
WILDFIRE

on WHIDBEY?

*(When) Will it happen **HERE?***

Program & Resources

August 24, 2024



THE WORLD IS CHANGING. WE MUST ACT NOW.

presented by

Whidbey Climate ACTION and Whidbey Island Center for the Arts



whidbeyclimate.org

wicaonline.org

Whidbey Climate ACTION is a self-organized group of volunteers taking action to promote sound climate policy and community resilience, and to protect and enhance the natural systems that support all life on Whidbey Island and on Earth.



Join Whidbey Climate ACTION's email list to be notified when **Wildfire on Whidbey** conference presentations are posted, and to be informed about other upcoming events and actions. Thank you for attending!

≡ PROGRAM ≡
~ Morning ~

WILDFIRE ON WHIDBEY...WILL IT HAPPEN HERE?

TRADITIONAL SNOHOMISH WELCOME
PAMELA SEAMONSTER

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS
ANNE TEARSE

WILDFIRE IS COMING – IS WHIDBEY ISLAND READY?

GUY GIFFORD
Statewide Community Resilience Manager, WA State Dept. of Natural Resources. (DNR). Wild Land Fire Fighter since 1984.

STATUS OF FOREST HEALTH
Anacortes Community Forest Lands Monitoring Program

ERIC SHEN
Monitoring Program Lead

LESSONS FROM LAHAINA
Proactive Climate-Resilient Strategies and
How to Work Together for Best Outcomes

JENNY PELL
Permaculture specialist in climate resilient agroforestry and watershed restoration

RESOURCES & REFERENCES
Explore over lunch, at the end of the conference, and ongoing
How to learn more, connect, and take action

JEANIE MCELWAIN

~ LUNCH ~
ZECH HALL

Huge thank you for Radical Hospitality...

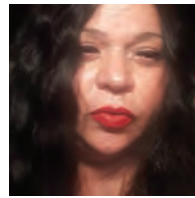
LANGLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
ISLAND CHURCH OF WHIDBEY
ST. HUBERT CATHOLIC CHURCH

They have provided the wonderful soups we have for lunch.

Thanks to **RePurpose** for providing reusable zero-waste lunchware as part of our waste reduction efforts.

rePurposeWhidbey.org provides reusable service items for any event.

≡ PRESENTERS ≡
~ Morning ~



Pamela SeaMonster
Snohomish Cultural Educator, Indigenous Storyteller, Weaver, Plant Medicine Specialist, Environmental and Human Rights Activist. Pamela is also a laurel winning director of the documentary YEHOW.



Guy Gifford
Guy has served in numerous Forestry/Wildfire positions and is now Statewide Community Resilience Manager for the Washington State Department of Natural Resources. Guy oversees statewide Firewise USA, Community Wildfire Protection Plans, Wildfire Ready Neighbors and Community Wildfire Defense Grants.



Eric Shen
Since retiring as a mechanical engineer, Eric has been a member of Transition Fidalgo, a nonprofit dedicated to improving community resilience and sustainability on Fidalgo Island and neighbors nearby. He is the program lead for the Anacortes Community Forest Lands (ACFL) program, which is one of several projects Transition Fidalgo has developed and implemented to showcase the wonders within our community and share our skills.



Jenny Pell
Jenny Pell is a career permaculture designer, experienced consultant in the Pacific NW and the tropics. Specialist in Climate Resilient Agroforestry, Watershed Restoration, and Neighborhood Food Solutions.
www.permaculturenow.org

A NOTE ABOUT THIS CONFERENCE

The organizing team for WILDFIRE ON WHIDBEY:

Jeanie McElwain
Anne Tearse
Rhonda Salerno
Kiki La Porta
Judith Lovelace

All team members have participated on behalf of WHIDBEY CLIMATE ACTION. Thank you for countless meetings, hours of planning, and logistical management.

Thank you to our COLLEAGUES at **Whidbey Climate ACTION** for your interest, ideas, and support.

