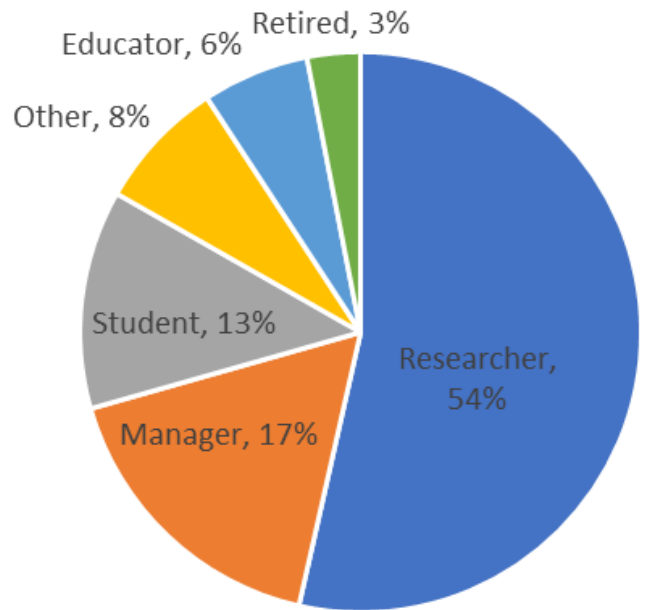


THE
FIRE  **CONTINUUM**
 MAY 21-24, 2018 • MISSOULA, MT
 PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE OF WILDLAND FIRE **CONFERENCE**

FCC Evaluation Report

Who Attended the Conference?

- 649 attendees
 - 250 attendees participated in field trips (5 offered)
 - 240 attendees participated in pre-conference workshops (14 offered)
 - 22 attendees participated in post-conference research burn
- 37 of the 81 students volunteered at the conference
- 54% of attendees identified as a researcher/scientist
- 17% of attendees identified as a manager/practitioner
- 102 registrants from outside of US, representing 16 countries
 - 24 countries were represented on the world map at the conference
- 137 registrants from Montana (21% of all participants)
- Most attendees were affiliated with a university/academic (41%) or federal agency (30%).
 - Most represented federal agencies: US Forest Service (117), Environmental Protection Agency (11), and US Geological Survey (8). Very few attendees from the National Park Service.



Survey Summary

Who Responded?

- 166 respondents; 26% response rate
- 66% of respondents were presenters at the conference
- Most respondents affiliated with university/academic (45%) or federal agency (27%).
- Most respondents identified as a researcher/scientist (45%), manager/practitioner (26%), or student (13%).

Overall Satisfaction and Feedback

- On a scale from 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent), respondents gave the conference an average rating of 4.74.
- All aspects of the conference received average to good ratings, with social activities and field trips being rated the highest and the poster session rated lowest.

