



Collaboration is the Key

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What began as a research-oriented collaboration has evolved into a partnership for managing fire on a large scale in southeastern Arizona's Santa Cruz and Cochise counties.

Public and private parties from the Patagonia Mountains on the west to the San Pedro River on the east have come together as the Huachuca Area Fire Partners (HAFP) to manage fire activities over the 500,000-acre borderlands area. The HAFP will take on projects that participants are unable to accomplish on their own.

The Nature Conservancy in Arizona played a significant role in helping the partners develop a fire management plan (FMP). The plan is a general framework for collaborative, landscape-scale fire by 11 landowners and six landless partners. The HAFP is working together to let natural fires burn when feasible, suppress unwanted wildfires, conduct prescribed burns, use non-fire means to reduce fuels around developed areas, and monitor results. We have defined projects in the FMP that are difficult for any entity to carry out alone. Projects will cross political boundaries to manage fire along natural features and roadways. We are also soliciting participation from Mexican agencies and non-governmental organizations.

Ecological mapping system has defined 13 landscape types for the HAFP planning area—from Chihuahuan desertscrub and grassland mosaics to Madrean pine and mixed conifer forests on high-elevation limestone mountains. The benefits of managing for fire on a broad landscape, such as the Huachuca area, are numerous. Foremost are increased public and fire crew safety, widespread improvement in ecosystem function, and economical execution of fire activities.

**Conservation
Accomplishments
in Arizona
are Achieved
through
Science and
Collaboration**

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