

| Presentation Title  | Place in Schedule  |
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| <p>The Continuum of Support - Stress First Aid for Wildland Firefighters and First Responders</p>   | <p>Concurrent Session 3.3<br/> <i>Day 2 – Wednesday</i><br/> <i>May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018</i><br/> <i>4:00 – 5:15pm</i></p> |
| Description of Presentation   | Presenter Name(s) And Credentials  |
| <p>In the Wildland Fire culture, there is often a gap between experiencing stress reactions and seeking help. This culture appeals to "type A" personalities and those who are problem solvers and service-oriented. Therefore, it is a culture that could benefit from learning the basics of self-care, support for each other, and good mentoring. Stress First Aid can only be as strong as the determination of the culture to preserve the health and well-being of each of its assets, so that they can both serve others and get the most of the job for as long as they choose to be a part of the culture. The stress encountered by wildland fire personnel is influenced by a number of factors: the threats the job can present, the tragic losses which they routinely witness, the difficult decisions they have to make, and the cumulative demands that wildland firefighting places on them. The traditional critical incident response has been to send peer support teams and clinicians in the aftermath of a line-of-duty-death or serious injury. These well trained, compassionate peers are dispatched to be with the surviving co-workers and greater community and offer coping mechanisms to help navigate the days and months following a critical incident. This type of response to an incident is accepted and expected. The current, non-formal, small scale effort within the U.S. Forest Service has introduced the concept of a Continuum of Support; from pre-incident PREPAREDNESS training in self-care, Stress First Aid (SFA), and mentoring, to RESPONSE training in critical incident stress management (CISM), to RECOVERY involving a revisit to and/or a training in self-care, Stress First Aid and mentoring. This continuum concept has been developed to help reduce the likelihood that these stress reactions, as mentioned above, will develop into more severe or long-term problems.</p> | <p>Kimberly Lightley<br/> <i>U.S Forest Service, Fire Aviation and Management</i></p>                                      |

Individual Interagency Hotshot Crews have been selected and introduced to the Stress First Aid for Wildland Firefighter model as a stress PREPAREDNESS initiative. The Stress First Aid for Wildland Firefighters represents a civilian adaptation of the Combat and Operational Stress First Aid Field Operations Manual, National Center for PTSD, Department of Veterans Affairs. These wildland firefighters received instruction on self-care and the Stress First Aid peer support model prior to the 2017 summer fire season. These same crews received a follow-up questionnaire, post-summer fire season, addressing applicability of the SFA model during fire season, identifying biggest stressors of their occupation, and likelihood of using stress preparedness skills in their fire service job and/or personal life. Wildland firefighters receiving the Preparedness training have applauded the efforts of the agency to recognize the long-term cumulative stress and environmental stresses that firefighters face daily. The small scale training effort continues with introduction of the Stress First Aid for Wildland Firefighters model to additional field-going and aerial firefighter modules. The effort has successfully introduced the concept of a Continuum of Support, supporting the proactive wellness approach, rather than only response mode to critical incidents.