



Mindfulness Training: Cultivating Wellbeing and Resilience in Emergency Managers

Presented by: **Garth Smelser, Mindful NOAA Program Manager, NOAA**

Presentation Abstract: Mindfulness meditation equips practitioners with the resilience, self-awareness, and emotional intelligence skills imperative for them to thrive in their professional and personal lives. Emergency managers' and first responders' physical, mental, and emotional health must remain in our collective awareness and organizational investments. Supporting emergency managers health and wellbeing holistically – body, mind, spirit – requires an out-in-the-open dialogue about the dangerous realities of this professional landscape and any stigmas associated with prevention and treatment. A burgeoning movement is underway which can normalize and bring meditation practice and benefits to the front lines of emergency management.

Speaker Bio: Garth is serving as the Mindful NOAA program manager. Before NOAA, Garth served 14 years in the US Forest Service and eight years as a US naval officer. Experiencing the transformative power of mindfulness practices, he decided to deepen his learning journey by sharing the practices with others. While co-founding Mindful NOAA – a first of its kind in a federal agency – Garth studied with the Engaged Mindfulness Institute. Through the Calmer Choice organization, he taught mindfulness to grade school students and serves on its board. Garth works with the Center for Mindfulness in Public Safety to train safety and corrections officials in mindfulness-based wellness and resilience. He also

serves as an adjunct faculty member at the Federal Executive Institute teaching mindfulness to government executives.