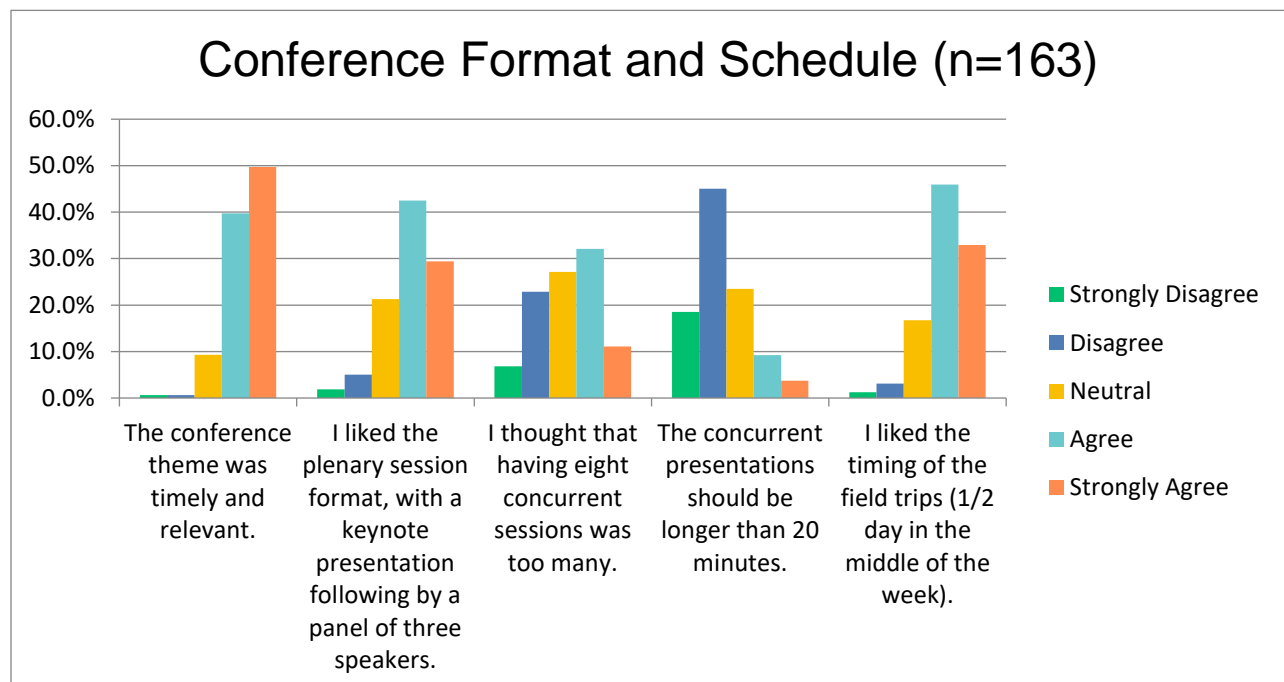
Rating of Specific Conference Elements	Average Rating (1 = Very poor; 5 = Excellent)
Overall Conference	4.74
Social Activities	4.62
Field Trips	4.61
Wellness Lounge	4.56
Special/Concurrent Sessions	4.51
Pre-conference Workshops	4.49
Exhibit Hall	4.33
Keynote Presentations	4.28
Poster Session	3.87

Main themes from open-ended comments:

- Several positive comments indicated the conference was well organized and offered a nice mix of activities. People really enjoyed the social activities, especially the Caras Park event.
- Most frequent complaints were that the poster session was not set up well for the number of posters presented and that there were too many competing sessions or presentations.

- Respondents would attend a future IAWF/AFE conference, with an average score of 8.4 on a scale of 1 (not at all likely) to 10 (very likely).
- Things respondents liked best about the conference (top themes from open-ended comments):
 - Networking with other conference attendees and social events
 - Quality of presentations and diversity of topics covered
- Things respondents liked least about the conference (top themes from open-ended comments):
 - Missing presentations they wanted to see because of very packed schedule
 - Having a separate conference site and hotel; size of presentation rooms and room set up
 - Lack of time to move between presentations and little time for discussion/questions

