency for providing aid.
2. Sections 29-5-105 and 107 do not directly relate to the liability question, but required edits to keep control of the assisting agencies personnel and equipment with the assisting agency, while still working under the direction of the incident commander. This supports keeping the liability with the assisting agency.
3. The changes proposed are only related to fire and EMS agencies and should not impact law enforcement agencies.
4. The re-writes include public EMS resources to assist with the movement of these resources.
5. The changes proposed do not impact other statutes related to the giving or receiving of aid including: Workers' compensation coverage (29-5-109), Pension fund payments (29-5-110), Government may cooperate or contact (29-1-203), Emergency services – agreements – immunity from liability (29-1-206.5) or Mutual Aid (24-33.5-713).
6. The changes do not impact liability related to bringing out of state resources into Colorado.

Detail

- I. The statutes related to the giving and receiving of aid being discussed are 29-5-105, 29-5-107, 29-5-108. A new statute may be added to establish CCRMAS.
- II. **29-5-105: Assignment of firefighters for temporary duty:**
 - a. Original Text: The chief of the fire department of any town, city, city and county, or fire protection district may, in his or her discretion and upon request therefor by the chief of any fire department of any other town, city, city and county, or fire protection district, assign members of his or her department or companies thereof, together with such equipment as the fire chief determines to be proper, to perform temporary fire fighting or other duties under the direction and control of the requesting fire chief; except that the assigning fire chief may require that such firefighters, fire companies, and equipment shall be under the immediate direction and control of a superior officer of the assigning fire department, which superior officer shall be, during such temporary assignment, under the direction and control

of the requesting fire chief. Nothing contained in sections 29-5-103 to 29-5-110 shall be construed to limit the power of any town, city, or city and county or fire protection district to prohibit or limit by ordinance or regulation the exercise by a fire chief of the discretion granted in sections 29-5-103 to 29-5-110.

b. Proposed Text:

(1) The chief of the fire department of any town, city, city and county, or fire protection district may, in his or her discretion and upon request therefor by the chief of any fire department of any other town, city, city and county, or fire protection district or emergency medical responder, EMT, or paramedic attached to a public ambulance district, assign members of his or her department or companies thereof, together with such equipment as the fire chief determines to be proper, to perform temporary fire fighting or other duties under the command of a fire service agency however, operational control of individual pieces of equipment and personnel furnished by the assigning agency remains with that agency. All Emergency Incident operations and activities shall be coordinated with the Incident Commander. At no time shall any Party involved in an incident as a temporary assignment be expected to operate contrary to standing orders or policies of its own jurisdiction or physician advisor. Nothing contained in sections 29-5-103 to 29-5-110 shall be construed to limit the power of any town, city, or city and county or fire protection district to prohibit or limit by ordinance or regulation the exercise by a fire chief of the discretion granted in sections 29-5-103 to 29-5-110.

(2) Assisting Party's Discretion. Should any Party have personnel or resources already committed to an Emergency Incident or environmental conditions prevent timely and/or safe access, either within or without its jurisdiction, or otherwise unavailable, which in its sole discretion prevents it from providing requested assistance and also providing an adequate level of service and protection within its own jurisdiction, it shall promptly notify its dispatcher or the other Parties and shall be released from all or a portion of its assisting responsibilities until its personnel and resources are adequate and available.

III. **29-5-107: Request for temporary assignment of firefighters**

- a. Original Text: The chief of the fire department of any town, city, city and county, or fire protection district may, when in his or her opinion the same is required by any conflagration, fire, or other such emergency, request the chief of the fire department of any other town, city, city and county, or fire protection district to assign to him or her firefighters, fire companies, and equipment of such other fire department to perform temporary duty within the boundaries of such requesting town, city, city and county, or fire protection district, under the direction and control of such requesting fire chief and under such terms and conditions as shall be agreed upon between the requesting and assigning fire chiefs. Such firefighters shall, while so assigned and performing duties subject to the direction and

control of the requesting fire chief, have the same power as regular firefighters and fire companies of the requesting town, city, city and county, or fire protection district.

