

# Newsletter



## Southern California Association of Foresters & Fire Wardens

### OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS 2019-2020 OFFICERS

President— Tim Ernst—LFD  
First Vice President — Nathan Judy—ANF  
Second Vice Pres.— Dave Fowler—SLU  
Secretary Tim Chavez—RRU  
Treasurer Phil Johnson—ORC

### DIRECTORS

Dan Snow—BDF  
Trevor Johnson—VNC  
Kevin Johnson—LAC  
Troy Whitman—SCE  
Curt Schwarm-LPF  
Brian Gaines—SQF  
Rusty McCulley—BDU  
Chris Childers - SBC  
Brook Spellman—CSR  
Stan Hill—CNF  
Kurt Zingheim—MVU  
Ira Peshkin—KRN

Ed Shabro—Vendor Representative  
Doug Lannon—Arrangements Chair  
Don Forsyth—Safety Chair  
Nick Ferrari—Publicity Chair

*We, the members of the Southern California Association of Foresters and Fire Wardens, do band together for the purpose of strengthening inter-agency cooperation, fire safety coordination, and fellowship.*

**An Association dedicated to the  
Training and Safety of Southern  
California Wildland Firefighters  
for 90 years.**

### 90th Annual Wildland Fire Training and Safety Conference

*90 Years of Unified Service for our First Responders of  
Southern California*

# CANCELLED



**Southern California Association of Foresters and Fire Wardens**  
*Protecting California Since 1930*



Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting of the Southern  
California Association of Foresters and Fire Wardens  
April and May 2020



## 2020 ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF FORESTERS AND FIRE WARDENS

HAS BEEN CANCELLED

WE WILL IMMEDIATELY BEGIN PLANNING THE 2021 CONFERENCE AND HOPE YOU PLAN TO ATTEND.



### Foresters and Fire Wardens Contact Information

**Mailing:** SCAFFW c/o Tim Chavez 132 S. San Jacinto Ave., San Jacinto, CA 92583



**E-mail:** [SCAFFW@gmail.com](mailto:SCAFFW@gmail.com)  
**Web Site:** [www.scaffw.org](http://www.scaffw.org)



You can now go directly to our web site by scanning the QRC (quick response code) with your smart phone.



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Follow us on iNSTAGRAM @SCAFFW

### Cover Photo

Unfortunately due to the COVID 19 pandemic the 2020 Training and Safety Conference must be cancelled.

Photo at left, Credit Ken Morris LACOFD VPPP .



## SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF FORESTERS AND FIRE WARDENS 90TH ANNUAL WILDLAND FIRE TRAINING AND SAFETY CONFERENCE.

# May 6-7, 2021

Check our web site for further information [www.scaffw.org](http://www.scaffw.org)

**Did you or are you thinking of changing your E-mail address? Please remember to contact the SCAFFW at [SCAFFW@GMAIL.com](mailto:SCAFFW@GMAIL.com) and let us know so we can send you your newsletters and other important infor-**



# Presidents Message

## Tim Ernst, Los Angeles Fire Department



Dear Friends & Colleagues of the Southern California Association of Foresters & Fire Wardens,

On any other year, we would be a week or two out of the Annual Conference, looking back on how great it was to catch up with each other, and thinking about the lessons we learned to make us better firefighters. Unfortunately,

this isn't any other year...

In early March, the Board started looking at the seriousness of the pandemic, and considered our responsibility to be forward thinking in the interest of safety – even before the Public Health Order was released that would prevent the continuation of this year's event. Since December of 2019, the Board has been planning the 90th Anniversary event, with a list of planned speakers and entertainment fit for this special event. That said, the members of the Board share the same disappointment you all have about missing this year. I want to personally thank all the Directors for their work to develop the proposed curriculum and for their commitment of time toward this year's event – which will set us up to make next year's event our best yet! Since we missed it this time, next year will be our 90th Anniversary event which we are sure will make up for the loss of this year.

