

**SHOSHONE NATIONAL FOREST
WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT RESOURCE PROTECTION GUIDELINES
JULY 2008**

These Guidelines are developed for use with wildland fire management activities including prescribed burning operations. Wildland fire suppression and fire use are considered emergency operations. It is recognized that where life and property are threatened, some necessary management actions will occur that may not be consistent with these guidelines.

OBJECTIVES

Provide firefighters, incident management teams, and prescribed fire organizations with direction to avoid impacts or mitigate the effects to forest resources from wildland fire management and logistical operations. There are separate additional guidelines for post fire rehabilitation that will contribute to a more site-specific rehab plan.

Resource Advisor

Resource advisors work for the agency administrator and are assigned to a fire to provide guidance and assessment of the need and application for resource protection measures. They serve as the primary liaison between the fire team and forest specialist when additional information is needed.

LOGISTICS

Bears: Bears frequent the area, and personal awareness of their presence is an important part of human safety. The guidelines below can and should be adjusted to the specific situation at hand – for example if seasonal bear foods are at a minimal and bears are frequenting the fire area then additional human safety precautions should be taken. **Proper food storage is one of the most important actions to take to reduce human – bear interactions and an unsafe situation.**

Personnel Safety at Base and Spike Camps:

Areas within bear habitat (all of the Shoshone NF and immediately adjacent) are subject to implementation of bear safety practices.

Every individual on the fire (contractors as well) needs to have a bear safety briefing from a designated forest staff when they arrive on a fire. The briefing should include instructions on personal safety, use of bear spray, bear spray safety, and the Food Storage Order requirements.

- Individuals should not store food or other bear attractants in their tents or sleeping area. Bear attractants can be anything that has a food odor and includes food, such as fire pits and camp stoves, any beverage other than water, empty beverage or food containers, toothpaste, food wrappers, ketchup, garbage, horse feed and antifreeze etc.
- Individuals are not required to carry bear spray when in areas of concentrated human activity (generally more than 5 people) such as around base camp. Bear Spray is required of individuals leaving areas of concentrated human activity or moving between camps.
- If a camp is comprised of 3 or less, everyone is required to carry bear spray.

Bear spray is checked out to individuals and is returned at the time of demobilization.

Food Storage: All foods must be stored using one of the following options:

- Sling food 10 feet off the ground and 4 feet from any vertical supports (e.g., tree trunks).
- Within a bear resistant container which could include containers certified by the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee Courtesy Inspection, semi trailers, closed hard-sided trailers, in vehicle cabs, trailers and trunks.
- Approved Electric Fences – Counter Assault (The Pentagon model). These fences are for use as described in their manual. Two fences can be linked to cover a large area BUT NO MORE THAN 2 SHALL BE LINKED TOGETHER. If other electric fences are available, their voltage and design must be approved by a forest wildlife biologist. Use must follow procedures outlined in attached – “Specifics for approval and use of Portable Electric Fences”.

Recommend sleeping at least 100 yards from properly stored food.

Bear Monitors: A bear monitor is required at all ICP, base and spike camps if food storage standards cannot be met. Bear monitors may also be required at other spike camps depending on location and level of bear use of the area. A bear monitor will provide “presence” in areas where there is none. Additional roles and expectations of the bear monitor can be provided by the forest. The forest can provide individuals qualified to serve as bear monitors. With some training and information the bear monitor role can be filled by other people already working at camp such as a safety officer.

- Bear monitors at ICP and base camps will work the dusk to dawn hours circulating through camp and making sure everyone is adhering to the bear safety standards.
- Bear monitors assigned to backcountry camps are expected to remain at camp. There may need to be a night shift person and a dayshift person.

Camps:

Camp locations proposed for use by more than 10 people, or more than 3 days/site, or use of riparian areas shall require coordination and concurrence with the Resource Advisor or Agency Administrator.

Locate camps such that surface and subsurface water resources are protected. Camp locations & staging areas should not be in riparian areas, on alluvial fans, near slide areas, or other hazardous terrains that are subject to mass movement and flash floods as examples.

Cultural Sites will not be used for camps without consultation with Unit Archaeologist.

