



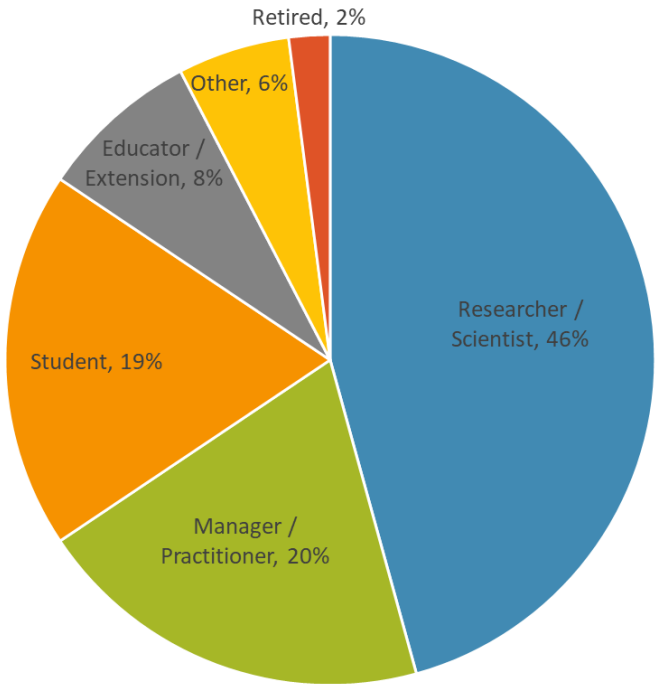
# 2019 Fire Congress Evaluation Report

## Quick Facts

- Program included 6 keynote plenary presentations, 6 Fire AFEx talks, 12 workshops, 7 field trips, 70 poster presentations, 9 fire circle discussions, and 340 oral presentations.
- Congress was supported by 28 sponsors and exhibitors representing universities, agencies, non-profits, and other organizations.
- 538 attendees
  - 152 attendees participated in field trips
  - 214 attendees participated in workshops

## Who Attended?

- 51 attendees were from outside of US, representing 12 countries.
- In U.S., states with most attendees include Arizona, California, Oregon, Colorado, and Texas.
- Most attendees were affiliated with a university or college (51%) or federal agency (28%).
  - Most represented federal agencies: US Forest Service (68), National Park Service (25), and USGS (17).
- 101 undergraduate and graduate students attended.
- 46% of attendees identified as a researcher/scientist, 20% as a manager/practitioner, and 20% as a student.



## Additional Demographic Information

- Information below is from the optional demographic survey added to registration; 29% response rate (n=157).
- Respondents represented a range of ages and years of experience, mostly self-identified as white or Caucasian, not LGBTQ, and are about ½ female and ½ male. The majority are not a parent, guardian, or caregiver.

Age	
18-29	25%
30-39	20%
40-49	25%
50-59	16%
60-69	11%
70 or older	3%

Years of experience	
5 or less	28%
6 to 10 years	15%
11 to 15 years	11%
16 to 20 years	15%
21 to 25	11%
More than 25 years	20%

### Ethnicity and/or race (self identified)

Caucasian, White	73%
Mexican, Hispanic	8%
Mixed, Other Responses	7%
European	6%
Asian, Chinese	4%
Native American, American Indian	2%

### Gender

Female	53%
Male	47%
Non-binary	0%
Self Identify	0%

### LGBTQ

Yes	6%
No	94%

### Parent, guardian, or caregiver

Yes	37%
No	63%

### Age of children

0-2 years old	19%
3-12 years old	65%
13-18 years old	28%

## Post-Congress Evaluation Survey Summary

### Who Responded?

- 145 respondents; 27% response rate.
- Almost 40% of respondents had not attended an AFE event before.
- 64% of respondents were presenters at the Congress.
- Most respondents affiliated with university/academic (45%) or federal agency (27%).
- Most respondents identified as a researcher/scientist (44%), manager/practitioner (19%), or student (18%).

### Overall Satisfaction and Feedback

- Respondents would recommend attendance at a future AFE Congress to a colleague, with an average score of 8.8 on a scale of 1 (not at all likely) to 10 (very likely).

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement.	Average, (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree)
I liked the conference location (northern Tucson, AZ).	4.22
The event was inclusive of a diverse range of people and perspectives.	3.99
The organizers took actions to make the Fire Congress an environmentally and socially responsible event.	3.79
The event provided a family-friendly environment.	3.64
The registration fees were reasonably priced for the event.	3.45
There were enough opportunities for affordable meals.	2.69

- Things respondents liked best about the Congress (top themes from open-ended comments):
  - Networking opportunities
  - Variety and quality of presentations
    - Including diversity of speakers, disciplines represented, and topics
  - Location, including venue and Southwest region

*“The opportunities to talk informally and network with colleagues was the most valuable aspect. Of course, there were many nice talks, but the informal discussion always seems to be productive.”*

