

After the Disaster: Designing a Landowner Guidebook for those impacted by natural disasters

Background: 2020 brought the biggest fires in the history of Colorado. Many Extension agents started getting calls to first help with emergency management and evacuation. After the fires were out, inquires to county Extension offices became focused on post-disaster questions, like ‘What do I do now?’ and “How do I restore my land?”. With the fire-related reduction in groundcover, flooding and mudslides are predicted in fire areas, and preparation for those events is necessary.

The Internship: The *After the Disaster Guidebook* internship is an opportunity for students to work with a variety of Extension personnel and partners to research what post-disaster recovery programs are available to landowners, research what issues landowners and communities face after a fire, and help Extension develop a landowner guidebook and other resources that can be used to help respond to those community needs. The student will learn how to reach out to organizations and individuals to collect information and solicit feedback. The intern should be passionate about this topic and find a way to professionally relay that.

Objective: Create the *Guidebook*, an online and print resource to help people in disaster zones move forward and help answer the questions “where do I start?” “what do I need to keep in mind?” “what paperwork do I need?” and “what organizations (like Extension) can help me?” **Scope:** a statewide resource that can be populated with county specific information. The project will be piloted in Mesa County, and if time allows, additional versions may be created for other locations hard hit by disaster in 2020.

Mentorship: CSU mentors/partners include representation from multiple colleges and backgrounds. Susan Carter, the lead advisor, is well-versed in mentorship and likes to check in often, ascertain intern needs, and determine how she can help create a positive experience for the intern. The additional advisors for the project have a great deal of mentorship experience as well, including several with previous CSU Extension Internships. The advisory group includes:

- Internship lead Susan Carter, Horticulture and Natural Resource Agent for the Tri River Area
- Todd Hagenbuch, Director of Routt County Extension
- Doug Dean Area Director of Tri River Area Extension
- Carolina Manriquez, Colorado State Forest Service
- Ragan Adams, Coordinator, Veterinary Extension Specialist Group, College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, Department of Clinical Sciences
- Tony Cheng, Professor in Department of Forest and Rangeland Stewardship, Warner School of Natural Resources and Director of the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute
- Gloria Edwards, Warner School of Natural Resources, CSU, Southern Rockies Fire Science Network Program Coordinator with connections to Coalition of Collaboratives (<https://co-co.org/>), Coalition for the Upper South Platte, Forest Stewards Guild and the Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition.

The successful candidate will work with and develop partnerships with Extension agents, Extension PRU leaders, law enforcement, public information officer(s), emergency manager(s), and groups and organizations like Red Cross, Fire Adapted Colorado, NRCS, BLM and others.

Additional Details: Most of the internship can be done remotely. Site visits to the Pine Gulch burn and surrounding areas will be beneficial to the intern and the project, if protocol allows. In-person meetings with impacted landowners and community members would be preferable, but not necessary to complete the project. Limited funding for travel and housing is available.