

IAWF Distinguished Service Award

WILLIAM T. SOMMERS

The International Association of Wildland Fire (IAWF) is pleased to announce the establishment of the *Distinguished Service Award*, which recognises individuals, groups or organisations for their outstanding contributions to furthering the goals of the Association.

To commemorate the 20th anniversary of the *International Journal of Wildland Fire*, the Association proudly honours Dr William T. Sommers of George Mason University as the first recipient of the *Distinguished Service Award*. Through his vision and leadership as the Forest Service Director of Forest Fire and Atmospheric Sciences Research, the *International Journal of Wildland Fire* was created.

Dr Sommers spent 30 years in the research division of the US Forest Service, serving as a director of national research programs. In that capacity, his areas of responsibility included forest fires, global change, the carbon cycle, invasive species, quantitative ecology, ecological risk assessment and sustainable forest management. He was a member of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG), the International Boreal Forest Research Organization (IBFRA) and the Roundtable on Sustainable Forests. In addition he was active in the White House science committees on Global Change and Ecological Systems.

Following his distinguished career in the US Forest Service, Bill joined the staff at George Mason University, where he serves as a research professor and chief scientist at the College of Science Center for Climate and Society, and as the co-Director of the EastFIRE Laboratory. Dr Sommers is currently engaged in research on fire history and climate change as well as fire emissions of GHG and black carbon.

Dr Sommers' academic training is in Atmospheric Science and Geophysical Fluid Dynamics with degrees from the City College of New York (CCNY), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and State University of New York at Albany (SUNYA), with additional training at the MIT Sloan School of Management.



Bill has served on the IAWF's board of directors and as vice-president of the Association. He also represented IAWF as a member of the US delegation to the XIIIth World Forestry Congress in Argentina. Bill continues to forward the Association's goals through his research and education.

Congratulations Dr Sommers. The IAWF is grateful for all of your contributions to the Association and the field of wildland fire science.