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FSM 5100 - FIRE MANAGEMENT

CHAPTER 5130 - WILDLAND FIRE SUPPRESSION

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Approved: ROBIN L. THOMPSON
Associate Deputy Chief

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Posting Instructions: Interim directives are numbered consecutively by title and calendar year. Post by document at the end of the chapter. Retain this transmittal as the first page(s) of this document. The last interim directive was 5100-2003-2 to FSM 5120.

New Document	id_5130-2003-3	10 Pages
Superseded Document(s) (Interim Directive Number and Effective Date)	id_5130-2002-1, 5/21/2002	5 Pages

Digest:

This interim directive (ID) revises and incorporates direction previously issued in ID 5130-2002-1 and also sets out new direction and clarifies existing direction regarding fire suppression planning and operations, safety priorities, and responsibilities of officials. The direction in this ID and the direction on the related ID to FSM 2670 implement action item A-31 from the "Thirtymile Accident Prevention Plan" (December 2001, as updated) prepared by the USDA Forest Service in consultation with the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) in response to the investigation findings and recommendations for the Thirtymile Fire. The IDs also address action items A-1, A-3-a, A-3-b, A-3-c, A-4, A-5-a, A-8-a, A-8-b, A-11, A-13, A-14, A-15, A-16, A-17, A-22, and A-27. Notice of the issuance of the previous ID 5130-2002-1 was published in the Federal Register on May 21, 2002 (67 FR 35789), and notice of the issuance of this ID 5130-2003-1 was published on April 24, 2003 (68 FR 20111).

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Digest--Continued:

5130.3 - Revises direction formerly issued in ID 5130-2002-1, reorganizes paragraphs, and clarifies policy regarding wildland fire suppression in order to emphasize that the safety of firefighters, other personnel, and the public is the first priority while conducting wildland fire suppression activities. Also adds cross-references to FSM 2671.45f for related direction on consultation during emergencies where the requirements related to the Endangered Species Act might affect operations. Adds an annual requirement for line officers to communicate their expectations for fire management leadership. Adds cross-references and requirements for use of the Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations and the Incident Response Pocket Guide (FSM 5108). Adds direction for choosing fire suppression strategies and regarding the need for increased oversight during transition and fire behavior thresholds.

5130.42 - Adds the responsibility of Deputy Chiefs, Regional Foresters, Forest Supervisors, and District Rangers to manage fatigue in firefighters and other fire suppression personnel. Adds the responsibility of these officers to ensure that employees are mobilized in wildfire suppression positions for which they are qualified pursuant to the Fire and Aviation Management Qualifications Handbook (FSH 5109.17).

5130.43 - Revises and incorporates direction previously issued in ID 5130-2002-1 for the responsibility and authority of Forest Supervisors and District Rangers to supersede natural and cultural resource considerations and constraints when the safety of firefighters, other personnel, or the public is at risk. Adds the responsibility of Forest Supervisors and District Rangers (line officers) to annually convey to Type 3, 4, and 5 Incident Commanders the performance expectations for critical phases of wildland fire suppression. Adds the responsibility of Forest Supervisors and District Rangers for supplemental safety inspections for a minimum of 10 percent of each unit's Type 3, 4, and 5 wildfires. Adds the responsibility of these officers to ensure that Type 1, 2, and 3 wildland fires have a dedicated Incident Commander with no collateral duties, except for unfilled Command and General Staff Positions as described in the Fireline Handbook (FSH 5109.32a).

5130.44 - Revises and incorporates direction previously issued in ID 5130-2002-1 for the responsibility of District Rangers to accomplish after-action reviews on all Type 3 wildfires and on selected Type 4 and 5 wildfires as necessary.

