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MEDIA ADVISORY

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NATIONAL FIRE PLAN CONFERENCE: "SUCCESS THROUGH LOCAL COLLABORATION"

WASHINGTON, Jan. 13, 2003—The U.S. Departments of the Interior and Agriculture will present the first-ever National Fire Plan (NFP) award winners at the second annual NFP conference in New Orleans, La.

WHAT: The second annual National Fire Plan conference, "Success Through Local Collaboration," is scheduled for Jan. 14-15, 2003, at the Sheraton Hotel New Orleans in New Orleans, La. The Department of the Interior's Secretary Gale A. Norton will speak at the National Fire Plan awards presentation and luncheon on Wednesday. Interviews with Secretary Norton will follow the luncheon. Representatives from the federal and state land management agencies and federal, state and local partners from across the United States will attend.

WHO:

- Gale A. Norton, Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior
- Mark Rey, Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Mike Foster, Governor, Louisiana (invited)
- C. Ray Nagin, Mayor, New Orleans
- Paul D. Frey, Louisiana State Forester
- Tim Hartzell, Director, Office of Wildland Fire Coordination, Department of the Interior, Washington, DC
- Corbin Newman, Coordinator, National Fire Plan, USDA Forest Service, Washington, DC

WHEN: Wed., Jan. 15, 12:15–2 p.m. Interviews will follow the awards luncheon.

WHERE: Pontchartrain Ballroom, 3rd Floor
Sheraton Hotel New Orleans
500 Canal Street, New Orleans, LA 70130

HOW: Media may attend all conference sessions, and are especially encouraged to attend the National Fire Plan awards presentation and luncheon on Wednesday, Jan. 15. Interior Secretary Norton will speak and interviews will follow. Lunch will be provided for members of the media.

DETAILS: The National Fire Plan was established as a cooperative, long-term effort of the USDA Forest Service, Department of the Interior and the National Association of State Foresters for the federal government and state partners to manage impacts of wildland fire to our nation's communities. Conference sessions will focus on

local collaboration in achieving National Fire Plan goals. Highlights include the luncheon and awards presentation by Interior Secretary Norton, and a session by keynote speaker Bob Bendick, vice president of the Southeast Division of The Nature Conservancy.

National Fire Plan awards will be presented for Excellence in Implementing the National Fire Plan; Excellence in Firefighter Preparedness, Safety and Training; Excellence in Rehabilitation and Restoration; Excellence in Hazardous Fuel Treatment; Excellence in Community Assistance; Improving Accountability; plus several special awards.

For more information on the conference, call Jennifer Plyler at (202) 205-1777

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