



**File Code:** 5100

**Date:** July 9, 2002

**Route To:**

**Subject:** Direction on Incident Management – Thirtymile Hazard Abatement Plan

**To:** Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, IITF Director, and WO Staff

We are currently at National Preparedness Level 5 with extremely dangerous wildfire situations in many geographic areas of the country. It is critical that our first priority remain firefighter and public safety. To help facilitate accomplishment of this objective, a Monitoring Plan and an Incident Checklist for use in implementing the abatement actions of the Thirtymile Hazard Abatement Plan (HAP) have been developed and enclosed. These are tools you can use for monitoring and tracking implementation and compliance with recent incident management policy changes and the HAP. It is also acceptable to use locally developed checklists to track these same actions. This Monitoring Plan is for fire season 2002 only. It will likely be revised and reissued for future fire seasons.

Several questions have been asked regarding the HAP and implementation direction. Following are a few points of clarification:

1. The HAP is National in scope and the abatement actions apply to all fires on all National Forest System lands.
2. Forest Service (FS) employees do not lose their status as “FS employees” when they are working on non-FS fires. As a result, the employee specific, HAP abatement actions still apply to every FS employee when engaged in wildland fire activities, even on non-FS incidents. Examples of these actions include:
  - Compliance with work/rest guidelines
  - Compliance with entrapment avoidance and shelter deployment protocols
  - Accepting fireline positions in compliance with red card qualifications
  - Compliance with the 10 Standard Firefighting Orders
  - Mitigation of Watch Out Situations
3. Since the HAP and policy letters from the Chief are FS specific, cooperating agencies are not required to monitor and document actions taken in compliance with the HAP, or provide products such as fire danger pocket cards.
4. If non-FS employees are assigned to a FS incident via a FS originated Resource Order, the HAP actions and FS policy apply unless these actions would violate their home agency contracts, union agreements, or applicable interagency Fire Protection Agreements, Operating Plans, or Mutual Aid Agreements. These employees are “agents” of the host FS Agency Administrator, and must comply with the FS policies while assigned to the FS fire.



5. The WO letters (file code 5100) of January 11, 2002 and April 5, 2002 provided direction on the issuance of “pocket cards”. It has become apparent that issuing a pocket card for every fuel type is not realistic, nor the intent of the direction. FS Units are to develop Fire Danger Pocket Cards for only the most critical fuel types on their home units using a fuel model or fuel models that appropriately and effectively communicate fire danger based upon critical energy release component (ERC) and/or Burning Index (BI) threshold values. These pocket cards need to be issued to each fireline supervisor on the home unit or from another sending unit prior to deployment on a FS fire. Additional information on pocket cards is available at: <http://famweb.nwcg.gov/pocketcards/>

Also enclosed is a series of frequently asked questions and answers (Q&As) for your information and use. They will be updated as necessary as implementation of the HAP continues.

The Forest Service website [www.fs.fed.us/fire/fire\\_new/](http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/fire_new/) provides an excellent source of information regarding the Thirtymile Incident. The Monitoring Plan, Check List, and the Q&As will also be posted there.

As we manage this difficult fire season, I again ask you to make the following Code of Conduct for Fire Suppression an integral part of our agency culture. Line Officers, Fire Program Managers, and firefighters at all organizational levels must embrace these codes, and be held accountable for compliance.

#### **Code of Conduct for Fire Suppression:**

- Firefighter safety comes first on every fire every time.
- The 10 Standard Firefighting Orders are firm...we don't break them; we don't bend them.
- All 18 Watch Out Situations must be mitigated before engagement or re-engagement of suppression activities.
- Every firefighter has the right to know that his or her assignments are safe.
- Every fireline supervisor, every fire manager, and every administrator has the responsibility to confirm that safe practices are known and observed.

If you have any questions or require further clarification, contact Jim Payne, National F&AM Thirtymile Coordinator at (503) 808-2359 or [jepayne@fs.fed.us](mailto:jepayne@fs.fed.us).

*/s/Joel D. Holtrop*

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Enclosures

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