Thank you to **Whidbey Island Center for the Arts** for co-presenting WILDFIRE ON WHIDBEY with us.

≡ PROGRAM ≡

~ Afternoon ~

PREVENTION, PROTECTION, RESPONSE

ISLAND COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT – PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE TO WILDFIRES IN ISLAND COUNTY

ERIC BROOKS

Director, Island County Emergency Management

FIGHTING FIRES ON WHIDBEY

NICK WALSH

Fire Chief, South Whidbey Fire Department

FIREWORKS – RECIPE FOR WILDFIRE DISASTER

JACKIE LASATER

Safe and Humane Fireworks

COMMUNITY WILDFIRE RESILIENCE ON WHIDBEY ISLAND FIREWISE: A program for making homes defensible

COLLIN MCAVINCHY

Whidbey Island Conservation District Stewardship Forester

HOUSEHOLD AND NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAMS & SUPPORTS

JEANIE MCELWAIN

~ STRETCH ~

INDIGENOUS TEACHINGS ON WILDFIRE THROUGH STORY

PAMELA SEAMONSTER

ALL SPEAKERS PANEL | QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

KIKI La PORTA and RHONDA SALERNO, moderators

WHAT'S NEXT?

JEANIE MCELWAIN

CLOSING

KIKI La PORTA

≡ PRESENTERS ≡

~ Afternoon ~



Eric Brooks

Deputy Director of Island County Department of Emergency Management since 2011. He has a Master's in Disaster Infrastructure Planning & Management from UW. Eric is responsible for all aspects of emergency planning in all of Island County as well as the county's Disaster Response Center during active emergencies. Eric served in the US Navy from 1990 to 2011.



Nick Walsh

South Whidbey Fire Chief since April 2022. Nick was born on Whidbey, grew up in Skagit County, and served in the Anacortes Fire Department starting in 2007. While there, he served as Division Chief for Training & Emergency Management Services, Safety Officer of the Skagit County Emergency Response Team and on the City of Anacortes Emergency Operations Team.



Jackie Lasater

Jackie is a co-founder of Citizens for Safe and Humane Fireworks of Island County. She is a Whidbey Audubon Society Conservation and Science board member and Mountain Fire survivor.



Collin McAvinchey

Collin joined the Whidbey Island Conservation District in March 2024, following an 8-year tenure with the National Parks Service. He has 10 years experience in conservation and natural lands management, has served as a consulting forester to national parks in Washington, Oregon and California. He has a BA in Interdisciplinary Studies from Fairhaven College at Western Washington University and an MA from Evergreen State College.



Jeanie McElwain

Jeanie began her emergency preparedness journey in 5th grade when she went to bomb shelter trainings, has experienced numerous earthquakes, been a tornado siren checker, and a flood recovery facilitator and participates in CERT and Map Your Neighborhood. She holds a Ph.D. in transpersonal psychology and a MSLS in Library Outreach to underserved populations.

THANK YOU TO OUR EXPERTS

Profound gratitude to all our PRESENTERS who have offered their time, knowledge, and expertise in this endeavor, to help all on Whidbey Island prevent, prepare, and respond to wildfire. We are deeply conscious of the ecological systems and all the lives – human and non-human – which will be impacted by fire. Our intention is to minimize the likelihood and gravity of wildfire on Whidbey, and to enhance the resilience of our Island.

And thank you to our ATTENDEES for your initiative and concern for our common home, and for carrying your new knowledge forward from this day to promote the safety and well-being of all.

≡ RESOURCES ≡

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Department of Emergency Management (DEM) PREPAREDNESS FAIR (FREE)

Oct 10 11am-2pm.

North Whidbey Middle School, 67 NE Izett St., Oak Harbor

DEM, local and regional partners host this fact-filled fair each year.