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Digest--Continued:

5130.45 - Revises and incorporates direction previously issued in ID 5130-2002-1 for the responsibility and authority of Incident Commanders to supersede natural and cultural resource considerations and constraints when the safety of firefighters, other personnel, or the public is at risk. Adds the responsibility and authority of Incident Commanders to assign fireline personnel only to positions for which they are qualified (para 1). Directs that cooperating agency personnel are to be accepted as qualified under the Incident Command System based upon their employing agencies' certification system (para. 2). Provides direction regarding performance ratings in compliance with the Ten Standard Firefighting Orders and the Eighteen Watch Out Situations (para. 2). Requires monitoring of the effectiveness of planned strategy and tactics (para. 3), and the immediate delay, modification, or abandonment of firefighting action when strategies and tactics cannot be safely implemented (para. 3a). Requires documentation of findings regarding fatigue and the measures taken to manage compliance with guidelines for work, rest, and length of commitment (para. 4-4b). Sets out the responsibility of Incident Commanders to personally conduct and document safety inspections (para. 5) and to ensure that arriving personnel have positive, documented contact with appropriate incident management personnel prior to commencing work (para. 6).

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5130.3 Policy

1. Wildland Fire Suppression Planning and Operations. Line officers shall conduct wildland fire suppression planning and operations in compliance with Service-wide and interagency wildland fire suppression principles and practices established in the Fireline Handbook (FSH 5109.32a); the Firefighters Guide (FSM 5108); Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations (FSM 5108); the Incident Response Pocket Guide (FSM 5108); and the Health and Safety Code Handbook (FSH 6709.11).

2. Priority for Safety. In conducting wildland fire suppression, responsible officials shall give first priority to the safety of firefighters, other personnel, and the public. Consistent with this priority, responsible officials shall conduct wildland fire suppression in a timely, effective and efficient manner.

3. Fire Management Leadership. Line officers shall annually communicate their expectations of leadership in fire management to all of their units' employees.

4. Wildland Fire Suppression Strategies. A Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) shall be used to document wildland fire suppression strategy decisions for any incident that is expected to exceed, or has exceeded, the action planned in the fire management plan (FSM 5131.1). In making decisions about how to organize and conduct suppression operations (suppression strategies), line officers shall minimize both suppression cost and resource loss consistent with the resource management objectives for the values to be protected. Consider fire behavior, the availability of suppression resources, the values of the natural resources and property at risk, direction in the Forest land and resource management plan, and the potential cost of suppression.

a. Choosing Fire Suppression Strategies.

(1) The primary criteria for choosing fire suppression strategies and tactics are to maximize safety and to minimize suppression costs, resource loss, and environmental damage.

(2) Planned and actual suppression costs must be responsive to safety considerations and commensurate with the values to be protected. These costs must be included and displayed in the WFSA and, when costs are exceeded, revision and re-approval of the WFSA are required.

(3) Under no circumstances are suppression strategies and tactics to be tailored to achieve resource benefits. Even though resource benefits may result in some areas from the fire, do not spend suppression dollars with the objective of achieving resource benefits. Further, do not use unplanned wildland fires to achieve resource benefits unless such actions are consistent with the applicable Forest land and resource management plan.