- b. Proposed Text: The chief of the fire department of any town, city, city and county, or fire protection district or emergency medical responder, EMT, or paramedic attached to a public ambulance district may, when in his or her opinion the same is required by any conflagration, fire, or other such emergency, request the chief of the fire department or public ambulance district of any other town, city, city and county, or fire protection district to assign to him or her firefighters, fire companies, and equipment of such other agency to perform temporary duty within the boundaries of such requesting town, city, city and county, or fire protection district, under the command of the Incident Commander of the requesting fire service agency however, operational control of individual pieces of equipment and personnel furnished by the assigning agency remains with that agency and under such terms and conditions as shall be agreed upon between the requesting and assigning fire chiefs regardless of if a formal assistance agreement is in place or not. Such personnel shall, while so assigned and performing duties under the command of the Incident Commander of the requesting fire agency while operational control of individual pieces of equipment and personnel furnished by the assigning agency remains with that agency, have the same power as regular firefighters and fire companies of the requesting town, city, city and county, or fire protection district.

IV. 29-5-108: Liability of requesting jurisdiction

- a. Original Text: (1) During the time that a police officer, deputy sheriff, or firefighter of a town, city, city and county, county, or fire protection district or of a state institution of higher education employing a peace officer in accordance with article 7.5 of title 24, C.R.S., is assigned to temporary duty within the jurisdiction of another town, city, city and county, county, or fire protection district, or of another state institution of higher education employing a peace officer in accordance with article 7.5 of title 24, C.R.S., as provided in sections 29-5-103 to 29-5-107, any liability that accrues under the provisions of article 10 of title 24, C.R.S., on account of the negligent or otherwise tortious act of the police officer, deputy sheriff, or firefighter while performing the duty shall be imposed upon the requesting town, city, city and county, county, fire protection district, or state institution of higher education, and not upon the assigning jurisdiction.

(2) During the time that a person from another state is performing firefighting duties within the jurisdiction of a county, municipality, fire protection district, or fire protection authority in this state under an agreement authorized in section 29-1-206.5 (1), any liability that accrues under the provisions of article 10 of title 24, C.R.S., on account of the negligent or otherwise tortious act of the firefighter while performing the duty is imposed upon the county, municipality, fire protection district, or fire protection authority of this state that is a party to the agreement.

- b. Proposed Text: (1) During the time that a police officer, deputy sheriff of a town, city, city and county, county or of a state institution of higher education employing a peace officer in accordance with article 7.5 of title 24, C.R.S., is assigned to temporary duty within the jurisdiction of another town, city, city and county, county, or of another state institution of

higher education employing a peace officer in accordance with article 7.5 of title 24, C.R.S., as provided in sections 29-5-103 to 29-5-107, any liability that accrues under the provisions of article 10 of title 24, C.R.S., on account of the negligent or otherwise tortious act of the police officer or deputy sheriff while performing the duty shall be imposed upon the requesting town, city, city and county, county or state institution of higher education, and not upon the assigning jurisdiction.

(2) During the time that a firefighter of a town, city, city and county, county, or fire protection district or emergency medical responder, EMT, or paramedic attached to a public district is assigned to temporary duty within the jurisdiction of another town, city, city and county, county, or fire protection district, as provided in sections 29-5-103 to 29-5-107, any liability that accrues under the provisions of article 10 of title 24, C.R.S., on account of the negligent or otherwise tortious act of the firefighter while performing the duty shall be imposed upon the assisting town, city, city and county, county, fire protection district, and not upon the requesting jurisdiction.

(3) During the time that a person from another state is performing firefighting duties within the jurisdiction of a county, municipality, fire protection district, or fire protection authority in this state under an agreement authorized in section 29-1-206.5 (1), any liability that accrues under the provisions of article 10 of title 24, C.R.S., on account of the negligent or otherwise tortious act of the firefighter while performing the duty is imposed upon the county, municipality, fire protection district, or fire protection authority of this state that is a party to the agreement.