The normal makeup of the three members of the Executive Board includes leadership from Local Government, Forest Service & Cal Fire, which rotate up each year to fill the positions of 2nd Vice President, to 1st Vice President, to President. Due to the required cancellation of the 2020 event, the Board unanimously voted to continue the current slate of Officers into the 2021 Conference Planning Cycle. As you have heard me say many times over the years while introducing the "Conference Evaluation", our goal is to provide you the best wildland conference available. To that end, I would like to personally invite you to send me your ideas, likes, dislikes and recommendations, direct to my email :



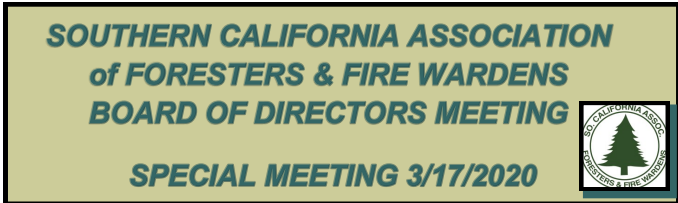
[timothy.ernst@lacity.org](mailto:timothy.ernst@lacity.org). This is your opportunity to influence the future of this great event.

As we move into our wildland season, let us all remember that the 2020 Corona Virus pandemic is an unprecedented situation which affects all aspects of our emergency response, so our approach to managing risks from both the virus and wildfire cannot be "business as usual." On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, we wish you all well as we adapt to our new normal, and must remind ourselves that in true firefighter fashion, we will adapt, and move forward.

Watch out for each other. Stay safe.

Tim





**BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING NOTES**

The Special Conference Call/meeting of the Southern California Association of Foresters and Fire Wardens was called to order by President Ernst at 1100 hours on March 17, 2020 by Conference Call.

**Officers and Directors Present:**

- Tim Ernst – President- Los Angeles Fire Dept.
- Nathan Judy –First Vice President- Angeles National Forest
- Dave Fowler –Second Vice President- CAL FIRE – San Luis Obispo Co.
- Phil Johnson – Treasurer – Orange County Fire Authority
- Tim Chavez – Secretary, CAL FIRE – Riverside County
- Doug Lannon – Arrangements Chair
- Don Forsyth – Safety Chair
- Nick Ferrari- Publicity Chairman- Los Angeles Fire Dept.
- Chris Childers – Santa Barbara County Fire Dept
- Stan Hill – Cleveland National Forest
- Ira Peshkin- Kern County Fire Dept.
- Kevin Johnson – Los Angeles County Fire Dept.
- Troy Whitman – Southern California Edison
- Curt Schwarm – Los Padres National Forest
- Dan Johnson – CAL FIRE – Southern Region
- Rusty McCulley – CAL FIRE – San Bernardino Co.
- Kurt Zingheim – CAL FIRE – San Diego County
- Ed Shabro – Vendor Representative
- Trevor Johnson – Ventura County Fire Dept.
- Dan Snow – San Bernardino National Forest
- Garrett Huff- Member- Santa Barbara County Fire Dept.
- Matt Ahern- Member- San Bernardino National Forest
- Josh Black- Member-CAL FIRE San Diego Co.

**Officers and Directors Absent:**

Brian Gaines- Sequoia National Forest

**Guests: none**

Due to the statewide restrictions on gatherings due to the COVID 19 outbreak, a motion has been presented by President Ernst to cancel the May 2020 Training and Safety Conference.

**Discussion:**

There was discussion of refunding registration refunds that have been received to date or to roll over the registration fees to 2021. Paypal makes it easy to do the refunds. Director Fowler will look into it. Chairman Ferrari mentioned that if we do cancel that we need to make notice on our social media platforms. Garrett Huff mentioned the in-person meeting for April will also need to be cancelled and we all need to cancel our reservations at the hotel to avoid charges. Director Phil Johnson stated that we will need to contact all speakers individually if we cancel. Director Schwarm advised that the Centers for Disease Control has restricted all gatherings for groups over 50 persons for the next 8 weeks which would encompass our Conference dates.

