



# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



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CLIMATE & WILDFIRE INSTITUTE

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# OUR FUTURE WITH FIRE

We're on a mission to move together into our future with fire.

Not long ago, two groups of climate and wildfire scientists and public policy analysts came together to address how to tackle the urgency of our climate and wildfire challenges. They identified the need for a nimble organization – operating across the boundaries of government, academia, industry, nonprofit, and the public – to accelerate our response to these challenges in the West and beyond. From these conversations, the Climate & Wildfire Institute (CWI) was born.

Since its inception, CWI has secured \$7 million in funding from the State of California and launched 13 projects within and beyond the state. Your support has set us on a path of growth, learning, and achievement over the last two years. From the local to the federal level, our projects are streamlining critical information and data, integrating Indigenous voices, and sharing knowledge, frameworks, and approaches that pave pathways for scalable solutions with substantial results.

Together, this work is sparking conversation, kindling connection, and igniting new ideas at the forefront of our climate and wildfire challenges. And we're just getting started.

Ken Alex  
Board President  
Climate & Wildfire Institute





# OUR MISSION

The Climate & Wildfire Institute (CWI) operates at the intersection of science, practice, and public policy – connecting researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to accelerate on-the-ground, science-based solutions to this era's most pressing climate and wildfire challenges.

\$7M

secured in startup funding

13

projects launched since 2022





# 2023 PROJECT PROFILES

Where science meets policy and practice

- California Year in Fire
- Intentionalfire.org
- Interagency Treatment Dashboard
- Regional Resource Kits
- Tahoe Sierra Wildfire Resilience Collaborative
- Teakettle Prescribed Burn
- The Stewardship Project
- Wildfire and Landscape Resilience Data Hub





# CALIFORNIA YEAR IN FIRE

Integrating policy with climate and wildfire practices ensures key decision-makers are guided by practical, real-world experience while on-the-ground solutions are shaped by informed and strategic policy choices.

The California Year in Fire project measures and tracks a wide range of social and ecological wildfire outcomes beyond just acres burned. The full measure of fire includes impacts on air pollution, water quality, public health, recreation economy, overall community resilience, and more. Providing a more well-rounded view of fire impacts allows for a more nuanced approach to community response, mitigation, and recovery practices and promotes a more holistic, adaptive approach to our changing environment.

## Core Benefits:

- Integrate a variety of stakeholder perspectives to offer a holistic assessment of wildfire impacts
- Drive forward effective policies based on informed, data-driven insights
- Raise public awareness of the multifaceted impacts of wildfires and the importance of integrated approaches to manage them effectively

This project was developed by the UC Berkeley Center for Law, Energy, and the Environment, with guidance and support from the Climate & Wildfire Institute and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation.

“Living and working in some of California's most notable fire footprints has made clear to me that wildfire impacts communities and landscapes in complex and nuanced ways not captured by the number of acres burned. The California's Year in Fire project aims to better equip policymakers, managers, and the public to understand and respond to the rapidly evolving state of wildfire by improving our collective understanding of its impacts, including how they are changing over time.

– Leana Michelle Weissberg, Center for Law, Energy & the Environment at UC Berkeley





# INTENTIONALFIRE.ORG

Misconceptions about the role and benefits of prescribed and cultural fire can pose a challenge to effective wildfire management and prevention efforts.

Intentional fire, which refers to both prescribed and cultural fire, is the right kind of fire, used at the right time of year and under the right conditions. As a subset of beneficial fire, intentional fire is a collaborative, community-based solution that is informed by skilled practitioners with a deep understanding of place and it's one of the most important tools we have to minimize the impacts of catastrophic wildfires. CWI's intentional fire website was created as a tool to educate practitioners, policymakers, and the public about the use and benefits of this approach.

Core benefits:

- Provide a nuanced description, benefits, and importance of intentional fire
- Feature informational audio and video clips with a wide range of Tribal and nonprofit practitioners
- Offer additional project case studies and resources
- Deliver actionable steps for individuals to help advance intentional fire in their own communities

The website is a project of CWI and was developed and published by CWI staff, with support from partners and independent design contractors.





