



**Collaborative Fire Planning Workshop**  
Wildfire Risk Management Science Team

# PODs Workshop Planning Team



**Dave Calkin** is a supervisory research forester with the Rocky Mountain Research Station in Missoula, Montana. He leads the Wildfire Risk Management Science team working to improve risk-based fire management decision making through improved science development, application, and delivery. His research incorporates economics with risk and decision sciences to explore ways to evaluate and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of wildfire management programs. He received a B.S. in applied math from the University of Virginia, an M.S. in natural resources conservation from the University of Montana, and his Ph.D. in Economics from Oregon State University. Contact Dave at [dave.calkin@usda.gov](mailto:dave.calkin@usda.gov)



**Matthew Thompson** is a Research Forester in the Human Dimensions Program at the Rocky Mountain Research Station, in Fort Collins, CO. His research interests include risk, systems, and decision analysis, applied to questions of forest and wildland fire management. He has a Ph.D. in forest engineering and M.S. in forest management from Oregon State University, an M.S. in industrial engineering and operations research from University of California, Berkeley, and a B.S. in systems engineering from the University of Virginia. In 2016 he received the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers. He enjoys daytime pajamas, virtual workshops, and college basketball. Contact Matt at [matthew.p.thompson@usda.gov](mailto:matthew.p.thompson@usda.gov)



**Kit O'Connor** is a Research Ecologist with the Human Dimensions Program at the Rocky Mountain Research Station. Kit's primary research interest is in bridging the human and ecological dimensions of fire management with a focus on ecosystem restoration and resilience, safe and effective suppression response, and sustainable forest and fire management systems. Kit has a B.S. in agricultural science from Penn State University, M.S. in forest biology from University of Quebec at Montreal, and a Ph.D. in natural resource management from University of Arizona. He lives in Missoula, Montana where he enjoys trail running, mountain biking, and family adventures. Contact Kit at: [christopher.d.oconnor@usda.gov](mailto:christopher.d.oconnor@usda.gov)



**Michael Caggiano** is a research scientist with the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado. His most recent work focuses on cross boundary spatial fire planning, prescribed fire capacity building, mapping the wildland urban interface (WUI), and evaluating patterns of home loss in WUI disasters. He received his B.A. from SUNY Geneseo, M.A. in Geography from CUNY Hunter, and Ph.D. in Forest Sciences from Colorado State University. Contact Mike at [michael.caggiano@colostate.edu](mailto:michael.caggiano@colostate.edu)



**Christopher Dunn** is a Research Associate in the College of Forestry at Oregon State University. He spent eight years in fire suppression and fuels management prior to pursuing research on fire effects and ecosystem response to mixed severity fires. Today he leverages his operational experience and research training to bridge the gap between science and management to better prepare land and fire managers for the changing fire environment, supported by collaborations with the Human Dimensions Program at the Rocky Mountain Research Station. Contact Chris at [chris.dunn@oregonstate.edu](mailto:chris.dunn@oregonstate.edu)



**Nehalem Clark** merges her passion for science with her background in land management as the Science Delivery lead for the Rocky Mountain Research Station. Nehalem spent more than a decade working in land management (NEPA, forest planning, range management, wildfire and prescribed fire, invasive species research, trail building and ecological monitoring for several Federal agencies), with the goal of bringing a multidisciplinary approach to her work. Nehalem has a B.S. in Geography and Resource Management from Huxley College at Western Washington University and an M.S. in Ecology from the University of Colorado at Boulder. Connect with Nehalem at [nehalem.clark@usda.gov](mailto:nehalem.clark@usda.gov)



**Alexis Neukirch** is an ORISE Fellow with the Rocky Mountain Research Station Science Application and Communication team. She assists the team with a variety of science delivery projects. She has a B.S. from the University of Kentucky and an M.S. from the University of Iceland. Connect with Lexi at [alexis.neukirch@usda.gov](mailto:alexis.neukirch@usda.gov)



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