

# WESTAR Prescribed Fire & Smoke Management Dialogue Recommendations

WESTAR COUNCIL MEETING – APRIL 23, 2019



# Overview

---

- Project background and purpose
- Pre-meeting interviews
- Dialogue 1: January 23-24, 2019
- Dialogue 2: February 28, 2019
- WESTAR Council recommendations
- Questions

# Project Background and Purpose

---

## **Background**

- Western State Air Quality Directors and Federal Land Managers expressed interest in a review of current practices and discussion of options for improving coordinated action for the future

## **Purpose**

- Identify actions that can be taken to enhance state-land manager collaboration and coordination and improve program outcomes related to prescribed fire, smoke management, and air quality objectives

# Pre-meeting Interviews

---

- Facilitator held pre-meeting participant interviews to:
  - Establish understanding of current programmatic landscape
  - Identify key interests, needs, and challenges related to prescribed fire, smoke management, and air quality
  - Inform January 23-24, 2019 dialogue agenda
- WESTAR distributed interview synthesis document to meeting participants in advance of January 23-24 dialogue

# Dialogue 1: January 23-24, 2019

---

- Day 1: state air quality staff met to share perspectives, explore challenges, and identify best practices across the major elements of a prescribed burn
- Day 2: Built on Day 1 discussions and held short conference call with state and private land managers
  - Federal Land Managers were unable to participate due to government shutdown
- WESTAR distributed meeting theme summary document after meeting

## Dialogue 2: February 28, 2019

---

- WESTAR held conference call with FLMs to brief them on January 23-24 meeting themes beforehand
- Participants met to identify actions that can be taken to enhance state-land manager collaboration and coordination and improve program outcomes
- WESTAR distributed document summarizing major themes and possible recommendations for potential actions by states and land managers after meeting

# WESTAR Council Recommendations

---

- WESTAR Council recommendations are based on themes and recommendations from Jan. 23-24 and Feb. 28, 2019 dialogues
- WESTAR recognizes interest and/or willingness to take action will vary depending on capacity of agencies and judgement as to the necessity of the actions

# Engaging Early and Routinely During the Planning Process

---

- WESTAR Air Directors could support development of a 'key map' overlay to ensure states and land managers are in agreement regarding the geographic areas of greatest concern for possible smoke exposure and to help bring focus on possible alternatives to burning
- WESTAR, in collaboration with FLMs, could offer NEPA and prescribed fire and smoke management planning processes training

# Interjecting and Inviting Connectivity

---

- WESTAR Air Directors could contact their respective Governor's offices and FLM agency leadership to schedule joint discussions regarding prescribed burn and smoke management within agreements the Governor is developing with FLM agencies.
- WESTAR Air Directors could reach out as appropriate to state, regional, and land-unit level leadership at FLM agencies (and vice versa) to proactively ensure positive working relationships exist

# Building Trust, Knowing What's Happening, and Who is Engaged

---

- WESTAR could convene a regional group of state air quality and land management agency staff on an annual or bi-annual basis to reflect on the experiences of the past year and upcoming burn season.
- Potential dialogue topics could include pre- and post-burn season planning; developing common messaging; public communications and outreach; advances in best practices; forecasting and modeling; and, how Exceptional Events policy is being implemented by states.

# Modeling, Monitoring, and Tools for Effective Fuel Load Management

---

- WESTAR could convene periodic prescribed fire and smoke management technical webinars to enable states and federal land managers to discuss, share and learn about new developments in modeling, monitoring, and other tools for effective fuel load and smoke management

# Ensuring that State Capacity isn't a Bottleneck

---

- WESTAR states could monitor the resource capacity of their state air quality agencies in light of the likely increase in the pace and scale of prescribed burns across the western landscape
- WESTAR states could keep each other informed through regular status engagement with each other on their resource situation

# Questions?

---