Next Steps:

1. Coordinate with EMS agencies to get their buy in on the changes.
2. Work with CDPS Policy Analyst to verify proposed language changes are properly written.
3. Determine if a new statute would need to be added to the Colorado Revised Statutes establishing CCRMAS as described in Recommendation 20-01.



Colorado Fire Commission

Recommendation 20-03

Establish a State Responsibility and Large Wildland Fire Fund within DFPC

Statutory Duties: Per 24-33.5-1233(4)(b)(II) Reviewing the current emergency fire fund program and providing recommendations to make it more inclusive of counties throughout the state; and Per 24-33.5-1233(4)(b)(III) Evaluating funding mechanisms for effective response to large fires, with consideration given to appropriate cost-share agreements, financial contributions, mitigation and preparedness, mutual aid participation, and local actions and plans.

Assumptions:

1. Large wildfires that exceed local and county capacity and require State funding will continue to occur;
2. Over the last decade, the State of Colorado has spent an average of \$8,800,000 to \$14,500,000 per year on suppression costs. Variables in the annual amount include Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) reimbursements and active fire billing for more recent fires that has not been closed out;
3. Currently there is no dedicated, consistent funding source for management of these fires. DFPC relies on the Emergency Fire Fund, if funds are still available, or on an Executive Order to utilize Disaster Emergency Funding (DEF) to cover the costs for suppression of large fires;
4. The existing Emergency Fire Fund (EFF) program is over 50 years old, only generates \$1,000,000 annually to support large fire suppression efforts, and only applies to 42 of the 64 Counties in Colorado;
5. Any changes to the current system need to ensure that both the Counties and State have program buy-in and all parties contribute towards the solution;
6. This proposal would apply to all Counties in the State;
7. The proposal would reduce delays in response and decision making while determining funding sources. The DFPC Director would be able make timely decisions as incidents develop;
8. The proposal would increase financial consistency and tracking due to fewer funding sources and Executive Orders;
9. The proposal would give the State the ability to plan and budget for a baseline level of suppression expenses that are going to occur;
10. During high end years when expenses occur above available baseline funds, DFPC would still need to request Executive Orders and supplemental funding from the Governor's Office; and
11. Funding for this program would be requested as an appropriation from the existing Insurance Premium Tax fund prior to those funding being combined into the General Fund.

Detail

- I. The proposal is to create a base budget to manage wildfires that exceed county capability and qualify as a State Responsibility Fire.
- II. The cost of the program would be based on a 5-year rolling average of pre-FMAG reimbursement expenses plus an additional amount of at least 10% to be used to fund forest and vegetative mitigation programs under management of the Colorado State Forest Service.
- III. The Director of DFPC would have the authority to manage requests and awards within this fund similar to the current EFF program.
- IV. All future cost recoveries on qualifying State Responsibility Fires would go back in to this fund. In addition, any unused funds will rollover from year to year, with an upper level cap that is equal to 3 years' worth of funding. If funds accumulate above the cap, the "excess" amount goes to other fire related programs with 50% towards forest and vegetation management programs through the Colorado State Forest Service and 50% to support fire agency training and capacity building and firefighter health and safety programs, including the Firefighter Safety and Disease Prevention Grant program.
- V. Every county needs to have a minimum buy-in/contribution to be eligible to receive funding for State Responsibility Fires. The recommendation is to utilize the Enhanced State Assistance Funding proposal (Recommendation 20-04) and subsequent contribution calculations, as the minimum buy-in for this proposed Large Fire and State Responsibility Fire program.

Next Steps:

1. The subcommittee is working on identifying opportunities within this recommendation to incentivize the counties to implement local mitigation efforts;
2. Evaluate and recommend a structure and process for utilization of excess funds above the cap;
3. Evaluate and verify necessary modifications and updates to current interagency fire agreements, State statute, etc.;
4. Evaluate use of any existing EFF fund balance to jump-start this program. This would require approval from all current EFF county participants; and
5. Evaluate changes to eligible expenses (e.g., should law enforcement, staffing roadblocks, and security costs incurred by the county be eligible under this program).
6. Evaluate how an appropriation directly from the Insurance Premium Tax fund could be achieved and what, if any, addition details need to be worked out to make that type of appropriation feasible;
7. Evaluate options through statutory language or other mechanisms to protect the funds collected for this proposed recommendation; and
8. Conduct a stakeholder outreach process to get input and buy-in to this funding stream for covering the costs of state responsibility fires.



