

Tyson Bertone-Riggs

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Summary

Executive, policy, and field experience working at the intersection of forest management, fire risk reduction, and community wellbeing. Inclusive, collaborative coalition-building at both national and regional scales. Demonstrated success in staffing and leading the nation's congressionally chartered Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission to the successful on-time completion of 167 consensus recommendations.

Education

Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR: M.F. Forest Ecosystems and Society (2016).

University of Oregon, Eugene OR; B.A. Geography and Political Science (2004); *cum laude*.

Experience

ALLIANCE FOR WILDFIRE RESILIENCE

Managing Director and Co-founder

April 2025 – present

Established the Alliance for Wildfire Resilience to advocate for policy changes to improve outcomes from wildfire.

- Organizational development including fundraising and strategic plan development.
- Leads advocacy efforts for AWR for federal policy change.
- Frequently represented the organization in public venues including testimony before Congress and public speaking engagements.
- Responsible for representing the positions of the organization in media interviews.
- Organization of a national table of partner organizations to advance wildfire policy.

WILDLAND FIRE MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

Coordinator (contracted)

June 2022 – March 2024

Served as the staff co-lead for the congressionally chartered Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission which developed recommendations to improve the nation's ability to manage and live with wildfire.

- Designed a process and protocol to support a fifty-member commission in reaching consensus on an aggressive, one-year timeline.
- Developed agendas and successfully facilitated monthly full commission meetings and weekly workgroup meetings to lead members to reach consensus on 167 recommendations.
- Contributed policy expertise to commission deliberations, as well as prepared topical briefing packets with relevant information for workgroups.
- Played a lead role in writing both the Aerial Equipment Strategy Report and On Fire: the final report of the commission, including synthesis of discussions, summation of findings, and technical writing.

- Helped project manage a six-member staff team to successful completion of the project by developing team protocols, work and product tracking platforms, and through collaborative leadership.
- Served as a liaison to congressional offices to build awareness and support for the recommendations of the Commission, as evidenced by the drafting of legislative proposals on nearly half the recommendations.
- Worked closely with the federal co-chairs to navigate complex decisions on both internal processes, as well as external relationship management with stakeholders and the Biden Administration.
- Represented the work of the commission in external venues, including through presentations to partners and the interested public, often to audiences of between 200-800 people.

RURAL VOICES FOR CONSERVATION COALITION

Portland, OR

Executive Director

May 2021 – June 2022

Served as the lead executive for a diverse and expanding coalition committed to equitable land management policies and positive ecological outcomes.

- Sustained and grew a coalition and network during a time of unusual uncertainty and change during the covid pandemic and accompanying labor shortages.
- Developed multi-year strategic direction for the coalition, working with a board to ratify direction, and working with staff and partners to implement strategic plans.
- Developed and maintained key relationships, including federal, state, and local agencies; elected officials; Tribes; and community-based organizations.
- Frequently represented the coalition in public venues including testimony before Congress and public speaking engagements.
- Provided supervision and leadership in a manner that promoted teamwork, open communication, and mutual respect. Promoted staff development through mentoring and appropriate delegation of projects and decision making.
- Oversaw project management for the development of research products and workshops.
- Lead fundraising efforts by building relationships with foundations and individual donors, and through grant writing. Raised nearly \$1 million in one year.

RURAL VOICES FOR CONSERVATION COALITION

Portland, OR

Policy Manager

January 2018 - May 2021

Served as the lead staff for policy analysis and government relations in a growing coalition.

- Played a key role in building a growing coalition by developing organizational best practices, recruiting new participants, and building the reputation of the organization.
- Analyzed potential and emerging policy of relevance to the coalition at a federal and state level and advocated as appropriate.
- Set overall policy priorities and positions for the coalition, in consideration with the board and policy working group.
- Managed projects and contractors to produce policy-related learning material, including guidebooks and case studies.
- Synthesized forest and fire ecology research to help inform coalition policy priorities and communicate key findings to our participants.
- Represented the coalition to external actors, including agency leadership, elected officials, and congressional staff.
- Engaged in active fundraising by building relationships with foundations and through grant writing.

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY

Salem, OR

Program Coordinator (NRS3)

March 2017- July 2017

Supported the Federal Forest Restoration Program at a statewide, programmatic level on a temporary basis.