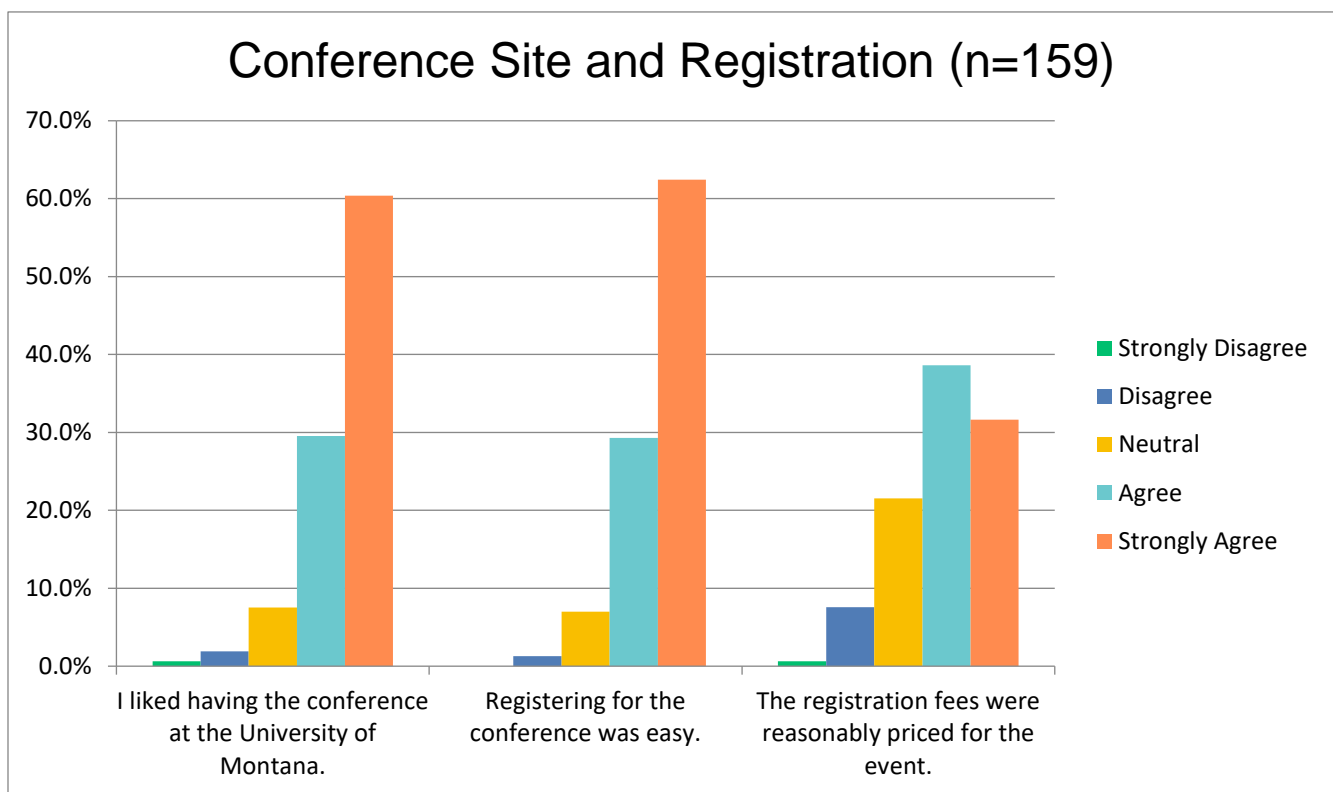
Format and Schedule



Main themes from open-ended comments re format and schedule

- The plenary panels needed to be better facilitated to encourage more dialogue.
- Respondents liked the special sessions that included time for discussion.
- 20 minutes is the right length of time, but it is difficult to move between presentations; consider a short break to allow time for changing rooms.
- Having field trips mid-week encouraged more people to attend and was a nice break from presentations.
- Field trip participants want more time in the field discussing topics and less presentation time.