Camps located in Wilderness or backcountry areas with less than 10 people and less than 3 days/site camping in uplands (i.e., non-riparian sites more than 200 feet from water or meadows) sites shall use ‘cat hole’ methods to dispose of human waste (shallow holes, buried after each use).

Camps located in Wilderness or backcountry areas proposed for use by more than 10 people, or more than 3 days/site shall use slit trench method for dealing with human waste.

At base camps all food garbage (used Gatorade bottles, all trash that contained food or has a perceived food smell) will be stored in a bear-resistant garbage bin, with pick up scheduled daily.

In wilderness or backcountry all garbage and trash shall be removed daily; burying and/or burning biodegradable and non-biodegradable items is not permissible. Garbage shall be stored at least 100 yards from sleeping areas in a bear resistant container, hung according to the bear guidelines, or stored in an approved electric fence. If this cannot be met, a bear monitor may be required on site.

Recycling: The Shoshone would like to minimize its ecological footprint and save resources. Recyclable products shall be sorted and taken to local (Cody, Powell, Lander and Dubois) recycling centers. Contacting the recycling center prior to beginning any recycling efforts is recommended. Efforts to minimize garbage are expected (e.g., keep the plastic bottles from Gatorade and water to the minimum and use alternative water supply systems such as refillable containers).

City of Powell Recycling: (307) 754-9773

Cody Recycling: (307) 587-3990

Lander Recycling:

Vehicle Weed Washing: All vehicles should be washed thoroughly, particularly the undercarriage to prevent the spread of weeds and their seeds. **Vehicles should be washed at the time of check-in and when de-mobilized.** Wash stations will be determined based on the location of the camp and incident. Washing stations may be located on or off site. On site weed washing station equipment and location will be coordinated with the Resource Advisor. Establish locations where this site is not draining directly into waterways (even dry drainages) and weed seeds are contained or confined to the wash area.

Hazardous Material:

For hazardous materials, only order what is needed to complete the task. The Incident Management Team will be responsible for making arrangements to properly dispose of all remaining hazardous materials. The Forest will make available names of contractors that can transport and dispose of hazardous waste.

- All hazardous materials will be properly stored and labeled.
- If storing over 55 gallons per site, provide spill containment measures for extended use. Provide for spill containment with adequate spill apron. Have fuel spill kit at fuel site(s).
- All hazardous waste spills shall be promptly reported and properly cleaned up in accordance with the Forest's Hazmat Plan.

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OPERATIONS

Mechanical equipment:

Use of mechanical equipment in Wilderness Areas is subject to approval by the Agency Administrator and will be authorized in a Delegation of Authority. Forest Supervisor has the authority to approve the use of motorized equipment except for the use of heavy equipment, dozers/tractors which are reserved for the Regional Forester (FSM 23236.1-1).

In Wilderness Areas use 'Minimum Requirements Decision Guide' to address use of motorized and mechanized equipment for prescribed fire projects.

Outside of wilderness areas, use of dozers is subject to approval by the Agency Administrator. Proposed dozer lines should be reviewed by Resource Advisor prior to construction, with final concurrence by the Agency Administrator where possible.

Personal Safety:

Bears may frequent the area. And personal awareness of their presence is an important part of human safety. The guidelines below can and should be adjusted to the specific situation at hand – for example if seasonal bear foods are at a minimal and bears are frequenting the fire area then additional human safety precautions should be taken.

All overhead must have bear spray on their person while on the fire line. Every 5th crew member must have a bear spray on their person. Individuals are not required to carry bear spray within areas of concentrated human activity (generally more than 5 people) such as around base camp. Bear Spray is required of individuals leaving areas of concentrated human activity or moving between camps.

Bear spray must be readily available in a chest holster or hip holster, not in a backpack. Bear spray cozies are needed for transporting pressurized bear spray cans (e.g., in vehicles, aircraft,

backpack, etc.). Transporting pressurized bear spray cans in aircraft may require that it be slung outside the fuselage of the aircraft.

Bear spray is checked out to individuals and is returned at the time of demobilization.