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- (4) The selection of less aggressive containment strategies in low-consequence areas is appropriate if it is determined to be the safest and least-cost alternative.
- b. Management During Transition From Initial to Extended Attack Fires. Transition from initial attack to extended attack can be especially dangerous. During this transition, the fire shall be managed as a potentially life-threatening event.
- c. Exception to Consideration of Suppression Costs or Resource Loss. When a potentially life-threatening event exists, action shall be taken to provide for the safety of firefighters, other personnel, and the public, regardless of suppression costs or resource loss. For related direction concerning Endangered Species Act consultation, see FSM 2671.45f, Consultation in Emergencies.
- d. Identification of Fire Behavior Thresholds for Large Fires. Identification of the fire behavior thresholds at which large fires typically occur is important because these thresholds indicate fire danger levels that significantly compromise safety and control. When such thresholds are approached, fire program managers shall request additional supervisory and suppression support. Consult the Incident Response Pocket Guide (FSM 5108) for extended attack transition analysis.
5. Response to Human-Caused Ignitions. Units are to conduct a cost-effective initial attack on any human-caused ignition.
6. Response to Wildland Fire. Units are to respond to each reported wildland fire with planned forces and tactics as directed in the fire management plan (FSM 5110, 5140).
7. Expectations of Employees in Reporting Fires and Participating in Suppression Actions. All employees are expected to promptly report wildland fires to the nearest unit. Employees who discover wildland fires are expected to take initial action consistent with their wildland fire qualifications. Employees without wildland fire qualifications are not expected to take initial action.
- a. Every Forest Service employee has a responsibility to support and participate in wildland fire suppression activities as the situation demands. Wildland fire suppression is not limited to those employees with skills in wildland fire suppression operations; rather, it also requires the skills of employees in fiscal, human resources, telecommunications, communications, and other areas.
- b. Employees who are not sent to provide direct support of a wildland fire suppression action are expected to fill in as directed to ensure that critical work at the home unit is performed in the absence of other employees who are deployed to provide direct support in wildland fire suppression emergencies.

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8. Notification of Wildland Fire Entrapment.

- a. Line officers shall notify the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) immediately of any wildland fire entrapment. Entrapments are situations where personnel are unexpectedly caught in a fire-behavior-related, life-threatening position where planned escape routes or safety zones are absent, inadequate, or compromised. An entrapment may or may not include deployment of a fire shelter for its intended purpose. These situations may or may not result in injury; they include near misses.
- b. The responsible line officer shall investigate all fire entrapments promptly and thoroughly. Forward a copy of the investigative report and the corrective action plan to the Director of Fire and Aviation Management, Washington Office, within 10 days of receipt of the investigative report.

5130.4 - Responsibility

5130.41 - Director, Fire and Aviation Management Staff, Washington Office

The Director of Fire and Aviation Management, Washington Office, through the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC), has the responsibility to coordinate all requests for national shared resources and overhead personnel from resources outside the requesting Region. Procedures for mobilization and demobilization of resources are contained in the National Interagency Mobilization Guide (FSM 5108).

5130.42 - Deputy Chiefs, Regional Foresters, Area Director, Forest Supervisors, and District Rangers

The Deputy Chiefs, Regional Foresters, Area Director, Forest Supervisors, and District Rangers have the responsibility:

1. To ensure that employees under their supervision are appropriately trained and made available as needed to support wildland fire suppression.
2. To ensure that those employees with supervisory or managerial responsibilities in wildland fire management stay abreast of current fire suppression information, such as factors affecting wildland fire behavior, wildland fire suppression management and organization, contents of agency and interagency wildland fire management directives, fire management plans, and economic and risk analysis.
3. To ensure that the assigned line officer declares each wildfire out.
4. To ensure that all fire entrapments are promptly and aggressively investigated (FSM 5130.3).

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5. To ensure that fatigue in firefighters and other wildland fire suppression personnel is identified and appropriately addressed (FSH 5109.34).

6. To ensure that employees are mobilized in wildland fire positions for which they are qualified pursuant to the Fire and Aviation Management Qualifications Handbook (FSH 5109.17).

5130.43 - Forest Supervisors and District Rangers

In addition to the responsibilities set out in FSM 5130.42, Forest Supervisors, and District Rangers have the responsibility:

1. To make safety of firefighters, other personnel, and the public the highest priority in wildland fire suppression activities (FSM 5130.3). When a potentially life-threatening situation may exist, the Forest Supervisors and District Rangers have the authority to supersede natural and cultural resource considerations and constraints to provide for the safety of firefighters, other personnel, and the public (FSM 5130.3, para.4).