Colorado Fire Commission

Recommendation 20-04

Implement an Enhanced State Assistance (ESA) Program

Statutory Duties: Per 24-33.5-1233(4)(b)(II) Reviewing the current emergency fire fund program and providing recommendations to make it more inclusive of counties throughout the state; and Per 24-33.5-1233(4)(b)(III) Evaluating funding mechanisms for effective response to large fires, with consideration given to appropriate cost-share agreements, financial contributions, mitigation and preparedness, mutual aid participation, and local actions and plans.

Assumptions:

1. Wildland fires will always occur, and the State needs the ability to detect wildland fires early and to take rapid action to limit unwanted wildfires and protect values at risk;
2. The State of Colorado already spends funds on these programs. There is a need to evaluate options and develop an updated and more effective system to meet Colorado's current fire situation;
3. Capabilities of local fire agencies and Counties vary across the State. The majority of these agencies either do not possess and/or cannot fund the following: aviation resources, handcrews, incident management teams, or wildland expertise and specialists;
4. Wildfires are easier to manage when they are small. Early detection and rapid, effective, initial attack can reduce final fire size, costs, impacts to communities and infrastructure, exposure to firefighters and citizens, etc.;
5. Agencies may hesitate to request additional resources early on due to concerns over cost and financial responsibility;
6. The existing Emergency Fire Fund (EFF) generates approximately \$1 million per year from county assessments to be used once a fire reaches state responsibility. Once a wildfire exceeds local capacity and becomes a state responsibility fire, \$1 million does not have a significant impact on covering the cost of suppression efforts, which average approximately \$8 – \$14 million per year;
7. Eliminating the EFF program and transitioning the \$1 million per year to support early intervention will save significant dollars on the back end. Unsuccessful initial attack on unwanted wildfires affects and costs all levels of government. It is in the best interest of the State to support these efforts and partner with local agencies to reduce impacts of wildfire as well as costs of large wildfires;
8. A new county assessment calculation would be developed to include the eastern plains counties, which currently do not participate in the EFF program.
9. Due to financial constraints on counties, increasing assessments above the current EFF levels for existing participants, would not be feasible at this time.
10. The current initial attack and state assistance programs negatively impact DFPC base budgets, are not sustainable, and reductions in the amount of assistance that can be provided to local agencies will likely be required without changes to the program;

11. State assistance allows local agencies to respond to the next incident and return to their regular duties, programs, and jobs. This is especially valuable for Volunteer Fire Departments;
12. This proposal would incentivize and reduce barriers for local agencies to take action during the early stages of a wildfire;
13. This proposal would improve consistency and tracking of funds, through utilization of 1 fund for all state assistance rather than the current 4 funds (WERF, CFAC, Preparedness, and General);
14. Funding for this program would be requested as an appropriation from the existing Insurance Premium Tax fund prior to those funding being combined into the General Fund.