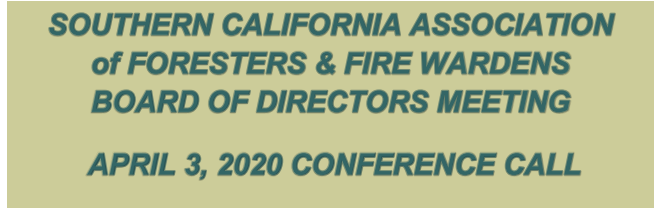
President Ernst called the question and after a roll call vote the motion to cancel the 2020 Training and Safety Confer-

ence was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 1130.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tim Chavez,  
Association Secretary

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING NOTES**

The conference-call meeting of the Southern California Association of Foresters and Fire Wardens was called to order by President Ernst at 0900 hours on April 3, 2020. Roll Call was as follows:



**Officers and Directors Present:**

- Tim Ernst – President- Los Angeles Fire Dept.
- Nathan Judy –First Vice President- Angeles National Forest
- Dave Fowler –Second Vice President- CAL FIRE – San Luis Obispo Co.
- Phil Johnson – Treasurer – Orange County Fire Authority
- Tim Chavez – Secretary, CAL FIRE – Riverside County
- Doug Lannon – Arrangements Chair
- Don Forsyth – Safety Chair
- Nick Ferrari- Publicity Chairman- Los Angeles Fire Dept.
- Chris Childers – Santa Barbara County Fire Dept
- Stan Hill – Cleveland National Forest
- Ira Peshkin- Kern County Fire Dept.
- Kevin Johnson – Los Angeles County Fire Dept.
- Troy Whitman – Southern California Edison
- Curt Schwarm – Los Padres National Forest
- Dan Johnson and Brook Spelman– CAL FIRE – Southern Region
- Rusty McCulley – CAL FIRE – San Bernardino Co.
- Trevor Johnson – Ventura County Fire Dept.
- Garrett Huff- Member- Santa Barbara County Fire Dept.
- Matt Ahern- Member- San Bernardino National Forest

**Officers and Directors Absent:**

- Dan Snow – San Bernardino National Forest
- Brian Gaines – Sequoia National Forest
- Kurt Zingheim – CAL FIRE – San Diego County
- Ed Shabro – Vendor Representative

**Guests: None**

**Minutes:** President Ernst presented the minutes of the Feb. 7, 2020 meeting. Motion by Chairman Forsyth seconded by Director Whitman, to approve the minutes. The motion was approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Phil Johnson presented his report covering 2/7/2020 to 4/3/2020 .

B of A Balance as of 2/7/2020	\$43,522.53
Receipts:	
Dues and Conference Registration	0.00
Pal/Registration (refunded)	Pay-
Total Receipts:	\$0.00

Disbursements: \$0.00  
 Paypal refunds \$130.00  
 Chairman Ferrari (conference giveaway)  
 \$2738.78

Total Disbursements: \$2868.78  
 B of A Balance on hand: \$40,653.75  
 Last year at this time: \$34,534.23

**Housekeeping Items**

Event Insurance/CANCELLED, Refund Pending  
 \$176.00  
 UCCR Reservation/\$10,383.61 Forwarded to 2021 Conference/\$1153.74 10% deposit Refund Pending Discussion with UCCR  
 SCE Grant/Application not submitted due to cancellation of 2020 event

Motion by Director Whitman , second by Director Childres to approve the Treasurer's report as presented. The motion was approved.

**Committee Reports:**

**Arrangements:**

Chairman Lannon reported that the screen that was donated was delivered to Pilgrim Pines but not installed. Director Dan Johnson has a volunteer that will complete the installation. Pilgrim Pines has layed off all their staff. Most groups have cancelled on them. Our cancellation notice to them was given on 3/18/2020 after our conference call. Our deposit to UCCR, the parent company of Pilgrim Pines, was \$11537 and because we did not cancel before 2/2 by the contract language, we forfeited \$1154.73. The remaining \$10,883 was moved forward for the 2021 conference registration. Camp Luther Glen is in the same situation. The Oak glen Stake House is closed and Laws Coffee Shop is also closed. The band The Finnians was notified as was Gordon Graham. No beer/wine license was purchased.

