

Success Stories

Bringing People Together and Sharing Knowledge in the Northern Rockies



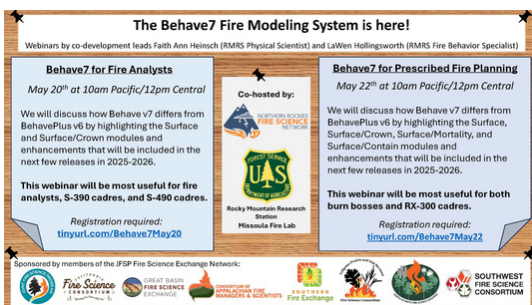
Capacity Building: Training & Workforce Development in the Northern Rockies

In 2024-2025, the Northern Rockies Fire Science Network (NRFSN) engaged in several activities to promote training and workforce development in the region.

“Thanks for allowing myself to attend, great class. I’ve been in wildland fire mitigation the last 4 years after retiring, and love what I do, so I’m grateful for any new knowledge.”

-Survey Respondent, Behave7 Webinars

- **Fire & Fuels Monitoring Trainings:** The second biannual Hybrid Fire and Fuels Monitoring Workshop was co-hosted with the Northwest Fire Science Consortium. This event included virtual trainings and field days on the Yakama and Flathead Reservations.
- **Perspectives - Preparing the Next Generation through Student Fire Associations:** This publication explored how student fire associations in the region are creating training and educational opportunities to build capacity and expand the wildfire workforce.
- **Behave7 Webinars:** Responding to a request from the Missoula Fire Lab, NRFSN hosted two webinars on the newly updated Behave7 program, in collaboration with eight other exchanges across the country.



The Northern Rockies Fire Science Network (NRFSN) serves as a go-to resource for managers and scientists involved in fire and fuels management in the Northern Rockies. The NRFSN is funded by the Joint Fire Science Program and is one of 15 Fire Science Exchange Networks across the country. The NRFSN facilitates knowledge exchange by bringing people together to strengthen collaborations, synthesize science, and enhance science application around critical management issues.

Read the story...

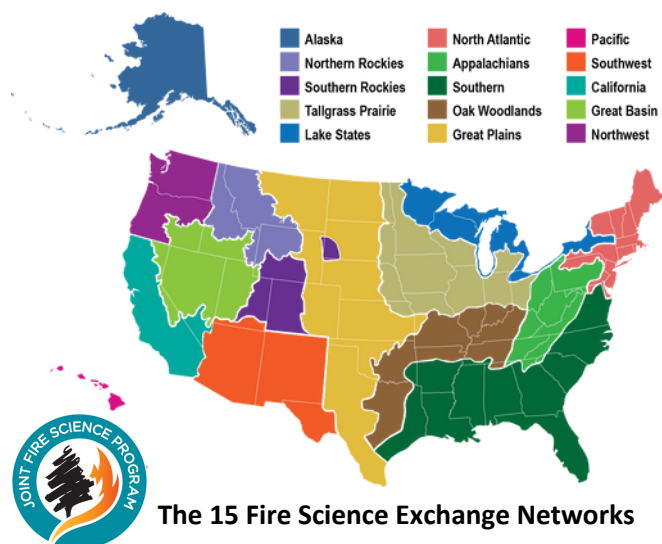
Taken together, these different activities all focused on building capacity in the region through training and workforce development. The Fires & Fuels Monitoring Workshop was a continuation of a training held in 2023. Following the success of the 2023 workshop, a committee formed to continue the training every two years. These events help support the fire and fuels goals of multiple agencies in the region and build upon the available resources and recordings. Through a combination of virtual and in-person learning, this joint workshop is expanding regional workforce development and fostering place-based learning. Attendees learned and practiced monitoring skills, including a hands-on walkthrough of the FIREMON sampling protocol.

The Perspectives piece on Student Fire Associations approached capacity building in a different way, focusing on awareness and building connections between different groups. Workforce development and the education of the next generation of fire and fuels professionals are key components of successful future management. For some people, student fire associations have played a key role in their professional development. NRFSN spoke to students from the University of Montana and the University of Idaho to get their perspectives on the benefits and potential of student fire associations in the region, and the subsequent publication was posted to the [Association of Fire Ecology's "Studying Fire"](#) page and distributed to the NRFSN mailing list, which has over 1,400 subscribers.

Similar to the Fires & Fuels Monitoring Workshop, the Behave7 webinars were a direct example of capacity building through increasing skills and access to new tools. NRFSN hosted two webinars, providing an introduction to the latest version of the Behave fire modeling system for fire analysts and prescribed fire planning. Between the two webinars, there was a total live audience of 553 people, and the views of the recording through the end of September 2025 were 1,426. NRFSN also developed an [FAQ document that was distributed with the webinars](#) to help guide users as they start using the updated version. 🌱



A student from the University of Montana Fire Club works on a prescribed burn at the Lubrecht Experimental Forest near Greenough, MT (courtesy photo)



More information about the Northern Rockies Fire Science Network:



nrfirescience.org



[@NRfirescience](https://twitter.com/NRfirescience)



[@nrfirescience](https://www.instagram.com/nrfirescience)