

The Office of the Federal Coordinator for Meteorological Services and Supporting Research (OFCM) would appreciate your participation in a survey regarding wildland fire weather needs, which is part of our longer-term effort to complete a comprehensive, National Wildland Fire Weather Needs Assessment report. This assessment has national implications for fire weather programs within the National Weather Service (NWS), the National Wildfire Coordinating Group, and the federal wildland fire agencies' Predictive Services. Your thoughtful and honest input on the attached survey will contribute to this effort and will help shape future program directions.

Background:

The Western Governors' Association (WGA) requested the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's OFCM complete a national needs assessment report of federal, state, and local fire managers' needs for weather information in their wildfire and prescribed-fire decision-making processes, to include a framework to meet those needs by the NWS and the federal wildland fire agencies' Predictive Services.

As part of this assessment, we have developed a Wildland Fire Weather Needs Survey, which is being made available to the wildland fire community and will allow us to collect and synthesize these needs. In addition to wildland fire needs, this survey also includes important smoke management information, and all results will be shared with the fire weather community to facilitate operational improvements. In summary, we are fully committed to providing the WGA with a comprehensive assessment of fire weather needs and, as a result, are seeking your input to make this assessment as complete as possible.

Instructions:

We have made our survey available online at www.ofcm.gov/fireweather/questionnaire.html. We encourage you to take time to provide substantive input to all questions in all functional areas. If you run into a functional area in which you are unfamiliar, please skip ahead to the next functional area and complete those questions. We sincerely welcome any and all input you have to offer.

Surveys must be received at OFCM by December 22, 2006, in order to be processed and used in this important needs assessment. If you have any questions, please contact my project lead, U.S. Air Force Lieutenant Colonel David Andrus. He can be reached at 301-427-2002 or david.andrus@noaa.gov.

I sincerely thank you for expending your time and energy on this vital survey.

Best regards,

Samuel P. Williamson
Federal Coordinator for Meteorological Services and Supporting Research