A motion was made by President Ernst and seconded by Chairman Forsyth to attempt negotiations with UCCR to get the non-refundable \$1154.73 credited back to us for next year. The vote was 9 in favor and 5 against. Motion passed.

**Exhibits and Demonstrations:**

All contacts have been made regarding cancellation of the conference.

**Registration and Membership:**

Second VP Fowler advised all money would be refunded, including annual memberships. Those refunds would be through Paypal.

**Entertainment and Raffle:**

Director Johnson was on a call. He reported later that he would follow up on the discussion of the purchase of tablecloths with our logo.

**Publicity:**

VP Judy advised A poster was sent out and posted on some of our social media accounts. Still trying to recover passwords for twitter and other accounts.

**Historian:**

The work on the History book will continue. By the way the last time the conference was cancelled was during World War II from 1942-1948. The work on the Life Member list is continuing.

**Safety:** CHP and medics have been cancelled.



**Golf:**

Status of the Golf Tournament will continue to be subject to discussion. Director Snow was not available to be on the call. There are still 5 Directors that need to pay for shirt orders. Contact Director Snow ASAP.

**Newsletter:** Nothing to report.

**Program:**

All Directors please reach out to proposed speakers for positive confirmation that they are aware of the cancellation.

The Conference giveaway update—Pelican sold the entire lot of the previously approved for purchase flashlight out from under us. Chairman Ferrari was able to get another similar flashlight at the same price. Those have been received and are secure at LAFD. These flashlights were originally retail priced at \$66 ea. We received 290 at about \$9.86 per light. A total of 2738.78 plus 119.96 shipping was paid by Chairman Ferrari. Reimbursement will be handled by Treasurer Phil Johnson. Personalization of the lights was discussed. We will try to get a sample to Norco Camp to see what they can do. A question was asked about what the shelf life of the batteries might be. The manufacturer will be contacted to find out.

**Old Business:**

Director Trevor Johnson will continue to follow up on the purchase of tablecloths for the raffle tables and registration.

The laptop computer discussed last meeting was originally purchased for registration data storage. It is mostly obsolete and no longer needed.

**Life Membership Recommendations:**

No recommendations

**Gary Helming Award Nominations:**

Not discussed.

**New Business:**

Director Trevor Johnson would like the venue discussed at the May meeting. It will be added for the May Conference call agenda.

A motion was made by Director Whitman that due to the extraordinary circumstances of the cancellation of the conference due to COVID19 that the current slate of officers continue to serve the organization until the May 2021 Training and Safety Conference. Seconded by Director Childers. Motion approved.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Board of Directors of the Southern California Association of Foresters and Fire Wardens will be held by conference call (details to follow), on May 1 at 0900 hours.

The meeting was adjourned at 0955.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Chavez,  
 Association Secretary

**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION  
of FORESTERS & FIRE WARDENS  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

**May 1, 2020 CONFERENCE CALL**



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING NOTES**

The meeting of the Southern California Association of Foresters and Fire Wardens was called to order by President Ernst at hours at 0904, on conference call and Google Meet.

**Officers and Directors Present:**

Tim Ernst – President- Los Angeles Fire Dept.  
Nathan Judy –First Vice President- Angeles National Forest  
Dave Fowler –Second Vice President- CAL FIRE – San Luis Obispo Co.  
Phil Johnson – Treasurer – Orange County Fire Authority  
Tim Chavez – Secretary, CAL FIRE – Riverside County  
Don Forsyth – Safety Chair  
Nick Ferrari- Publicity Chairman- Los Angeles Fire Dept.  
Chris Childers – Santa Barbara County Fire Dept  
Ira Peshkin- Kern County Fire Dept.  
Kevin Johnson – Los Angeles County Fire Dept.  
Troy Whitman – Southern California Edison  
Curt Schwarm – Los Padres National Forest  
Dan Johnson – CAL FIRE – Southern Region  
Rusty McCulley – CAL FIRE – San Bernardino Co.  
Kurt Zingheim – CAL FIRE – San Diego County  
Brian Gaines – Sequoia National Forest (dialed in late)  
Trevor Johnson – Ventura County Fire Dept.  
Garrett Huff- Member- Santa Barbara County Fire Dept.  
Alternate

