

From the President's Desk

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FireNet, Join Us Online!

One of the many hats that I've worn for the International Association of Wildland Fire (IAWF) is "moderator" of our listserv FireNet. FireNet is our free email-based discussion and information distribution system, or listserv, specifically serving the global wildland fire community. The fact that it is free and you don't have to be an IAWF member means that the international participation is with a larger population than just our membership and while the emphasis is wildland fire we have subscribers from a wide range of fire specialties.

I've been associated with IAWF's version of FireNet since the beginning, but like many great ideas it wasn't originally our idea. You may recognize the name FireNet as one of the oldest and most established wildland fire networks in the world. Originally managed by Dr. Chris Trevitt at the Australian National University (ANU), FireNet had enjoyed a significant following of wildland fire professionals going back to 1996.

In April of 2002 the IAWF began a wildland fire listserv called the IAWF Network. In June of that year after discussions with Dr. Trevitt it was agreed to transfer management of FireNet to the IAWF and our original listserv was discontinued. Because of other job responsibilities Dr. Trevitt had determined he did not have the time to devote to the proper running of a listserv serving the wildland fire community, and ANU was also having difficulty dedicating the resources necessary for maintaining the listserv.

So are you a FireNet subscriber already? I would hope so, but I know there are many members who don't participate in this free service offered by IAWF and I'm going to take this opportunity to encourage you to do so. We feel that FireNet is just one of the many ways (including *Wildfire* magazine, our peer reviewed wildland fire research publication *The International Journal of Wildland Fire*, and our web site www.iawfonline.org), in which we try to fulfill our IAWF mission statement to "facilitate communication and provide leadership for the wildland fire community."

So what happens if you become a subscriber? First you receive a welcome message, you will also receive monthly reminders concerning your user name and password and how to modify your subscription if necessary including

unsubscribe. After subscribing you will begin to receive occasional emails submitted by others in the global fire community network including comments to queries for information, ideas, opinions and announcements, as well as important IAWF news. You will have the opportunity to post your own reasonable responses to these wide ranging fire topics. What I hope you will not receive is more unwanted email or spam; that is part of my job as the "moderator," to personally view and eliminate unwanted solicitations sent to you via FireNet. One of the few rules I try to enforce is no blatant advertisements for commercial products or messages with degrading language or images! All posts are maintained in a historical archive and can be viewed by subscribers based on date, topic, or author. Your email address is maintained in a confidential subscriber file which can only be accessed by a few, such as myself and the server operator, and is never given out.

So you are gone on a fire and your email box is full, what happens then? As you might guess this happens frequently in our business. Subscribers email boxes that are either full or otherwise no longer receiving messages eventually are deleted from the distribution list after a prescribed number of bounces. You can always re-subscribe if you have been unable to attend to your email housecleaning. Remember FireNet is a free service.

Give FireNet a try and actively participate in the online discussions; you can easily sign up off of our web site.