Detail

- I. The proposal is to end the Emergency Fire Fund (EFF) program and move to a new State Enhanced Assistance Program that would provide additional resources before and during the initial stages of an incident to prevent rapid spread and exceeding the capacity of the local agencies.
- II. The cost of the new program would be \$2,800,000 / year with approximately \$1 million coming from country assessments (same as collected under the current EFF program but with the addition of the eastern plains counties) and \$1.8 million from a new appropriation to DFPC. This annually appropriated baseline level of funding, would provide sustainable and enhanced State Assistance to local jurisdictions during the early stages of an incident.
- III. All future cost recoveries on incidents utilizing State Assistance would go back in to this fund. In addition, any unused funds will rollover from year to year, with an upper level cap that is equal to 3 years' worth of funding (\$8,400,000). If funds accumulate above the cap, the "excess" amount goes to other fire related programs with 50% towards forest and vegetation management programs through the Colorado State Forest Service and 50% to support fire agency training and capacity building and firefighter health and safety programs, including the Firefighter Safety and Disease Prevention Grant program.
- IV. The Director of DFPC would have the authority to manage requests and awards within this fund similar to the current Wildfire Emergency Response Fund (WERF) and Colorado Firefighting Air Corps (CFAC) programs
- V. Eligible resources and costs would include:
 - Initial attack resources (out of local area that are not covered under mutual aid), including 20-person handcrews, 10-person modules, and 5-person squads
 - Pre-position of resources (local fire agency, county, State and/or Federal) under a severity model
 - Flight hours for aircraft (State or Federal resources under a Closest Forces concept)
 - DFPC overtime for supporting local wildfire incidents and prescribed fires, and enhancing fire department and county capacity.

See **Appendix A** for a summary of eligible resources and cost estimates
- VI. Every county needs to have a minimum buy-in/contribution to be eligible to receive resources and funding via State Assistance programs. The recommendation is to:
 - Re-direct current EFF contributions from large fire funding to this Enhanced State Assistance program;

- Develop a formula for Counties that are not EFF members to contribute toward this program;
 - Utilize new Insurance Premium Tax funds to fund State Assistance activities in combination with county assessments listed above.
- VII. If a 24-hour mutual aid program is developed and implemented in partnership with the Federal land management agencies (US Forest Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and US Fish and Wildlife Service) this proposed program would serve as contributions from the State of Colorado, county, and local agencies. The concept of the 24-hour mutual aid program is all resources sent to a wildland fire in the first 24-hours would not be billed, including aircraft.

Interim Action Plan: This temporary action plan is developed in order to proceed with implementation of elements of this recommendation prior to new funding.

- I. End the Emergency Fire Fund (EFF) program and move to a new Enhanced State Assistance (ESA) Program that would provide additional resources before and during the initial stages of an incident to prevent rapid spread and exceeding the capacity of the local agencies.
- II. This would move the approximately \$1 million dollars collected through EFF annually to the ESA program allowing for increase focus on initial attack and severity without additional funding.
- III. Develop a fair and equitable fee structure to encourage eastern plains counties, not currently participating in EFF, to contribute to the new ESA program.

Next Steps:

1. Evaluate revisions to current WERF statute versus starting from scratch with a new fund, new statute, etc.;
2. Evaluate and verify necessary modifications to current interagency fire agreements, State statute, etc.;
3. Evaluate and recommend a structure and process for utilization of excess funds above the cap;
4. Evaluate assessment formulas for both existing EFF members and the remaining Counties in the State. Wildfire risk is one example that is currently being evaluated;
5. Evaluate use of any existing EFF fund balance to jump start this program. This would require approval from all current EFF county participants;
6. Evaluate how an appropriation directly from the Insurance Premium Tax fund could be achieved and what, if any, addition details need to be worked out to make that type of appropriation feasible;
7. Evaluate options through statutory language or other mechanisms to protect the funds collected for this proposed recommendation; and
8. Conduct a stakeholder outreach process to get input and buy-in to this new Enhanced State Assistance program.

Appendix A – Summary of Costs and Eligible Resources

Annual Fund Summary		
Item	Description	Amount
Aviation Resources Day #1	No change to current. Includes all aviation resources (State and Federal) on 1 st day of an incident. Addition of Ag-Sprayer reimbursement program for eastern plains Counties.	\$ 1,850,000
Aviation Resources Day #2 (Optional)	No change to current. DFPC discretion for additional resources on the 2 nd day of incidents that don't qualify as a State Responsibility Fire.	In above
Handcrews (2 Days)	No change to current use of handcrews. Recommend allowing Modules to serve as eligible resources in addition to crews.	In above
Severity	New. Includes crews, engines, heavy equipment, overhead and aviation. Costs to pre-position and make resources available for rapid response. See table below for examples.	\$ 500,000
Overtime for State Resources	New. Overtime costs for State resources providing assistance on local wildfire incidents, prescribed fires, fire department capacity building, and certain all-hazard incidents (e.g., SAR).	\$ 450,000
Total Annual Costs =		\$ 2,800,000
Cap (# of Years) =		3
Cap Amount =		\$ 8,400,000