# INTERAGENCY TREATMENT DASHBOARD

Pioneering a single, central platform for timely, accurate, and accessible information is not an easy feat – but it is paramount to optimizing our treatment strategies. Understanding the details of fuels treatments, including location, type of treatment, and efficacy, vastly improves our ability to prioritize investments and build landscape resilience.

In support of the California Wildfire & Forest Resilience Task Force, CWI independently funded and launched the development of the Interagency Treatment Dashboard as a first-of-its-kind platform to streamline aggregated data from federal and state agencies, NGOs, and private landowners engaged in forest and wildland treatment projects. The dashboard ensures accurate and timely reporting of fuels treatment projects to build consistency, transparency, and access to key information and data for those putting in work on-the-ground.

## Core benefits:

- Aggregate data from state and federal agencies
- Provide a centralized platform for timely, transparent data
- Standardize reporting of fuels treatments and other projects
- Streamline management of fuels treatment data to inform future decision-making

The Interagency Treatment Dashboard is a project of CWI and the California Wildfire & Forest Resilience Task Force, in partnership with Spatial Informatics Group, led by CWI Board Member Dr. David Saah. The project now continues on with our partners.

“ There was frustration in that research takes too much time to get deployed. We needed a way to be able to bridge these conversations, bring people together, deploy the resource that's available in digestible formats, and create the infrastructure needed to support it. So that was the main charge for CWI.

– David Saah, Board Treasurer, Climate & Wildfire Institute





# REGIONAL RESOURCE KITS

Regional Resource Kits deliver essential data to the people who put that information to work across our landscapes. Government officials, foresters, scientists, land managers, land owners, and many others rely on critical, site-specific data to reduce the risk of wildfire and better steward our landscapes. These Regional Resource Kits identify essential information for land use decisions and priorities with a focus on regional datasets, recognizing the distinct needs of different locations and ecosystems in California.

Core benefits:

- Deliver targeted data to address the unique characteristics and challenges of regional landscapes
- Connect site-specific, actionable information to the on-the-ground personnel who put this information into action
- Establish an informed, coordinated resource for enhanced decision-making and implementation

The Regional Resource Kits project was staffed by CWI and led by CWI Board Member and California Wildfire & Forest Resilience Task Force Science Advisory Panel Co-Chair Dr. John Battles, in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service, California Wildfire & Forest Resilience Task Force, and others. The project now continues on with our partners.





# TAHOE SIERRA WILDFIRE RESILIENCE COLLABORATIVE

Cross-boundary, scalable, and sustainable solutions like the Tahoe Sierra Wildfire Resilience Collaborative are at the heart of establishing wildfire resilience in Western North America.

The scope of this collaborative spans 2.4 million acres across four national forests, two states, 12 counties, and five watersheds. It complements the work of the Moore Foundation's "Select Pilot to Achieve Results by Key indicators" (SPARK) projects, designed to identify best practices, scalable solutions, and impactful strategies that achieve measurable and widely applicable outcomes across the Western U.S. and Canada.

## Core benefits:

- Align regional partnerships, projects, resources, and funding to advance wildfire resilience
- Share opportunities to increase knowledge and solutions for wildfire resilience
- Support the development of a community framework to align SPARK projects with the goals of the Gordon & Betty Moore Foundation's Wildfire Resilience Initiative

The Tahoe Sierra Wildfire Resilience Collaborative is led by the Climate & Wildfire Institute, with support from Chris J Anthony Consulting and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation. It is funded by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation's Wildfire Resilience Initiative, which aims to enable beneficial fire and reduce vulnerability to extreme wildfire to safeguard healthy, fire-adapted ecosystems and resilient, fire-prone communities.





# TEAKETTLE EXPERIMENTAL FOREST PRESCRIBED BURN

Proactive, large-scale prescribed burns play a vital role in preventing the occurrence of even larger, catastrophic mega fires.