2. To annually convey responsibilities, expectations, and authorities of Type 3, 4, and 5 Incident Commanders to:

- a. Provide for safety and welfare of all personnel and the public.
- b. Develop and implement viable strategies and tactics.
- c. Monitor effectiveness of planned strategy and tactics.
- d. Execute suppression actions when and where they are safe and effective.
- e. Ensure that all firefighting actions are in full compliance with the Ten Standard Fire Orders and that the mitigation of applicable Eighteen Watch Out Situations has been accomplished (FSH 5109.32a).
- f. Immediately delay, modify, or abandon firefighting on any part of a wildland fire where strategies and tactics cannot be safely implemented.
- g. Maintain command and control of all firefighting resources.

3. To ensure that supplemental inspections for safety and health hazards, including compliance with the Ten Standard Fire Orders and mitigation of the Eighteen Watch Out Situations, are documented in the incident records on a minimum of 10 percent of the unit's Type 3, 4, and 5 wildland fires.

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4. Ensure that Incident Commanders on Type 1, 2, and 3 wildland fires have no collateral duties, except for those of unfilled Command and General Staff positions as described in the Fireline Handbook (FSH 5109.32a).

5. To assign an individual from the local unit to provide oversight to administrative and financial activities and to ensure fiscal integrity; to assign an Incident Business Advisor (IBA) to all Type 1 or complex incidents; and to ensure IBA oversight on Type 2, 3, 4, and 5 incidents.

5130.44 - District Rangers

In addition to the responsibilities set out in FSM 5130.42 and 5130.43, District Rangers have the responsibility to ensure accomplishment of after-action reviews as described in the Incident Response Pocket Guide (FSM 5108) for all Type 3 wildfires and for selected Type 4 and 5 wildfires.

5130.45 - Incident Commanders

Incident Commanders have the authority and responsibility:

1. To make safety of firefighters, other personnel, and the public the highest priority in wildland fire suppression activities (FSM 5130.3). When a potentially life-threatening situation may exist, the Incident Commanders have the authority to supersede natural and cultural resource considerations and constraints to provide for the safety of firefighters, other personnel, and the public (FSM 5130.3, para 4).

2. To assign personnel to fireline positions for which they are fully qualified, as certified by their employing agency. Trainees may be assigned pursuant to the direction in the Fire and Aviation Management Qualifications Handbook (FSH 5109.17).

3. To ensure that performance ratings are completed on Type 3, 4, and 5 wildfires for all ground fireline personnel assigned from outside the local area. Ratings shall include compliance with the Ten Standard Fire Orders and the Eighteen Watch Out Situations. Performance ratings shall be maintained in the official incident files and distributed to the individuals rated and their home units.

4. To monitor the effectiveness of the planned strategy and tactics and to:

a. Immediately delay, modify, or abandon firefighting action on any part of a wildland fire where strategies and tactics cannot be safely implemented.

b. Execute suppression actions when and where they are safe and effective.

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- c. Ensure that all firefighting actions are in full compliance with the Ten Standard Fire Orders and that the mitigation of the applicable Eighteen Watch Out Situations has been accomplished.
 - d. Maintain command and control of all fireline resources.
 5. To address fatigue (FSH 5109.34) in firefighters and other fire suppression personnel and ensure compliance with work/rest and length of commitment guidelines:
 - a. Document actions to manage fatigue for all fires that exceed one operational period.
 - b. Document preapprovals and justifications for excessively long work shifts and actions taken to ensure compliance with guidelines for work, rest, and length of commitment.
 6. To personally conduct inspections for safety and health hazards, including compliance with the Ten Standard Fire Orders and mitigation of the Eighteen Watch Out Situations on Type 3, 4, and 5 fires, and, in conjunction with the Safety Officer on Type 1 and 2 fires, to document these inspections in unit logs and to include the documentation in incident records.
 7. To ensure arriving ground fireline resources on Type 3, 4, and 5 wildfires have positive and documented contact with appropriate incident management personnel to address the briefing checklist elements in the Incident Response Pocket Guide prior to commencing work (FSM 5108).