Severity Funding – Summary of Potential Resource Uses		
Item	Cost/Unit	\$500,000 Covers
Engine – State - Extended Staffing (OT)	\$ 100 / hour	5,000 hours
Module or Helitack – State - Extended Staffing (OT)	\$ 300 / hour	1,667 hours
Engine – Cooperator – Engine with Personnel	\$ 3,600 / day	139 days
Engine – Cooperator - Strike Team (5 Engines + Overhead)	\$18,750 / day	26 days
Handcrew – State DOC - Type 2	\$ 10,000 / day	50 days
Overhead - Individual	\$ 750 / day	667 days
Overhead – Configured as 10-person IMT ₃	\$ 7,500 / day	66 days
Aviation – CWN - Type II Helicopter (Daily Availability)	\$ 5,000 / day	100 days
Aviation – CWN – SEAT (Daily Availability)	\$ 3,500 / day	142 days
Aviation – CWN – Large Air Tanker (Daily Availability)	\$ 28,500 / day	18 days

Severity Fund Notes:

- 1) Severity fund and approvals would be managed by DFPC Wildland Fire Management Section Chief or designee.
- 2) Severity provides funding for resources, not reimbursement to local agencies.
- 3) Preference will be given to lower cost and/or best value resources.
- 4) DFPC Preparedness Levels and local capacity will be used to evaluate and approve Severity requests.



Colorado Fire Commission

Recommendation 20-05

Implementing a Comprehensive Fire Data Collection and Dissemination Program

Statutory Duties: Per 24-33.5-1233(4)(b)(I) Develop an accurate understanding of Colorado’s Fire Problems, including the number of injuries and fatalities, overall fire losses, and the causes and origins of structural and wildland fires.

Assumptions:

1. Fire data is critical to understanding Colorado’s true fire problem.

Providing better data management for the Fire Service in Colorado begins by investing time and analysis in how fire departments collect data statewide, what data are gathered, and how the data are used to identify and respond to ongoing fire problems and trends in Colorado. These efforts are key to understanding what is needed to enhance data collection efforts, inform the public, and determine where we are going in the future and how to get there. This work includes both short-term and long-term strategies.

The Fire Data Subcommittee recently conducted a survey of fire departments in Colorado to learn more about the current status of fire data collection within the state. The survey findings provided some helpful insights regarding the percentage of fire departments that do/do not currently report their data, and some of the possible reasons. The findings also showed a strong interest in additional training for data collection and reporting. The Fire Data Subcommittee also determined that outreach to other states and organizations, regarding their best practices for data collection, will be helpful to our efforts in Colorado. All this information was used to develop some initial short-term recommendations to the Colorado Fire Commission regarding methods for improving fire data collection and the use of this data.

These recommendations for short-term steps will help determine the current status of data collection and help inform long-term, sustainable solutions. This information will then be used to develop long-term programs to improve the ability of the Fire Service in Colorado to collect, analyze, and effectively use this data. This is a starting point.

Detail

- I. Define more clearly how many fire departments in Colorado consistently report their data. It appears that more than half of fire departments in the state do not consistently report their data. Contact fire departments that do not consistently report to determine why they do not report data and identify solutions for improving data reporting. Identify clearly the barriers to reporting and further refine short-term recommendations based on findings.
- II. Conduct an inventory of every database used by different segments of the Fire Service in Colorado. This will include different data systems used by individual, local fire departments, and