**Officers and Directors Absent:**

Ed Shabro – Vendor Representative  
Matt Ahern- Member- San Bernardino National Forest Alternate  
Josh Black- Member-CAL FIRE San Diego Co. Alternate  
Dan Snow – San Bernardino National Forest (may have dialed in late)  
Doug Lannon – Arrangements Chair  
Stan Hill – Cleveland National Forest (may have dialed in late)

**Guests:**

**Minutes:** The minutes will be reviewed when the Newsletter comes out.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Phil Johnson presented his report covering April 3, 2020 to May 1, 2020.

Balance as of \$43522.53

Receipts:

Dues and Conference Registration \$.00



Total Receipts:	\$ .00	
Disbursements:		
Chairman Nick Ferrari (for conference giveaway)		\$2738.78
Paypal refund	130.00	
Total Disbursements:	\$2868.78	
Balance on hand:	\$40653.75	
Last year at this time:	\$34,534.23	

Regarding the return of the down payment for UCCR, Arrangements Chairman Lannon has negotiated the non-refundable portion of our deposit for Pilgrim Pines down from \$1153.74. They agreed to refund us 50% of the deposit (\$576.87). Treasurer Phil Jonson advised that they are in dire straights and that was the best they could do. All their employees are furloughed, and they are in danger of bankruptcy. Treasurer Johnson made a motion to accept the 50% refund as the final transaction for this years cancelled conference. Seconded by First VP Judy. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Director Whitman, second by Director Childers to approve the Treasurer's report as presented. The motion was approved unanimously.

**Old Business/**

**Committee Reports:**

**Arrangements:**

Director Lannon was absent.

**Exhibits and Demonstrations:**

No Report

**Registration and Membership:**

2<sup>nd</sup> VP Fowler advised all conference fees had been refunded on April 4 after our last call.

**Entertainment and Raffle:**

No Report

**Publicity:**

Cancellation message sent out to all social media and web page.

**Historian:**

Director Whitman advised that the last time the conference was cancelled was World War II. If any Director has COVID 19 Agency directives or documents, please send a copy to him to add to our history.

**Safety:**

Nothing to report

**Golf:**

Director Snow absent.

**Newsletter:**

There was no newsletter in between meetings, so the minutes from this meeting will be combined with the minutes of the March 17 conference all and the April 3 conference call and will come out next week.

2<sup>nd</sup> VP Fowler- yes  
 Secretary Chavez - yes  
 Treasurer Phil Johnson – yes  
 Director Zingheim- he will retire in December and Josh Black will be his replacement as the CAL FIRE San Diego Director  
 Director Peshkin- yes  
 Director Dan Johnson- had to leave the call but Brook Spelman will replace him as CAL FIRE Southern Region Office Director  
 Director McCully- yes  
 Director Hill- did not make the call  
 Director Whitman- yes  
 Director Kevin Johnson- Khoi Dao will replace him  
 Director Schwarm- the LPF is undergoing a reorganization and his position is in question. More to follow.  
 Director Childers- Garrett Huff will be the replacement for next year  
 Director Trevor Johnson- yes  
 Director Snow was not on the call but has stated earlier that Matt Ahern will be his replacement  
 Director Gaines- not on ccall  
 Chairman Forsyth- yes  
 Ed Shabro was not on the call  
 Publicity Chair Nick Ferrari- yes

**Life Membership Recommendations:** None

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Board of Directors of the Southern California Association of Foresters and Fire Wardens will be held December 4, 2020. Nobody knows what the situation will be as far as COVID 19 at that time, so more information to follow. The tentative location is Bakersfield (Kern County).

President Ernst will advise if another conference call will be required before December.