- Facilitated internal strategy discussions to help shape the program moving forward.
- Prepared documents and talking points that used in public settings to help demonstrate the value of the program to outside stakeholders and elected officials during a contentious budget year.
- Collaborated with statewide stakeholder groups, such as the Federal Forest Working Group.
- Managed contracts and worked collaboratively with outside nonprofit entities and university groups in support of the program.
- Organized and facilitated a series of meetings to systematically assess and discuss all aspects of the program, including providing recommended policy changes to the Program Director.
- Maintained communication within the program to keep all staff up to date on developments on topics of concern.

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY

Prineville, OR

Field Program Coordinator (NRS2)

March 2016-January 2018

Worked as a program coordinator in the ODF Federal Forest Restoration program in the Central Oregon District.

- Served as the ODF liaison to six forest collaboratives and four National Forests, requiring a high degree of professionalism in representing the agency to outside stakeholders in both written and oral communication.
- Independently assessed the political and institutional environment in which natural resources decisions are made and implemented, both within collaborative groups and in the Forest Service system, to encourage desired outcomes.
- Functioned as a project coordinator within the district, including developing working relationships with USFS District Rangers and BLM District Managers and resource specialists to develop project proposals.
- Understood and capitalized on existing policy and law related to public land management (e.g., 2014 Farm Bill authorities, Wyden Authority, NEPA).
- Monitored and analyzed evolving policy and law and communicate potential impacts and opportunities for engagement to collaborative stakeholders (e.g., smoke management).

USDA – FOREST SERVICE

McKenzie Bridge, OR

Student Manager Trainee

Summer 2015

Performed duties in both the field and office in support of the wilderness and trails program.

- Prepared an Outfitter-Guide Needs Assessment for the McKenzie River, including Wild & Scenic stretches.
- Facilitated meetings between staff and the District Ranger to produce recommended policies for outfitters and guides.
- Assured compliance of Needs Assessments with current management directives (Forest Plans), as well as statutes such as the Wilderness Act and Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.
- Synthesized social science reports and internal use data (including National Visitor Use Monitoring reports, special use permits, etc.) to examine the level of need for outfitters and guides.
- Reviewed recent court decisions regarding interpretation of both the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act and the Wilderness Act.
- Conducted field work, including train maintenance, wilderness management, and wildland firefighting.

OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY

Corvallis, OR

Research Assistant, Teaching Assistant

2013-2015

Half time position while pursuing a Master of Forestry in the department of Forest Ecosystems and Society.

- Served as a Teaching Assistant in a graduate-level environmental law and policy course covering Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act, and the Oregon Forest Practices Act.
- Helped to develop a new undergraduate program in tourism and recreation, including curriculum design.
- Served in student leadership roles, including as an organizer for a student-lead research symposium, departmental graduate representative, college-wide graduate representative, and student representative on a faculty hiring committee.
- Conducted research on a wide range of subjects and issues related to forestry, including recreation resource management, practices of sustainable forestry, forest economics, concepts in ecology, particularly at the landscape scale, and advanced wood products.
- Projects included writing, designing, conducting, and analyzing surveys related to outdoor recreation and trail use for the Oregon Parks Department.
- Developed a wide range of skills, including report writing, survey design and implementation, public presentation, analysis using Geographic Information Systems (GIS), statistical analysis, and general scientific research methods.

USDA – FOREST SERVICE

Various Locations

Forestry Technician

2009-2013

Worked as a crew leader responsible for construction and maintenance of trails and of recreation sites.

- Strong emphasis on public interaction, including informing visitors about rules and regulations and in-person fee collection.
- Reviewed a Record of Decision and Environmental Impact Statement to help implement a newly designated OHV area.
- Worked closely with law enforcement and multiple District Rangers to write and implement a “no shooting” CFR.
- Worked on specialized construction projects, including the demolition of a large campground using heavy equipment and the installation of facilities such as fee tubes, gates, and kiosks.
- Organized large volunteer work parties from the community and from industry groups.
- Detailed logistical planning for remote location projects.

ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEY CONSULTING

Austin, TX

Operations Coordinator

2006-2008

Grew a part-time, data entry job into a full-time, permanent position responsible for operational logistics and planning.

- Developed cost/benefit accounting systems for projects, helping the company to realize which types of projects were cost positive.
- Collaborated closely with owners and managers to track expenses and monitor progress in ongoing projects.
- Wrote bids for new contracts and worked in the field as a purchaser.
- Managed botanical database of native plants for use on projects.

US SENATOR RON WYDEN

Washington, DC

Press Assistant

2004

Began as an unpaid intern and worked into a position as a paid press assistant.

