



# Exploring Past and Future Roles of the Cooperative Extension Service in Southeastern U.S. Fire Education

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## MAIN QUESTIONS OR ISSUES THAT YOU ADDRESSED

Cooperative Extension has played an important role in implementing a strategy that maintains human safety and fire safe, resilient landscapes via education of agents. Agents are then equipped to address the human components and ecosystem services.

## LOCATION AND ECOSYSTEM INVESTIGATED

1. CES can organize nationwide and identify regions of concern where wildfire can be an issue and where prescribed fire can be utilized as an opportunity to mitigate wildfire effects.

## KEY FINDINGS OF YOUR RESEARCH

1. CES developed very good fire education resources following the 1998 Florida fire season. A multi-pronged approach was implemented to develop practitioners of prescribed fire to homeowner involvement.
2. A network of multi-organizational people has or is about to be lost due to retirements or job changes.
3. Increasing use of prescribed fire reduces fuel loads and "firescaping" (landscaping with fire in mind) reduces the human impacts.

## HOW DID YOU ANSWER THE MAIN QUESTIONS OR INFORM THE ISSUES?

1. Develop new liaisons as a working group to "trash out" issues and develop an educational planning strategy.
2. Develop a priority listing of areas CES can engage utilizing their strengths and engage non-traditional audiences
3. Identify audience groups from practitioners of fire to homeowners and develop an educational workshop to serve those audiences.

## HOW MIGHT/WILL IT INFLUENCE FIRE MANAGEMENT DECISIONS OR PRACTICES?

1. Local, state and federal agencies could utilize CES as a resource to start conversations and assist as appropriate serving as educators and in incident management utilizing their close community links.

## WHO IS THE MAIN END-USER OF YOUR RESEARCH?

1. Cooperative Extension offices will be better informed and therefore equipped if they are engaged in wildfire and prescribed fire discussions and various events.
2. Communities would be more resilient with landowners and homeowners will be the ultimate beneficiaries.

## CONGRESS SESSION

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