The Teakettle Prescribed Burn is a 3300-acre landscape-scale prescribed burn, informed by expertise from practitioners, policymakers, academics, Tribes, and state and federal agencies from across California. The burn will be executed in the Teakettle Experimental Forest, part of the Sierra National Forest, an area which largely hasn't burned since the 1860s and prior to colonization would have burned naturally every 15-20 years. A landmark project given its size, scale, and precious old-growth ecosystem, it will set a precedent for future substantial burns within California and beyond. From this effort, CWI will develop and share tool kits of lessons identified, best practices, and successful approaches so that other organizations and initiatives can more easily launch forward with their own intentional fire efforts.

## Core benefits:

- Reduce wildfire risk
- Stabilize carbon storage
- Support forest management
- Improve ecosystem health
- Encourage biodiversity
- Restore adapted landscapes

The project is led by CWI and Malcolm North, Ecologist at the Pacific Southwest Research Station. Funding for the Teakettle Prescribed Burn Project was provided by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Forest Health Program, as part of California Climate Investments.





# THE STEWARDSHIP PROJECT

Indigenous knowledge offers a critical foundation for our future with fire, evolving from over a millennia of direct, hands-on experience and practice.

The Stewardship Project directly integrates Indigenous and Western knowledge to better steward the landscapes of the American West. The central goal of this project is to promote policies to support active stewardship – a central component of Indigenous land management and knowledge which requires active engagement, long-term commitment, and sustainable capacity to achieve management goals. The project integrates both Indigenous and Western insights and management practices to develop federal policy recommendations centered on the Indigenous right to burn, co-management of wildlands, workforce and capacity development, regulatory realignment, and other areas.

## Core benefits:

- Preserve the central role of Indigenous cultural practices and traditions in land stewardship
- Emphasize the role of fire in the restoration and maintenance of healthy landscapes, in addition to wildfire risk mitigation
- Bridge the gap between Indigenous knowledge and Western science to develop more adaptive wildfire and land management approaches

The Stewardship Project is funded by CWI and led by Don Hankins, Professor of Geography and Planning at California State University, Chico; Sara Clark, Partner at Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP; and Scott Stephens, CWI Board Member and Professor of Fire Science at the University of California, Berkeley.





# WILDFIRE AND LANDSCAPE RESILIENCE DATA HUB

Big data can greatly improve wildfire, resilience, and climate decisions in California. Yet, current data systems can be antiquated, disparate, or otherwise not used to their fullest potential.

CWI established the Wildfire and Landscape Resilience Data Hub (Data Hub) to develop the data infrastructure needed to better inform land management, treatment, and other fire resilience priorities. The Data Hub integrates data acquired by projects such as the Interagency Treatment Dashboard and Regional Resource Kits and combines this with other sources of federal, state, and local data to enable better, faster, and more deeply informed decisionmaking. It serves as a central hub to help better allocate resources and investments, improve fire response, and establish greater fire resilience in California and beyond.

Core benefits:

- Improved coordination among federal, state, and local agencies
- Greater transparency for communities and the public
- Faster access to essential information
- Transforming data into on-the-ground results

The Wildfire and Landscape Resilience Data Hub was established by CWI, in partnership with the California Wildfire & Forest Resilience Task Force; University of California, San Diego; University of California, Berkeley; and Spatial Informatics Group. The Data Hub now continues on with our partners.