- Wrote press releases for local media distribution within the state of Oregon.
- Produced and edited video and audio messages for satellite distribution.
- Managed the official website using Adobe Dreamweaver.
- Produced a daily compendium of news articles relevant to the office.
- Kept abreast of legislative developments in both the House and Senate.

STATE & LOCAL POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

Eugene, OR

Campaign Manager, Campaign Staff

1999-2000

Worked in state and local political campaigns in both paid and volunteer positions while attending college.

- Managed a State House campaign, which included developing political strategy, volunteer recruitment and organization, media outreach, canvassing logistics, as well as coordination with state-level party organizations (paid).
- Supported a successful State House campaign by developing outreach material and assisting in fundraising (paid).
- Supported a successful City Council campaign, including helping develop political strategy, leading canvassing efforts, and supporting the candidate in public events (internship).

Publications

On Fire: the final report of the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission. (2023). **Bertone-Riggs, T.**, Cowan, E., and Schmidt, A. Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission.

Aerial Equipment Strategy Report. (2023). **Bertone-Riggs, T.**, Cowan, E., and Schmidt, A. Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission.

Fighting Fire with Fire: Policy Options to Increase the Use of Prescribed Fire on National Forests. (2021). **Bertone-Riggs, T.**, and Johnston, J. Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition.

Use Of Good Neighbor Authority Across the West. (2021). Cowan, E., and **Bertone-Riggs, T.** Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition.

Implementing Outcome-Based Performance Measures Aligned with the Forest Service's Shared Stewardship Strategy. (2020). Santo, A., **Bertone-Riggs, T.**, Huber-Stearns, H. Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition.

From Ideas to Action: A Guide to Funding and Authorities for Collaborative Restoration (second edition). (2020). Cowen, E., **Bertone-Riggs, T.**, and Davis, E.J. Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition.

Shared Stewardship Recommendations for Partnering with Community-Based and Collaborative Groups. (2020). Hardigg, K. and **Bertone-Riggs, T.** Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition.

Understanding Good Neighbor Authority: Case Studies from Across the West. (2018). **Bertone-Riggs, T.**, Cyphers, L., Davis, E.J., Hardigg, K. Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition.

Oregon Off-highway Vehicle (OHV) Participation and Priorities: Report in Support of the 2015-2024 Oregon Trails Plan. (2015). Lindberg, K., and **Bertone-Riggs, T.** Oregon Parks and Recreation Department.

Select Presentations

Next Steps for the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission, plenary presentation, and panel discussion to 400-500 attendees at the Wildland Urban Interface Conference of the International Association of Fire Chiefs, March 17, 2024.

An Overview of the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission, plenary presentation, and discussion to 200-300 attendees at the National Association of State Foresters CMS-Wildland Fire Committee Annual Meeting, January 24, 2024.

The Rising Risk of Wildfire, panel discussion to 300-400 attendees at the American Property Casualty Insurance Association Annual Meeting, November 6, 2023.

An Overview of the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission, plenary presentation to 500 attendees at the Wildland U.S. Fire Administrator's Summit on Fire Prevention and Control, October 10, 2024.

The Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission Report, virtual presentation to nearly 800 attendees to showcase the work of the Commission, September 27, 2023.

Policy Options to Increase the Use of Prescribed Fire, Testimony before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Oct 29, 2021.

The Importance of Fire Risk Reduction to Rural Communities, in-person testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Climate Change, Senate Select Committee on Climate Change, June 23, 2021.

Policy Options to Reduce Wildfire Risk, virtual panel presentation, Environmental Grantmakers Association, Feb 23, 2021.

From Parallel Play to Co-Management: Conserving Landscapes at Risk of Wildfire in the American West, virtual presentation, Colorado State University, Salazar Center for North American Conservation, Sept. 9, 2020.

The Policy Landscape of Wildfire and Fuels Management in the United States, special session presentation to 300-400 attendees, 8th International Fire Ecology and Management Congress: Cultivating Pyrodiversity, November 20, 2019.

Balancing Multiple Policy Objectives with Cross-Boundary Management, presentation, Western Governors' Association Working Lands Forum, March 16, 2018.

Wildland Firefighting and Related Certifications

S-372 Helicopter Manager Trainee 4/17

S-271 Helicopter Crewmember Trainee 7/15 S-212

Wildfire Powersaws 6/10

S-130 Firefighter Training 6/10

S-190 Intro to Fire Behavior 6/10

I-110 Intro to the Incident Command System 6/10

L-180 Human Factors on the Fireline 6/10

IS-700 National Incident Management System: An Introduction 6/10