



Celebrating 10 Years of wildfire knowledge exchange and collaboration across the Pacific



In 2011, the Joint Fire Science Program funded the Pacific Fire Exchange (PFX) program to facilitate information exchange and collaboration among Pacific island wildfire researchers and fire responders, land managers, communities and government. In 2021, PFX celebrated 10 years of leveraging the best available research to reduce fire management costs and protect natural, social, and cultural resources from wildfire devastation. The consortium of fire practitioners represented by the PFX spans a large geographic area including Hawai'i and U.S.-Affiliated Pacific Islands.



Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessments program

Did You Know?

- wildfire is a large & growing threat to Pacific islands comparable to the percentage of land area burned annually in the western U.S.
- wildfire impacts island ecosystems, watersheds, coral reefs, ranching and agricultural operations, tourism, the visitor industry, and human health and well-being.
- the Pacific island region is under-represented in current fire science.

Creating Pathways for Active Knowledge Exchange

Through information, training, and tools for Pacific wildfire mitigation activities, PFX aims to support:



Easier access to information sources



Better and more comprehensive information



Improved technical assistance



Collaborative information transfer

What Is PFX?

- one of fifteen nationwide science communication networks funded by the Joint Fire Science Program and co-led by the Hawai'i Wildfire Management Organization and the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.
- a program implemented by a small team that is guided by a steering committee of diverse wildfire stakeholders to find, research, and share relevant science and information.
- PFX hosts interactive events and produces multi-media wildfire science which reaches local and virtual audiences of 2,400+ people from diverse backgrounds across the U.S. and the Pacific.



PFX Highlights 2011 - 2021



From the start, PFX was designed to provide a mechanism for better addressing practitioner information needs toward improved wildfire outcomes. Although wildfire was understood to be a devastating force across communities and the environment, there was a paucity of basic fire information. Previously in Hawai'i, fire science was not conceived of as a stand alone need. PFX was unique in that its stated purpose was to fill the fire science research gap by connecting scientists to practitioners who could share their perspectives on research needs for improving fire management outcomes.



PFX's first statewide needs assessment in Hawai'i presented an opportunity for listening, dialogue and laying the groundwork for the role fire science might play. The 2013 - 2014 needs assessment helped participants understand the role that researchers play, and the value science could provide in helping managers make informed decisions. PFX provided participants with the building blocks needed to understand fire at the landscape level, and facilitated their receptivity to scientific inquiry and undertakings.



Since PFX pursues cross-cultural wildfire knowledge, the network now plays a critical role in communicating the status of Pacific island wildfire at the local and national level. One of PFX's first goals was presenting the first picture of increasing fire incidence in Hawai'i. PFX helped debunked the common perception that fire poses little threat to tropical island environments. Now, there is an ever-increasing interest in wildfire science and prevention--from grass-roots to congressional leadership. PFX's factsheets--particularly those on [climate change](#), [wildfire in Hawai'i](#), [fuel breaks](#) and the [grass-fire cycle](#)--are critical wildfire resources for an informing a wider public.



By responding to wildfire information needs and the changing media landscape, PFX continues to increase the reach and engagement of stakeholders in wildfire planning, research, and discussions. One of PFX's strengths is being responsive to stakeholder information needs by offering a variety of wildfire media, events and communication tools. For example, PFX hosts field trips to fire sites, conducts legislative briefings, forums and [webinars](#) featuring Pacific fire science. Most recently, we offer interactive virtual workshops, [self-guided fire science tutorials](#), and practitioner [audio interviews](#). Combined with quarterly [newsletters](#), the [Wildfire Communications list-serv](#), and our social media, we have grown our audience reach especially in the digital realm.



pacificfireexchange.org