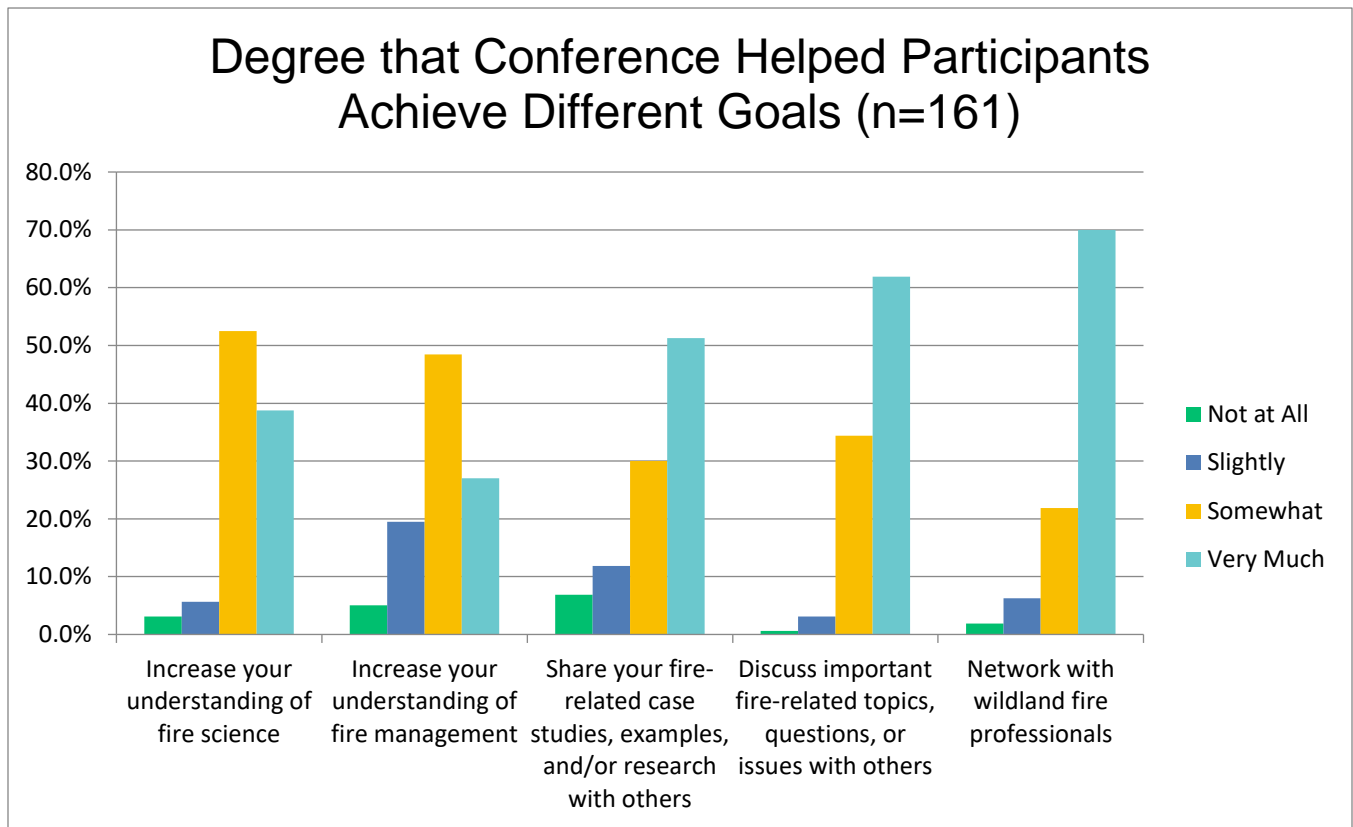
Location and Registration



Main themes from open-ended comments re conference site and registration

- Respondents like Missoula and UM as conference locations. However, they also noted that Missoula can be a challenging place for flights and that the rooms at UM were small for many of the sessions, needed better set-up, and some had AV or sound issues.
- Several people thought the conference was too expensive. Some would prefer if food, social activities, and goodies were optional to keep registration fees lower.
- Positive feedback on manager scholarships, reduced student rates, visitor passes, and volunteer opportunities. Suggestions for more manager scholarships and reduced rates for local attendees.

Participant Outcomes



Future Use of Information

Respondents reported being very likely to use the information provided at the conference in future fire-related work, with an average score of 8.2 on a scale of 1 (not at all likely) to 10 (very likely).

Conference Communications Feedback

- Respondents found all the communications useful, with the conference website being most useful in comparison to other methods.
- Open-ended comments revealed that several respondents liked the Whova app and found it useful for navigating sessions. Respondents suggest having bigger font in the printed program, and a few people needed better directional signs, especially inside the UC.

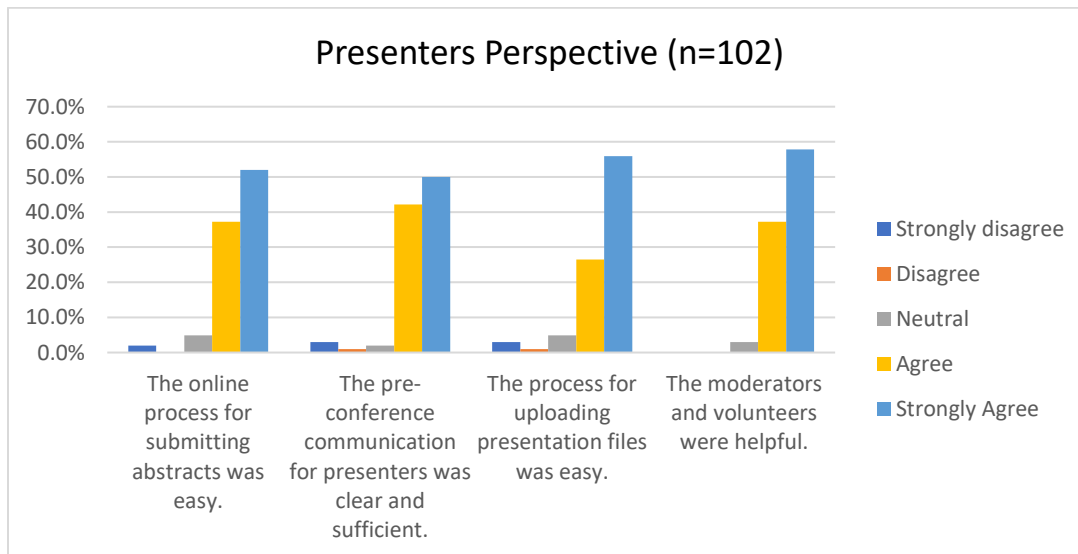
How useful were the following methods for receiving information about the conference?	Average Score, (1 = not at all useful; 4 = very useful)
Conference Website	3.65
Printed Program	3.57
Signs in Conference Areas	3.50
Pre-conference Emails/E-newsletters	3.44
Conference Mobile App (Whova)	3.21