- those used by larger agencies, such as state and federal agencies involved with wildland firefighting. Evaluate the similarities and differences among the various databases and the types of data collected. Develop plans to access the needed data from the different databases and develop uniform methods to compare and consolidate the data for use and analysis.
- III. Consult with Law Enforcement agencies, other types of organizations, and other states to learn more about their data reporting criteria and data collection best practices. Evaluate any regulations in place for collection and submittal of data, including methods that may exist to improve the consistency of data reporting, such as reporting requirements tied to eligibility for funding through various grant programs. Use this feedback to further inform efforts in Colorado to develop best practices for data collection and reporting.
 - IV. Improve the accuracy of the data reported by providing more training, and by evaluating the reporting methods for different types of reports. For example, EMS reports often receive more oversight and review compared to Fire reports. Identify the different types of data that are actually needed by the Fire Service in Colorado, evaluate the various methods and practices used to collect those different types of data from different types of reports, and develop reporting methods and training programs that address those needs and help to improve data reporting. For example, a mentoring program could be created in which fire departments more proficient with data reporting assist departments that are not as proficient. Include suppression support agencies which provide assistance to jurisdictional authorities, and data collected from fire origin and cause investigations.
 - V. Develop an organized system to publish data. This will include starting with data currently collected based on the findings from the recommendations above, as well as data collected in the future based on the improvements outlined in this document. Use the data to develop data tables; compare Colorado data to other states and national trends; and provide methods to use the data for analysis and decision-making. Communicate annual data results statewide to deepen understanding about fire trends, challenges and potential solutions. Key to this effort is creating a comprehensive communications plan that identifies target audiences, key messages, communications tools and dissemination strategies. The overall objective is to tell the story of the fire problem in Colorado to various audiences in easily understood formats.

Next Steps:

1. The subcommittee will create action plans and identify resources to implement these recommendations.

Appendix D: Commission Members' Recommendation Votes

RECOMMENDATION 20-01: IMPLEMENT THE COLORADO COORDINATED REGIONAL MUTUAL AID SYSTEM (CCRMAS)	
<i>Name and Entity</i>	<i>Final Vote</i>
Paul Acosta	In support
Bryce Boyer	In support
Lesley Dahlkemper	In support
Pam Feely	In support
Doug Hall	In support
Stan Hilkey	In support
Brita Horn	In support
Sean Jewell	In support
Vaughn Jones	In support
Kevin Klein	Does not support
Mike Lester	In support
Monica Million	In support
Mike Morgan	In support
Mark Novak	In support
Joe Pelle	In support
Brett Powell	In support
Sean Smith	In support
Ben Tisdell	In support
Ken Watkins	N/A*
Kevin Whelan	In support

*Chief Watkins was late to the meeting and did not participate in the vote on Recommendation 20-01.

RECOMMENDATION 20-02: IMPLEMENT THE COLORADO COORDINATED REGIONAL MUTUAL AID SYSTEM (CCRMAS)	
<i>Name and Entity</i>	<i>Final Vote</i>
Paul Acosta	In support
Bryce Boyer	In support
Lesley Dahlkemper	In support
Pam Feely	In support
Doug Hall	In support
Stan Hilkey	In support
Brita Horn	In support
Sean Jewell	In support
Vaughn Jones	In support
Kevin Klein	In support
Mike Lester	In support
Monica Million	In support
Mike Morgan	In support

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Mark Novak	In support
Joe Pelle	In support
Brett Powell	In support
Sean Smith	In support
Ben Tisdell	In support
Ken Watkins	In support
Kevin Whelan	In support

RECOMMENDATION 20-03: ESTABLISH A STATE RESPONSIBILITY AND LARGE WILDLAND FIRE FUND WITHIN DFPC

<i>Name and Entity</i>	<i>Final Vote</i>
Paul Acosta	In support
Bryce Boyer	In support
Lesley Dahlkemper	In support
Pam Feely	In support
Doug Hall	In support
Stan Hilkey	In support
Brita Horn	In support
Sean Jewell	In support
Vaughn Jones	In support
Kevin Klein	In support
Mike Lester	In support
Monica Million	In support
Mike Morgan	In support
Mark Novak	In support
Joe Pelle	In support
Brett Powell	In support
Sean Smith	In support
Ben Tisdell	In support
Ken Watkins	In support
Kevin Whelan	In support

