

## **CWSF Resolution No. 2000-6**

### **ORIGIN OF RESOLUTION:**

Wyoming State Forester

### **ISSUE OF CONCERN:**

National Guard preparedness for Wildfire Suppression Deployment

### **BACKGROUND:**

The National Guard's mission includes an emerging role in "Homeland Security" that will enhance their state mission of aiding their respective state and communities in time of crisis. These crises include natural disasters and civil disturbances.

The 2000 wildfire season, one of the most destructive in the last 50 years, has resulted in a substantial number of state and federal declarations of emergency and/or disaster. During these emergencies numerous state National Guard (NG) units were either activated or used on a volunteer basis. Prior to wildfire suppression deployment these NG units had to be trained by state or federal resource management agencies to provide wildfire suppression and safety knowledge. Tools and Personal Protective Equipment for NG units had to be special ordered at a time when warehouse stocks were depleted.

Trends in wildfire occurrences, size, intensity, and losses are increasing. Causes of these increasing trends include vegetative condition, fuel loading, increasing populations and density in the urban/wildland interface areas, and weather patterns. At the same time available federal wildfire suppression resources are declining substantially. As the severity of wildfires increase the frequency of disaster declarations and subsequent use of NG units and federal fire assistance increases.

The NG currently has the authority to use a limited amount of its federal training time to train for its role in response to civil disturbances. However, preparedness for wildfire suppression responses by pre-training and equipping are outside of its current federal mission.

### **RESOLUTION:**

The Council of Western State Foresters recommends that the National Association of State Foresters adopt the following resolution:

The NASF recommends, and urges; the Department of Defense, National Guard Bureau, to include in its federal "Homeland Security" mission wildfire suppression preparedness. Implementation would occur at the state level through cooperation between the Adjutant General and the State Forester, or other authorized state official, and be to National Wildfire Coordinating Group standards for the tasks assigned. This preparedness is to include training and equipping to provide the preplanned and agreed to operational and logistical support on wildfires in their respective states in a safe, efficient, and timely manner. Funding for NG wildland fire suppression preparedness should be new funds and not diminish from current funding or preparedness levels for the NG units.

### **CWSF ACTION:**

Approved       Disapproved       Tabled

Date: October 3, 2000