Recommendations for Creating a More Inclusive and Diverse Conference

- 72 respondents provided suggestions for how to make future conferences a more inclusive learning environment for all.
- The most common suggestion was to make sure plenary and session presenters represent diverse backgrounds, ethnicity, gender, professions, and organizations. Several people emphasized the need to include students and young professionals, indigenous cultures, and managers/practitioners.
- Many respondents were positive about the efforts already being made by both organizations.
- Respondents recommend that the organizations provide financial assistance, grants, or lower registration fees to encourage minority participation.
- Other suggestions include:
 - Allowing more time for discussion and networking
 - Making sure the conference leadership is diverse
 - Accommodating families (childcare options, nursing spaces)
 - Having socials that promote inclusion or diversity
 - Building inclusion into the program through special sessions, workshops, etc.

Presenter Feedback

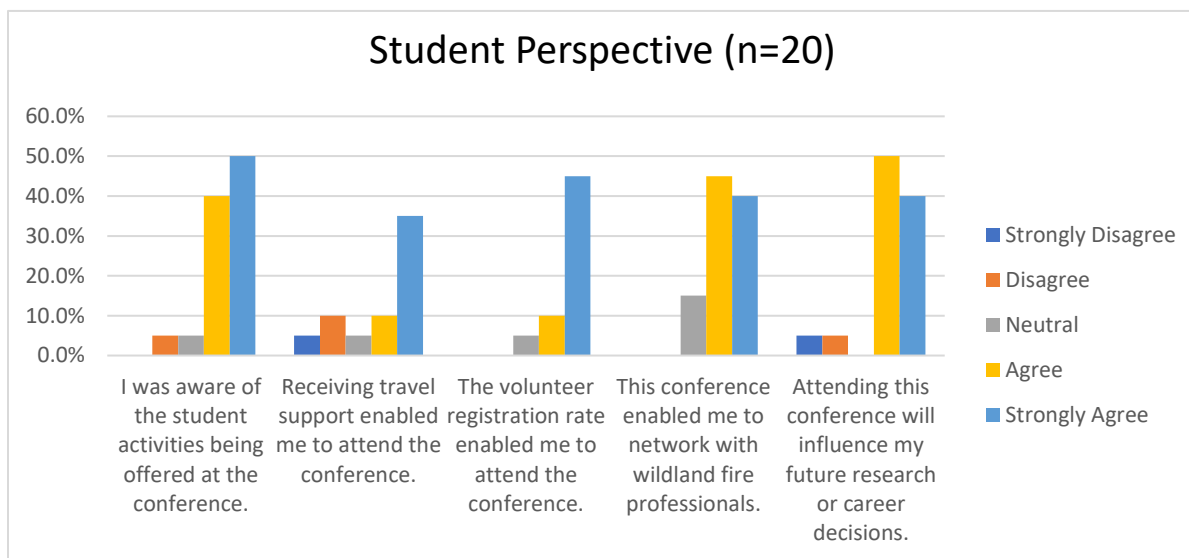
- Most respondents think the process and instructions for presenters were clear. A few people suggest better instructions regarding the time limits for presentations (how much time for presentation vs questions).
- Several people commented on the deadline for uploading presentations. They don't believe this early deadline is necessary and do not like that it prevents people from updating their presentation to reflect discussions that occur at the conference.



Student Feedback

- Positive feedback on the mentor luncheon, with comments noting the number and diversity of mentors that participated. Students wish they had more time with mentors.
- The student social was not well-attended, which may be reflected in the low rating.

Student Activities	Average Rating, (1 = not at all useful; 4 = very useful)
Student Poster Contest	4.0
Student/Mentor Luncheon	3.8
Popcorn and Movie Night	3.0
Student Social in Rec Room	2.6



Future Topic Recommendations

- Many of the suggestions were related to fire management, on the ground applications of research, effective management practices, and building connections between science and management.
- Some respondents want to see more presentations focused on social aspects of fire, including education, communication, and outreach.
- Some respondents would like to see sharing of information and perspectives from different countries and cultures. In addition, some comments indicate that we need to offer more opportunities for discussion.
- A variety of topics were suggested, including fire ecology, effects, risk management, fire response and suppression, technological advances, modeling, smoke management, and more.

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