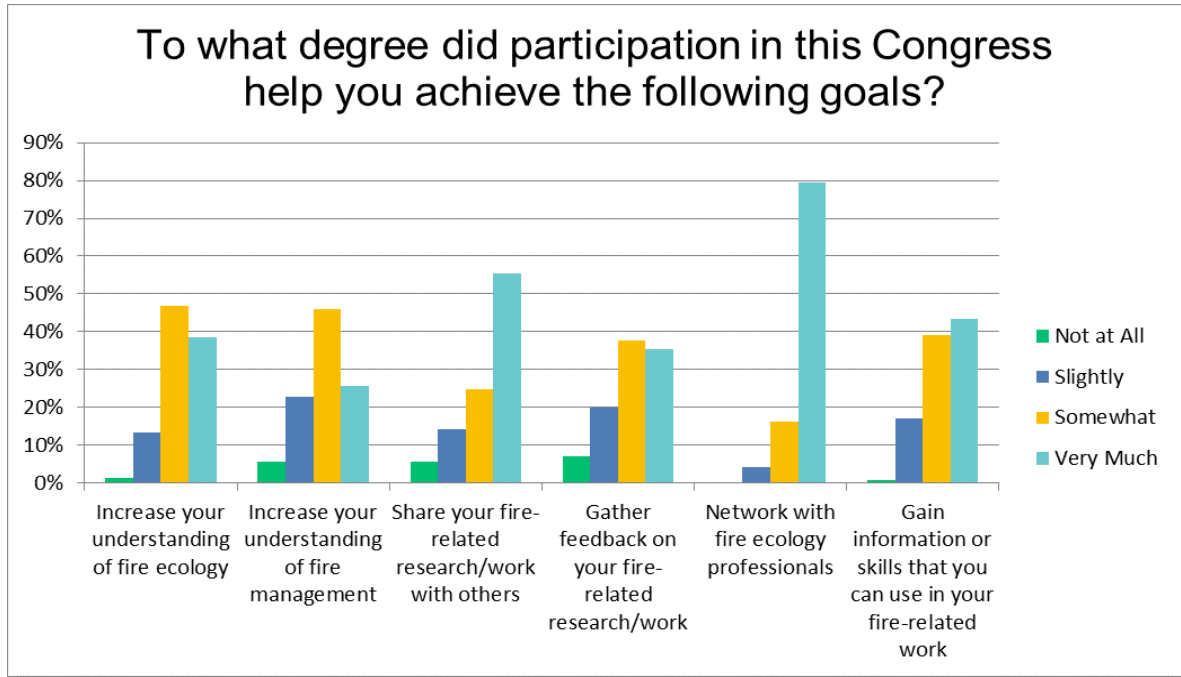
- Things respondents liked least about the Congress (top themes from open-ended comments):
  - Cost of food at Loews Ventana
    - Isolated location made finding other options difficult
  - Less frequently mentioned:
    - Long program at awards dinner
    - Long days and not enough time during breaks
    - Topics of opening plenary session
    - Not enough managers or management perspectives represented
    - Separation of the exhibitors from posters and food/beverages during reception and breaks

*“Beautiful resort, but it was a food desert for those who don’t have \$5 for a plain cup of coffee or \$30 for a meal. Using a more modest venue would allow for lower registration cost, more catering provided, and/or cheaper options for those who need them.”*

**Participant Outcomes and Use of Information**

- Respondents are very likely to use the information provided at the Congress in future fire-related work, with an average score of 8.5 on a scale of 1 (not at all likely) to 10 (very likely).
- Respondents are likely to use or view the plenary presentation videos being produced by NAFRI, with an average score of 5.4 on a scale of 1 (not at all likely) to 10 (very likely).
- All respondents will share information obtained at the Fire Congress with colleagues.
- Most report increased understanding, gaining information or skills to use in fire-related work, and exchanging information with other participants.

With how many colleagues will you share information you obtained during the Fire Congress?	Percentage of Respondents
0	0%
1 to 5	40%
6 to 10	31%
11 to 19	12%
More than 20	17%



### **Congress Communications Feedback**

- Respondents found all the communications useful, with the Congress website and printed program being more useful in comparison to other methods.
- 75% of participants downloaded the Whova mobile app and many utilized message boards, added photos, and built personalized agendas.
- Open-ended comments revealed that mixed opinions about the usefulness of the Whova app. Some respondents were frustrated about the limited number of printed programs available and didn't realized they needed to request a program through registration.

How useful were the following methods for receiving information about the conference?	Average Score, (1 = not at all useful; 4 = very useful)
Congress Website	3.51
Printed Program	3.46
Emails/E-newsletters	3.39
Wall/Door Posters in Meeting Space	3.29
Congress Mobile App (Whova)	3.20

### **Presenter Feedback (n = 94)**

- Most respondents think the process and instructions for presenters were clear. A few people suggest better instructions and enforcement of the time limits for presentations (how much time for presentation vs questions).
- Several people commented on the AV equipment—the color was off on some projectors, the screens were too small and low for the rooms, and the slides in some rooms auto-advanced and caused distractions for multiple presenters.

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement.	Average, (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree)
The online process for submitting abstracts was easy.	4.41
The process for uploading presentation files was easy.	4.29
The pre-Congress communication for presenters was clear and sufficient.	4.26
The AV equipment (e.g., computers, projectors, sound) met my expectations.	3.83

### **Student Feedback (n=24)**

- Students had positive feedback on the event. Open-ended comments indicated they would like to see more student events planned throughout the week, funding for international students, and lower costs for food and lodging.

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement.	Average, (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree)
This Congress enabled me to network with fire ecology professionals.	4.57
The student volunteer registration rate enabled me to attend the Congress.	4.33

Receiving travel support (from your institution, TREE grant, or other) enabled me to attend the Congress.	4.24
Attending this Congress will influence my future research or career decisions.	4.13
The Fire Congress offers a welcoming learning environment for students.	3.88
I was aware of the student activities being offered at the conference.	3.75

### **Recommendations for 2021 Congress**

- Many of the suggestions for themes were related to fire management, on the ground applications of research, effective management practices, and building connections between science and management.
- Respondents suggest making the days shorter (starting at 8am and ending after 9pm is too long), trying to schedule fewer concurrent sessions, and making sure the Fire AFEx talks are different than a typical plenary presentation.

Word cloud of most frequent words in open-ended comments for (after removing common words)