RECOMMENDATION 20-04: IMPLEMENT AN ENHANCED STATE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

<i>Name and Entity</i>	<i>Final Vote</i>
Paul Acosta	In support
Bryce Boyer	In support
Lesley Dahlkemper	In support
Pam Feely	In support
Doug Hall	In support
Stan Hilkey	In support
Brita Horn	In support
Sean Jewell	In support
Vaughn Jones	In support
Kevin Klein	In support

Mike Lester	In support
Monica Million	In support
Mike Morgan	In support
Mark Novak	In support
Joe Pelle	In support
Brett Powell	In support
Sean Smith	In support
Ben Tisdell	In support
Ken Watkins	In support
Kevin Whelan	In support

RECOMMENDATION 20-05: Implement a Comprehensive Fire Data Collection and Dissemination Program	
<i>Name and Entity</i>	<i>Final Vote</i>
Paul Acosta	In support
Bryce Boyer	In support
Lesley Dahlkemper	In support
Pam Feely	In support
Doug Hall	In support
Stan Hilkey	In support
Brita Horn	In support
Sean Jewell	In support
Vaughn Jones	In support
Kevin Klein	In support
Mike Lester	In support
Monica Million	In support
Mike Morgan	In support
Mark Novak	In support
Joe Pelle	In support
Brett Powell	In support
Sean Smith	In support
Ben Tisdell	In support
Ken Watkins	In support
Kevin Whelan	In support

Appendix E: County Emergency Fire Fund (EFF) 2020 Assessments

County	Assessment
Alamosa	2,673.05
Archuleta	6,373.44
Boulder	115,629.22
Chaffee	6,805.52
Clear Creek	6,066.16
Conejos	1,471.11
Costilla	4,797.26
Custer	1,967.47
Delta	5,436.54
Dolores	3,148.34
Douglas	94,808.87
Eagle	47,387.56
El Paso	110,481.52
Elbert	5,619.62
Freemont	8,958.28
Garfield	38,902.88
Gilpin	5,650.23
Grand	10,446.88
Gunnison	11,213.06
Huerfano	3,520.86
Jackson	2,014.15
Jefferson	140,289.28
La Plata	29,377.66
Lake	3,081.75
Larimer	86,976.74
Las Animas	11,367.20
Mesa	30,460.60
Mineral	742.63
Moffat	7,954.30
Montezuma	12,119.78
Montrose	10,416.18
Ouray	3,413.39
Park	7,547.54
Pitkin	45,687.90
Pueblo	26,110.71
Rio Blanco	15,082.41
Rio Grande	3,173.24
Routt	20,445.34
Saguache	1,443.84
San Miguel	13,712.97
Summit	27,742.65
Teller	9,481.87
COUNTY SUBTOTAL	\$ 1,000,000.00
Non-County	Assessment
Denver Mountain Parks	7,505.55
Aurora Water Board	616.02
NON-COUNTY SUBTOTAL	\$ 8,121.57
GRAND TOTAL	\$ 1,008,121.57

Appendix F: Acronym List

CCRMAS	Colorado Coordinated Regional Mutual Aid System
CDPS	Colorado Department of Public Safety
CFAC	Colorado Firefighting Air Corps
CFIRS	Colorado Fire Incident Reporting System
C.R.S	Colorado Revised Statutes
CSFC	Colorado State Fire Chiefs
CSFS	Colorado State Forest Service
DHSEM	Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
DEF	Disaster Emergency Fund
DFPC	Division of Fire Prevention and Control
EFF	Emergency Fire Fund
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
ESA	Enhanced State Assistance
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHAC	Forest Health Advisory Council
HSAC	Homeland Security Advisory Council
IPT	Insurance Premium Tax
NFIRS	National Fire Incident Reporting System
SRF	State Responsibility Fire
WERF	Wildfire Emergency Response Fund