



RESEARCH FOUNDATION

RESEARCH FOR THE NFPA MISSION

PROJECT SUMMARY

Engaging Local Officials for Wildfire Risk Reduction

28 June 2018; subject to update

Background: Organizations that are trying to implement policies engaging residents to reduce wildfire risk find it difficult to get buy-in from local officials which is necessary for effective and sustainable wildfire risk reduction. One perceived challenge in getting this buy-in is a lack of knowledge and understanding about the risk posed by wildfire to the elected official's constituents amongst the other hazards considered for overall community risk reduction.

Elected or traditional local officials are considered to be policy makers and implementers at the municipal or community level that have jurisdiction or influence over a defined area and constituents. This project would draw examples from case studies to learn from successes and failures in implementing policy that reduces wildfire risk. The goal is to show that by engaging local officials early and effectively the efforts have more sustainability because they become engrained in the local policy.

Research Goal: This project seeks to provide guidance that will assist organizations in communicating with local officials the risk posed by wildfire to communities and the value of implementing risk reduction policies that engage residents in the solution.

Project Tasks:

Task 1: Review Case studies. In the work of community-based wildfire risk reduction there are examples from several countries with varying landscapes of organizations in engaging residents and local officials.

Task 2: Develop guidance. The project will specifically look at case studies to provide guidance on three primary topics: (1) How to engage local officials in a discussion about science; (2) How to prove the value of resident led efforts; (3) The challenges faced by local officials in recognizing this risk amongst many others.

Task 3: Packaging & Dissemination. Guidance could be in the form of talking points for organizations to communicate with officials about wildfire risk. This can become a model for organizations to craft further messaging based on local examples. The guidance should also help organizations qualify what has been or can be done by resident engagement in wildfire risk reduction.

Implementation and Schedule: This is a one year project. The research project will be conducted under the auspices of the Research Foundation in accordance with Foundation Policies and will be guided by a Project Technical Panel who will provide input to the project, recommend contractor selection, review periodic reports of progress and research results, and review the final project report.

Intellectual Property: The Research Foundation will retain rights to the project deliverables including the final report which will be published on the Foundation website.