Speakers, tables loaded with information, and disaster supplies for sale, skills-practice, door prizes.

www.islandcountywa.gov/170/Department-of-Emergency-Management

South Whidbey Fire Department | www.swfe.org

HOUSEHOLD FIRE SAFETY AND PREPARATION CLASS: TBD

CPR/AED (cardio-pulmonary resuscitation/automated external defibrillator) AND FIRST AID

Sept 28, October 17, November 23 online & at Bayview Station

\$60 for training materials; register in advance

www.swfe.org | www.swfe.org/cpr-and-first-aid-classes

Check local fire departments, Dept of Emergency Management, Whidbey Island Conservation District for additional trainings and updates.

AGENCY/ORGANIZATION CONTACT INFORMATION

ANACORTES COMMUNITY FOREST LANDS FOREST MONITORING PROGRAM

Eric Shen

info@transitionfidalgo.org

CITY OF ANACORTES COMMUNITY FOREST LANDS

www.cityofanacortes.org/517/Community-Forest-Lands-ACFL

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: ISLAND COUNTY

www.islandcountywa.gov/170/Department-of-Emergency-Management

Eric Brooks

E.Brooks@islandcountywa.gov

360-679-7370 (office)

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES WASHINGTON STATE

www.dnr.wa.gov <https://www.dnr.wa.gov/>

Guy Gifford

guy.gifford@dnr.wa.gov

509-990-6218 (office)

SAFE & HUMANE FIREWORKS

Jackie Lasater

zhampster@hotmail.com

SOUTH WHIDBEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Nick Walsh

nick.walsh@swfe.org

360-321-1533 (office)

WHIDBEY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

collin@whidbeycd.org

360-678-4708 (office)

To learn more: Central, North, Oak Harbor Fire Departments; Fire Marshalls

≡ RESOURCES ≡

NEIGHBORHOOD AND HOUSEHOLD FIRE PREVENTION PROGRAMS

Neighborhood Preparedness Program

www.islandcountywa.gov/467/Map-Your-Neighborhood

Department of Emergency Management (DEM)

CERT: Community Emergency & Response Team (DEM)

www.islandcountywa.gov/519/Community-Emergency-Response-Team

Wildfire Ready Neighbors

<https://wildfireready.dnr.wa.gov>

Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR)

Community-Assistance Grants (DNR)

www.dnr.wa.gov/CommunityForestryGrants

Households

FireWise-Prepare Your Home ICCD (DNR)

<https://www.whidbeycd.org/firewise.html>

Free one-hour FireWise home assessment visits

www.dnr.wa.gov/firewise

www.whidbeycd.org/firewise.html

www.islandcountywa.gov/474/Wildland-fires

Red Cross (free household fire alarms)

contact: Nancy Waddell - 360-720-4467

nancywaddell@redcross.org

FUNCTIONING LOCAL INDEPENDENT ISLAND-FOCUSED ENTITIES

Coupeville Neighborhood Emergency Team

Project Lead:

Robert Davenport

360-678-7412

Camano Preparedness Group (CPG). . . . ALL of Camano Island

camanopreparednessgroup.org

camanopreparednessgroup@gmail.com

WHAT'S NEXT?

COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN

www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/creating_a_cwpp.pdf

Getting our act together: dnr.wa.gov

Select [Wildfire Information > Community Wildfire Protection Plan](#)

[Guidance](#) [Guidance on creating a CWPP in Washington State](#)

Select [Wildfire Information > Community Wildfire Protection Plan](#)

Lists all the counties and some communities in WA that have plans

[Click on named community to see its full plan](#)

[Click on Skagit County](#) to see plan of one of our closest neighbors

NB: Skagit County is larger and more complex than Island County

COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN = CWPP (DNR)

Whidbey contact: Jeanie McElwain

epiphany@whidbey.net

812-340-1259

≡ RESOURCES ≡

MAPPING RESOURCES

Explore different ways of looking at our land and natural resources
wadnr.maps.arcgis.com
<https://wadnr.maps.arcgis.com/home/gallery.html?sortField=relevance&sortOrder=desc>

WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE MAPS FOR WASHINGTON STATE

Smoke and fires

www.firesmoke.ca
FireSmoke Canada covers Canada and continental U.S. on this high-resolution interactive website which forecasts maximum concentrations of wildfire smoke particles at ground level. Also a great site to see where wildfires are burning in real time. Can enlarge for Washington locations.