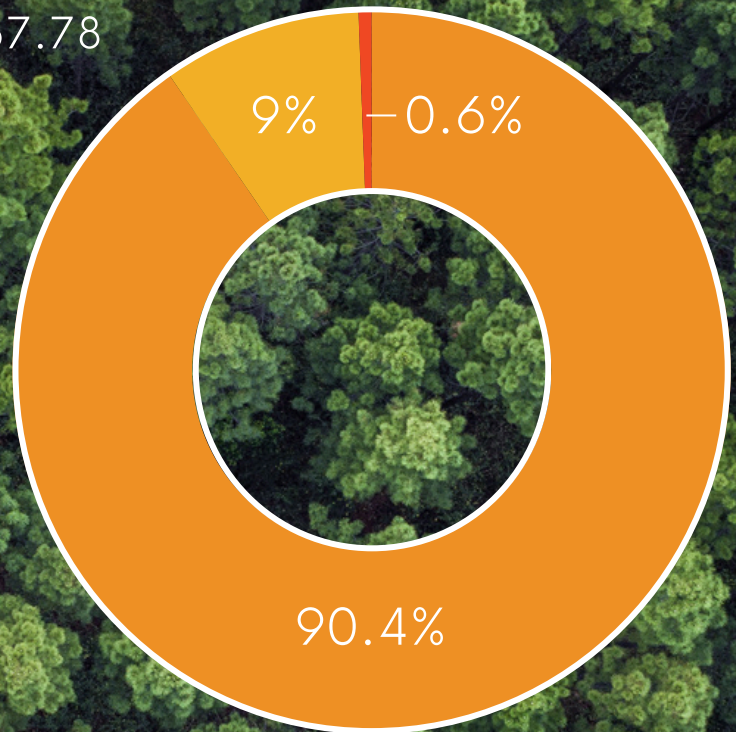




# 2023 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

## REVENUE:

- Grant Revenue: \$1,819,198.38
- Private Donations: \$11,757.78
- Other: \$180,584.56



## EXPENSES:

Program Expenses: \$2,871,455.08

Management & General Expenses: \$666,619.84

81.2%

18.8%

CWI received \$7 million in startup funding from the state of California in 2022. The abovementioned revenues and expenses reflect fiscal year 2023.





# LEADING THE WAY

## STAFF MEMBERS

- Caroline Godkin, Former Executive Director
- Bethany Hannah, Interim Executive Director
- Stacey Sargent Frederick, Former Deputy Director, Science & Policy
- Sarah Caldwell, Program Manager
- Lily Clarke, Former Program Coordinator
- Scott Scherbinski, Program Coordinator
- Sabrina Goodman, Communications Coordinator
- Helen Lahoda, Administrative Coordinator

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Ken Alex, President
- John Battles, Vice President
- David Saah, Treasurer
- Alex Hall, Secretary
- İlkay Altıntaş, Board Member
- Lara Kueppers, Board Member
- Scott Stephens, Board Member
- Marybel Batjer, Board Member
- Art Chapman, Former Board Member

“ It’s very important for me to see the relevance of what I’m doing at the societal scale, as a scientist and technologist. These types of techniques can help us to monitor the fast changes in our environment to track trends a lot faster.

– İlkay Altıntaş, PhD, CWI Board Member



# THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

- [Brumidi Group](#)
- [California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection](#)
- [California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force](#)
- [Center for Law, Energy, & the Environment at UC Berkeley](#)
- [County of Placer](#)
- [Geospatial Analysis Lab](#)
- [Spatial Informatics Group](#)
- [Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation](#)
- [Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP](#)
- [University of California, Berkeley](#)
- [University of California, Davis](#)
- [University of California, Irvine](#)
- [University of California, Los Angeles](#)
- [University of California, San Diego](#)
- [United States Forest Service](#)





# LOOKING AHEAD

With 2024 well underway, the Climate & Wildfire Institute continues to intersect research, policy, and practice to tackle our shared future with fire. We are excited to foster space for connection and conversation as we look to the year ahead – advancing more projects, deepening our partnerships, and exploring new opportunities to address current and future climate and wildfire challenges.

Together, we look forward to accelerating more solutions to our most pressing climate and wildfire challenges.

## STAY IN TOUCH

X : ClimateWildfire

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CLIMATE & WILDFIRE INSTITUTE

Accelerating solutions to the era's most  
pressing climate and wildfire challenges

[www.climateandwildfire.org](http://www.climateandwildfire.org)

