

Madelene McDonald

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KEY COMPETENCIES

Source water protection	Collaborative management	Strong interpersonal skills
Wildfire resilience strategies	Project and contract management	Proactive and self-motivated
Federal policy advocacy	Consensus building	Excellent communication skills

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

DENVER WATER
Watershed Scientist

February 2019 - Present

Forest Health and Wildfire Mitigation

Program Management: Negotiate and execute contracts, Memorandums of Understanding, and cost share agreements with 10+ external partners to implement wildfire mitigation in Denver Water's priority watersheds.

- From Forests to Faucets Partnership: Lead the \$96 million investment in forest health and wildfire mitigation between Denver Water, the U.S. Forest Service, Colorado State Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute.
- Denver Water Property Forest and Land Management: Manage a five year agreement with the Colorado State Forest Service to conduct forest restoration and wildfire mitigation on 60,000 acres of Denver Water owned property.
- Technical Assessments: Commission and review technical assessments to inform Denver Water's wildfire mitigation investments and translate results into management strategies.
- Risk Assessment Decision Support Analysis: Co-authored a comprehensive risk assessment with the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute covering treatment optimization strategies, climate-adjusted projections, and cost-benefit technical analyses to guide From Forests to Faucets investments.

Facility-Specific Wildfire Resilience Assessments

Program Management: Manage a five year plan to complete facility-specific assessments at critical facilities to develop unique and individualized guidance for building wildfire resilience tailored to localized conditions.

- Manage contractor implementation of projects to address vulnerabilities identified in the assessments, including defensible space and structure hardening projects.

Wildfire Recovery and Rehabilitation

Program Management: Manage Denver Water's Williams Fork Fire recovery strategy, including managing contracts with consultants, permits with the U.S. Forest Service, and collection agreements with the Rocky Mountain Research Station to execute the recovery strategy.

- Williams Fork Fire: Prioritize restoration projects, manage road and land treatments implementation, and commissioned a research project to evaluate reforestation efforts in the burn scar.
- Colorado Post-Fire Playbook: Co-authored the Colorado Post-Fire Playbook, a statewide resource to help guide counties, tribes, and water providers in navigating the complexities of wildfire recovery.

Collaborative Wildfire Initiatives

- Potential Operational Delineations (PODs): Participate in PODs workshops in Denver Water's priority watersheds and work with managers to integrate hardening POD features in wildfire mitigation programs.
- Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP): Supported the development of five CWPPs within Denver Water's collection system, offering expertise on the high-risk watersheds within the CWPP boundaries.

State and Federal Wildfire Legislation

- Review proposed legislation and help determine Denver Water’s position on state and federal bills.
- Advocate for state and federal partner resources through the Watershed Health Investment Partnership.

Team Management

- Manage one full time Watershed Scientist and seasonal Watershed Planning interns.
- Set collective strategic direction, develop work plans, conduct reviews, and mentor staff.

CLEAN WATER ACTION

March 2018 - May 2018

Community Organizer

- Organized grassroots mobilization of Baltimore communities in support of Clean Water Action priorities.
- Communicated with communities on behalf of the Maryland Forest Conservation Act and Community Healthy Air Act.
- Fundraised to keep Clean Water Action entirely citizen funded.

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

June 2017 - August 2017

Nutrient Reduction Team

- Researched innovative alternative solutions for reducing nonpoint source nutrient loading in Cape Cod’s impaired bays.
- Completed an analysis of alternative strategies based on efficiency and practicality.
- Advocate for nature-based solutions for urban stormwater management to stakeholders in New England.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

National Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission

- Primary Public Utility Industry Seat, appointed by USDA, DOI, and FEMA leadership.
- Testified before the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee on the findings of the Commission.
- Delivered 167 consensus federal policy recommendations to Congress to improve national wildfire management.

Colorado Forest Health Council

- Appointed by Governor Polis to serve the statewide Council.
- Front Range Water Supplier Seat.

Jefferson County Wildfire Commission

- Water Subject Matter Expert Seat, appointed by Jefferson County Commissioners.

Coalitions and Collaboratives Board of Directors

- Current Chair.

Colorado School of Mines: Natural Resources and Energy Policy Graduate Program Board of Advisors

EDUCATION

COLORADO SCHOOL OF MINES

Master of Science
Natural Resources and Energy Policy

LOYOLYA UNIVERISTY MARYLAND

Bachelor of Arts
Global Studies

- Dual minors in Environmental and Sustainability Studies and Business Administration

CERTIFICATIONS & LEADERSHIP

ICS Certifications

- FEMA ICS 100
- FEMA ICS 700

Denver Water H2O Leadership Academy

- Graduated 2025.

Janssen Leadership Training Academy

- Graduated 2018.