The meeting was adjourned at 0945.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Tim Chavez,  
 Association Secretary

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Table 1

New Preliminary Proposed Safety Zone Rule (July 2014)			
Calculating a Safe Separation Distance (SSD)			
SSD = 8 * Slope wind Factor * Height of the surrounding vegetation			
SLOPE-WIND FACTOR			
Wind Speed	Flat 0% Slope	20% Slope	>30% Slope
Light 0-10 mph	1	2	3
Moderate 11-20 mph	2	3	5
Strong > 20 mph	3	5	6



**Firefighter Safety Zones: perhaps one of the most critical decisions made by firefighters during daily operations is identification of suitable safety zones.**



Editors Note: In 2016 we had a presentation from Bret Butler of the Missoula Fire Science Lab at the Training and Safety Conference. His topic was new research on firefighter safety zone size. As a result of this research, there is a phone app that will help estimate the size of a safety zone needed to survive an entrapment without a fire shelter.

Based on current findings relative to energy transport from wildland fire in the presence of slope and wind, the following safety zone rule is proposed. The calculation also will be based on vegetation height rather than flame height. The proposed Safety Zone Rule is:  $SSD = 8 \Delta H_{veg}$  where SSD is safe separation distance or radius of the safety zone,  $\Delta$  is the slope/wind factor from table below, and  $H_{veg}$  is vegetation height. The equation is nondimensional which means that as long as the user is consistent any units will work (i.e. if vegetation height is in feet than the SSD is in feet). The value for  $\Delta$  given in the table below is based on wind in mph and slope in %. But the actual value for  $\Delta$  is nondimensional. So as an example, if a firefighter were working on a fire burning in sage brush that was 3 ft tall and the proposed safety zone was located in an area with a general slope of 15% and the wind speed expected for the upcoming burn period was 10 mph, with the conditions (fuel moisture, relative humidity, air temperature) generally moderate, the value for  $\Delta$  would be 2. Thus the safety zone should be large enough to provide a minimum separation from sage brush of  $8 \times 2 \times 3 \text{ ft} = 48 \text{ ft}$ . If the vegetation height were given as 1 meter than the SSD would be  $8 \times 2 \times 1 \text{ m} = 16 \text{ m}$ . An additional distance would be required to provide space for crew and equipment. Generally a crew of 20 people would require an additional 5 to 10 ft of radius, addition of a vehicle would require an additional 5 ft in radius.

The area highlighted in orange (see Table 1) corresponds to conditions under which large natural openings are required or mechanized equipment would be required to construct safety zones. Otherwise alternative tactics should be considered such as additional lookouts to monitor fire activity, enhanced methods to exit fire area, or modified decision points that would trigger egress earlier in the burn period.

The multiplier selection should be determined based on current and forecast weather, fuel conditions and fire behavior. For example a situation where the fire is or will be burning at what could be considered higher than normal intensity (possibly due to low fuel moisture or low relative humidity) would use a higher multiplier than the multiplier selected for a fire forecast to burn under moderate conditions.

-Disclaimer: This proposed safety zone rule should be considered preliminary and subject to increase or decrease based on analysis of additional data.

-Monitor this site for updates.

<https://www.firelab.org>

The app can be obtained here:

<https://www.firelab.org/document/firefighter-safety-app>

## Thinking Outside the Stratosphere

March 19, 2020/ wildfirelessons Blog

*The wildland fire community is an amazing collection of strong people. If we take care of ourselves and each other, we'll get through this.*

By Bre Orcasitas

All across the world people are having to alter their daily routines, schedules and habits, along with their basic behaviors in general due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, of which the wildland fire community is not immune.

Of course, as a community we pride ourselves on managing chaos and so we may not be as panicked as some; at least not yet. On any given day we have contingency plans for our contingency plans and this current pandemic although unprecedented in scale, is exactly the sort of thing that our community has the capacity to navigate. The trick is recognizing and accepting that we cannot continue moving forward as if all things are normal, things are most certainly not normal. The term "think outside the box" might need to be expanded to "think outside the stratosphere." For we are certainly in uncharted territory.

Goodbye Normal.

