

Frequently Asked Questions – Forest Stewards Guild fire management

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What is going on?

The Forest Stewards Guild is supporting the launch of a new, separate non-profit, The Ember Alliance, that will focus on bringing good fire back to fire adapted ecosystems. Staff from the Guild’s fire management team in the Loveland Colorado office will form the core of the new organization. The Guild and The Ember Alliance will partner closely to maximize the good work we can all do on the ground. We are both committed to ensuring current projects continue uninterrupted during the transition. Some fire projects will transition to The Ember Alliance while others remain with the Guild. In both cases, the organizations will work together to support our partners, communities, and ecosystems. For Guild members, our partnership with the Ember Alliance will provide opportunities for training and to participate in prescribed fire.

Why the new organization?

The Forest Stewards Guild expanded to include an operational fire management program in 2018. Since then, the larger team has achieved meaningful successes such as implementing ecologically significant prescribed fire in the Luera Mountains of New Mexico, securing prescribed fire insurance, training large numbers of new firefighters, and implementing the All Hands, All Lands Burn Team. While the Guild believes that bringing good fire back to fire-adapted ecosystems is part of our mission to practice and promote ecologically, socially, and economically responsible forestry, there is a need for more help than a fire management program of the Guild can provide. The Ember Alliance will add important good fire capacity. The Guild will remain involved in prescribed fire and fire adapted communities.

Creating a new non-profit fire management organization that is separate, but closely aligned with the Guild will allow both organizations to focus on core strengths. Because the two staffs have worked closely over the last three years, they are well positioned to build on each groups’ areas of expertise. Creating a new organization will allow for growth and increase stewardship capacity overall. The Ember Alliance will pursue projects that are outside the Guild’s mission or expertise. For example, The Ember Alliance will be deeply engaged in operational fire management – including wildfire suppression.

What will the new organization, The Ember Alliance, do?

The Ember Alliance's mission and vision line up well with those of the Guild including dedication to economic, social, and ecological responsibility; a commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equity; and a goal to support both good fire and good jobs.

The new fire management organization will be a 501c3 non-profit and focus on operational fire. In January, The Ember Alliance started the process of establishing its corporate structure, and will be operational in February. As with the Guild, The Ember Alliance will take advantage of the synergy between planning and implementation. Their planning projects will support fire operations and fire operations will support future planning projects. The Ember Alliance will also focus on establishing a fully operational, ten-person, place-based fire resource to achieve its training and DEIJ outcomes.

The Ember Alliance will be based in Loveland, Colorado, and work on projects nationally. Learn more at their new website <http://emberalliance.org/>.

How will the Guild and The Ember Alliance work together?

All our projects will continue as we work together to deliver on all our agreements. Some fire projects will transition to The Ember Alliance. Some will remain with the Guild, but with a subcontractor arrangement with the new fire management organization. The Ember Alliance will secure new projects under its own auspices as it grows and can rely on the Guild for forestry expertise.

In general, the Guild will continue to do everything we currently do with a reduced focus on operational fire. The Guild's operational fire work will continue in close partnership with the new entity and other organizations. For Guild members, the Guild's partnership with The Ember Alliance will provide opportunities for training and to participate in prescribed fire.

The Guild, with help from The Ember Alliance, will continue to support a range of fire related projects such as the All Hands, All Lands Burn Team that works with federal, state, tribal, and private partners to increase the pace and scale of prescribed fire in northern New Mexico. The Guild will also continue its research into fire issues such as prevention of human caused ignitions, post-fire response, and support for fire science knowledge exchanges from the Southwest to the Northeast. The Guild will also continue efforts to build fire adapted communities and develop collaborative community wildfire protection plans. With all the needs related to fire, the Guild is looking forward to having a new partner working for solutions.