National Interagency Fire Center

Provides current national statistics on wildfires in U.S.
www.nifc.gov
Rich in information on wildfires, including resources for fighting them.

inciweb.wildfire.gov

An interactive map showing all wildfires, which can be enlarged for local details, for fires currently burning in the continental U.S.

WILDFIRE: PRINT AND ONLINE RESOURCES

BOOKS & PRINT: library call number: 363.3709

Mott, Nick & Angle, Justin: **This Is Wildfire: How to Protect Yourself, Your Home, and Your Community in the Age of Heat.**
Practical, clear information on making decisions about and preparation for wildfires.

O'Connor, M. R: Ignition: **Lighting Fires in a Burning World**
Author & Firefighter participates in controlled burns across America. Loaded with facts about fire as a preventative balance to worse wildfires. A rich and informing read.

climatehubs.usda.gov

A Climate Resilience Guide for Small Forest Landowners in Western Washington.
Changes to and threatening Western Washington Forests and best practices for creating healthy resilient forests. Include charts of tolerance for low soil moisture and shade in Washington trees, management options. Excellent, comprehensive, clear. A project of University of Washington Earthlab and U.S. Dept of Agriculture Climate Hub

Emerging Hazards, Challenges and Opportunities Facing Island County Related to Climate Change

<https://www.islandcountymrc.org/media/21254/20231106-mrc-climate-change-white-paper.pdf>
White Paper requested of the Island County Marine Resources Committee by Island County Board of Commissioners, submitted Fall 2023, Revised 11/06/2023. Comprehensive report and extensive additional resources identifies "A Trend toward hotter and dryer summers with associated extremes" including "increased possibility of fire" as one of three major trends by which climate change is affecting Island County.

≡ RESOURCES ≡

High Country News: Is your community ready for wildfire?

<https://www.hcn.org/articles/is-your-community-ready-for-a-wildfire>
Brief and clear article on major steps to prepare for wildfire on city, county and regional levels

PLAN AHEAD FOR DISASTERS

ready.gov
U.S. Government's Extensive and easy-to-navigate site on all aspect of and kinds of disaster.

Select "Make a Plan" for extensive list of topics, including working with special needs, home fire escape plan, and much more.

Select "Wildfires" for comprehensive information, including "Stay Safe During" and "After a Wildfire."

OF INTEREST

Not too wet to burn (article)

<https://hakaimagazine.com/features/not-too-wet-to-burn/>

🌀 ENDNOTE 🌀

Whidbey Climate ACTION will post WILDFIRE ON WHIDBEY

presentations, videos, and documents as they are available on our website at whidbeyclimate.org. Scan this code to go directly to the wildfire conference page.



Throughout the planning of this event, it has been our intention to IGNITE interest and SPARK action.

Our aspiration is that fire-aware individuals, neighbors and communities will come together to prepare for a hotter, drier, stormier, less predictable, more fire-prone future.

We hope that our community will become...

AWARE of the unique needs and challenges to preventing and facing fires on an Island (with limited ways in and out.)

ATTUNED to the emerging risks to and needs of our unique island ecosystems – animals, plants, and us – and our intricate interrelationships.

And will ...

ADAPT TO the ever-increasing global, regional and local challenges we will face as temperatures continue to rise and rainfall and weather patterns continue to shift, and

CARE FOR all our community members, including those with special needs or financial constraints, and also for our beloved animals, wild and domestic, charismatic and not so much. We need them all.

Thank you for attending!