Fire programs everywhere are frantically strategizing, making plans, then assessing and reassessing on a near hourly basis as fresh updates trickle in. Anyone with an email account surely understands how quickly things are changing as a new coronavirus related email populates the inbox every 10 minutes. Normal has come to a grinding halt, that is simply where we are right now.

However, none of this changes the fact that we are rapidly progressing toward fire season in the Western U.S., which is quite obviously not something that we can postpone or close due to this outbreak. Meanwhile, the Eastern U.S. is already dealing real time with managing their fire season and the virus.

We know how to prep for fire season in times of normalcy, but there's no way of knowing when "normal" will even pay us a visit, let alone come back and stay for a while, and so where we currently reside on the map is our new starting point.

Here's what normal fire season preparation looks like:

- Onboarding New Hires
- Employees moving into shared quarters (dorms, barracks, bunkhouses)
- Fire Refreshers
- Pack-Tests
- Bootcamps and Guard Schools for new firefighters
- Regularly scheduled fire course trainings
- 80-hours of critical training for fire crews
- Spring Ops Meetings, Annual Captain's meetings, Workshops, IMT Conferences, Readiness Reviews, etc.
- Travel, travel, and more travel

It's a mind-bending exercise to even consider completely changing our recipe for success but nonetheless, our regular ingredients are not available.

To start with, we've got a nomadic seasonal workforce who may travel the world during the off-season or be from a



region other than where their crew is based. The time is fast approaching when the potential of not just our country as a whole, but individual states shutter their borders disallowing people in or out. For our nomadic workforce, this could prove to be an insurmountable challenge without an exemption in place.

Beyond the potential geographic issues, we must also grapple with how to get crews fire ready when essentially none of the standard practices listed above are an option – at least not in the manner they are traditionally accomplished.

When things go sideways out on the fireline we tend to get pretty inventive. After all, "necessity is the mother of invention" right? So maybe refresher requirements shift or expiration dates change (e.g. red cards, taskbooks, currency standards). Is it optimal? Probably not but it could work and remember – normal is gone.

What if rather than one large fire camp there were several smaller camps? Sure, that'd be great. Of course, the logistics associated with hosting multiple fire camps for each fire and multiplying those resources to stretch the country for a full fire season may not be feasible, but it's an idea. And what we need right now are ideas, lots and lots of ideas.

Perhaps we opt out of prescribed fire targets this year and the only wildfires that get staffed are those posing an imminent threat to life and property because if we stay on the current trajectory more than likely, we'll have to deal with mass amounts of quarantined firefighters.

With a current quarantine timeframe of 14-days we'd have to get very strategic about things like Interagency Hotshot Crew rotations on a national scale just to maintain consistent availability. Maybe we'll call in reinforcements early to be ahead of the curve. Our international fire compatriots, AD Hires, National Guard, Volunteers, come to mind as sources we can draw upon.

While it would be easy to make the assumption that our workforce is not within the vulnerable population to be affected by the coronavirus because of the fire community's average age and fitness level, it wouldn't necessarily be accurate.

Firefighters spend several months breaking down their immune systems (our first line of defense against viruses of any kind) through lack of sleep, poor nutrition intake and extensive physical exertion during the fire season. Not to mention the inhalation of smoke and particulate matter during initial attack and mop-up stages, along with an extreme lack of basic hygiene measures due to the environment, accessibility, and logistical capacity. No, we are most certainly not immune to this virus. Of course, bringing these points to light is not an attempt to generate panic or unease, but rather to gain some situational awareness around what we are up against so that we can create a solid plan.

Many organizations have already taken significant measures to reduce the spreading of the virus by extending telework agreements, canceling trainings, meetings, and travel in general. New directives for how to approach the fire season are no doubt in the works.

It's important to note that although we are in uncharted territory in terms of scale, there have been contagious outbreaks in fire camp settings in the past. We can take those previously learned lessons and at least add them to our playbook to help us deal with this current pandemic.

In a nutshell, the landscape may have changed but the mission remains the same. Alter strategies and tactics as necessary.

<https://wildfirelessons.wpcomstaging.com/2020/03/19/thinking-outside-the-stratosphere/>