

March 13, 2025

ITEM 217-1009-R0325

Request for Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus in the College of Forestry and Conservation on Dr. Ron Wakimoto; University of Montana-Missoula

THAT

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Dr. Ron Wakimoto from the faculty of the University of Montana, the faculty wishes to express its appreciation for his 33 years of dedicated and valued service to the University and the State of Montana by recommending that the rank of Professor Emeritus be conferred upon him by the Board of Regents of the Montana University System.

EXPLANATION

Dr. Wakimoto earned his Ph.D. at the University of California at Berkeley in 1978 and joined the School of Forestry at The University of Montana in 1982. Professor Wakimoto rose rapidly to the rank of Associate Professor and then Professor. He served as chair of the Department of Ecosystem and Conservation Sciences from 2005 to 2011. Professor Wakimoto was a very successful and popular teacher of wildland fire management, fuel management, fire ecology and other graduate and undergraduate courses. He was well-known and highly valued as a graduate and undergraduate student advisor throughout his career and was especially committed to supporting, mentoring and advising students of color.

Professor Wakimoto's research focused on the social acceptability of fuel management treatments, smoke quality and quantity from smoldering combustion, fire fighter safety, crown fire spread and the fire ecology of the Northern Mixed Prairie. His scholarly work includes dozens of publications in a variety of peer-reviewed journals including and he is recognized nationally and internationally for his expertise in wildland fire ecology and management. In 1986 he served on a Committee of Scientists in a National Park Service review of the prescribed burning programs at Sequoia/Kings Canyon National Park and Yosemite National Park. In 1988 and 1989 he was one of two academics to serve as technical advisors to the National Fire Policy Review Team following the Yellowstone events. In 1997 he gave testimony on Wildfire Policy to the U.S. House Agriculture Committee. In 2000 he presented testimony on the Montana fire-fuel situation to the U.S. House Natural Resources Sub-Committee on Forests and Forest Health and in 2001 gave testimony to the same committee concerning the implementation of the National Fire Plan. Since 2006, Dr. Wakimoto has worked in Bhutan teaching short courses on fire ecology, prescribed burning, fire-fighting and fire behavior, and assisting in the development of a National Fire Management Plan. In 2004 Dr. Wakimoto was elected a Fellow by the Society of American Foresters and in 2009 he became a member of the Committee on Accreditation for the Society of American Foresters. He received the H.H. Biswell Lifetime Achievement Award from the Association for Fire Ecology in 2014 and the George M. Dennison Presidential Faculty Award during Charter Days in 2015.

ATTACHMENTS

None