Cultural Resources:

Consult with the Unit Archeologist before initiating actions within key cultural areas or on historic structures. GIS maps of cultural sites will be made available as needed. Unit archeologist or Resource Advisor will provide measures for protecting or avoiding key cultural sites and historic structures, as well as address other fire operation activities that may be permitted within a cultural site boundary.

If an unmapped site or structure is found during fire fighting operations contact unit archeologist or Resource Advisor as soon as possible to determine further protective measures and documentation needs.

Firelines:

Build firelines outside filter strips (strip of vegetation that filters or catches sediment before entering riparian areas, wetlands, fens, etc.) unless tied into a stream, lake, or wetland as a firebreak with minimal disturbed soil.

Riparian, Lakes and Streams:

Follow the April 2000 Guidelines for Aerial Delivery of Retardant or Foam near Waterways (attached).

Use of retardant in Wilderness Areas requires prior approval by the Agency Administrator.

When using private water sources a written agreement is required. A log of where water is obtained and an estimate of how much water was used may be required for tracking the appropriation – check with Resource Advisor or forest hydrologist.

Store fuels and other chemicals outside of designated riparian areas. Spill pads and plastic liners are required under fuel barrels, jerry cans and tanks. These pads will be changed every 12 hours of use or when 50% saturated. Pads and liners will be bagged and hauled out to drop points or other designated site(s).

Do not pump directly from streams if chemical products are to be injected into the system. If chemicals are used, pump from a fold-a-tank located out of riparian area, a minimum of 150 feet from water sources, springs, lakes, and streams.

Avoid back flushing pumps and charged hose into live streams, lake, ponds or wetlands.

Use water WITHOUT chemical additives for suppression/mop-up in riparian areas, springs, and near live streams and other water bodies.

During the construction of dipping/pumping sites, to the best of your ability, provide passage for fish and other aquatic organisms. Consult your Resource Advisors for areas where Species of Concern may exist.

Activities that go beyond hand-piling logs, slash, and use of irrigation tarps for pooling water should be discussed with the Resource Advisor.

To prevent the spread of aquatic nuisance species follow the R4 Final Guidance for Fire Operations attached. Work with Resource Advisor to determine most appropriate method to address aquatic nuisance species. Here are a few mitigations measures presented in order of most to least effective measures:

- Avoid known contaminated waters as fire suppression water sources (locations will be provided).
- If such places cannot be avoided then avoid removal of water from areas with mud (organics) in which Whirling disease and mud snails occur, which are two invasive aquatic species on or near the Forest.
- If contaminated and uncontaminated sites are within the fire area have 2 buckets and duplicate equipment for use in each respective water body and do not interchange equipment or water.
- If contaminated sites cannot be avoided then disinfect all buckets that have been in a contaminated water source prior to going to a clean water source. At a minimum, remove all mud and sediment from the bucket with soap and water. Ivory dish soap is recommended for use in uncontained forest sites. Air-dry for 24 hours. Recent regional strategy recommends to “completely dry all equipment for 4-5 days before re-use” (Rocky Mountain Region Invasive Species Strategy Appendix B June 2008)
- Avoid in all cases dropping water from contaminated sources into uncontaminated watersheds, especially if the water is likely to reach live streams and rivers.

Helibases, Safety Zones and Staging Area Locations:

Where feasible coordinate location of helibases and constructed helispots with Resource Advisor prior to use. Field recon with lead time is preferred to evaluate site conditions and coordination with other resource specialists.

Locate helibases, staging areas, helispots, and other centers for incident activities outside of riparian areas, known cultural and high use recreation sites. Exemption may be granted by the Agency Administrator.

Coordinate the location of constructed safety zones/areas where significant ground disturbance or vegetation alteration is needed with Resource Advisor prior to use. A field recon, with lead time is preferred to evaluate site conditions and coordination with other resource specialists.

Noxious Weeds:

Avoid establishing camps or helibases in heavily infested noxious weed areas. If no other options are available coordinate with the Resource Advisor to develop mitigating measures to minimize the spread of noxious weeds into the backcountry. Depending on the infestation and character of the noxious weeds, mitigation measures could be fairly intensive and costly.